



TERTIARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

Guidelines for Student Charter in Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

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FOREWORD

The present Government is fully conscious of the valuable contribution that a highly educated workforce can make to the country's socio-economic development. Its vision is to transform our country into a Regional Centre of Excellence in Higher Education. The Government values its students and recognises the importance of the overall student experience in a tertiary institution. It wants to ensure that the period between enrolment and graduation is one of personal growth and development for each and every student. Our achievement depends on the level to which we add value to the lives of our youth. It is in this spirit that this student Charter has been prepared.

The Charter sets out what students can reasonably expect from a post-secondary educational institution and, likewise, it sets out the institution's expectations of the responsibilities of students as they pursue their studies within the institution's environment. The Charter provides information on the ways in which staff and students can work together to enhance and support the teaching, learning and research experience at the institution, and maintain an enjoyable and appropriate environment in which to work and study.

The guidelines contained herewith have to be used by each and every tertiary education institution to formulate their own specific student charter. Both students and staff should be given enough time to understand the guidelines before putting them into practice.

I personally promise my support to the commitments set out in this document, and I hope that it will help students and the institution to meet their obligations.

Dr R. Jeetah
Minister of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology

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While every care has been taken in the preparation of this publication, by its nature it may contain errors which are unintentional

1. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The tertiary education institution expects all its students to familiarise themselves with, and abide strictly by the regulations and policies of the institution, as may be published from time to time.

1.1 The institution expects all its students to

- a) comply with the requirements of their course of study;
- b) comply with any code of conduct that may be applicable to them whilst on campus;
- c) respect other students' basic rights to work and live in a safe, secure environment, free from anxiety, fear, intimidation and harassment;
- d) respect other students' basic right to freedom of speech as per law;
- e) maintain due confidentiality where they have access to confidential information of any nature;
- f) provide accurate information to enable the maintenance of proper records and keep the institution informed of changes;
- g) always have their institution identification card available while on the institution's campuses and to produce it when required;
- h) pay all institution fees falling due by the specified dates;
- i) treat institution property and materials with care and respect and act in a manner that does not bring the institution into disrepute;
- j) treat all institution staff, students and visitors with courtesy and respect;
- k) comply with the institution's Equality and Diversity Policy;
- l) make themselves familiar with the institution's Health and Safety Regulations and Fire Regulations, and comply immediately with prescribed procedures in case of emergency;
- m) comply with the Students' Union constitution and rules, where applicable;
- n) contribute to energy saving on campus through simple acts like switching off light and fans on leaving classroom.

1.2 The student can expect:

- a) to receive a Student Handbook containing information about the institution, its policies, its regulations and facilities;
- b) to receive an induction when joining the institution;

- c) that the teaching received will be evaluated. The feedback will be used to enhance the quality of teaching;
- d) that the tertiary institution will work with the student to help him/her develop learning skills, recognising that this is an ongoing process;
- e) that the tertiary institution will provide a quality learning environment;
- f) that the tertiary institution will provide the student access to appropriate resources to enable him/her to complete his/her studies;
- g) that the tertiary institution will support the student, both academically and personally, to help him/her complete his/her studies;
- h) that staff will be courteous, professional and efficient;
- i) that the tertiary institution will seek to create and maintain an atmosphere and environment which is conducive to learning;
- j) that the tertiary institution will monitor admissions, progression and feedback from students, with a view to continually enhancing the quality of the provision;
- k) in conjunction with the Students' Union, the tertiary institution will provide a wide range of high-quality sport and cultural activities, with extensive extra-curricular activities for students;
- l) that the tertiary institution will respect the student right to confidentiality;
- m) that the tertiary institution will comply with all relevant legislation.

2. APPLYING TO THE INSTITUTION

The institution will be guided by the following principles when admitting students:

- a) the basic criterion for admission will be the student's qualifications;
- b) criteria for selection will be fair and transparent and applied consistently, in line with the institution's Equality and Diversity Policy
- c) prospectus and course related information will be available to applicants in sufficient time to enable them to submit applications in the light of the most up to date information;
- d) information from application forms will be treated in confidence and in line with the Data Protection Act;
- e) students are informed of the outcome of their applications.

3 BEFORE THE STUDENT JOINS IN

3.1 The student can expect the Admissions Office to provide information on:

- a) all relevant courses and services;
- b) entry requirements;
- c) fees and any other charges associated with each course;
- d) the facilities and support available for students, including those with disabilities.

3.2 The institution can expect the student to:

- a) provide full and accurate information, as requested;
- b) respond to any offer of seat that is made, within the time specified;
- c) inform the institution of any disability and special need arrangements so that reasonable adjustments can be considered;
- d) communicate to the institution for any special help required;
- e) familiarise with the information the institution has published about its courses and about studying at the institution;
- f) take part in all relevant examinations, tests or interviews.

4 WHEN THE STUDENT JOINS IN

4.1 The student can expect the institution to:

- a) provide a programme of orientation to the institution and its services and an induction to the course of study;
- b) provide documentation outlining the syllabus, assessment requirements and essential learning materials for the course;
- c) provide a student handbook, containing any information regarding services, regulations and procedures;
- d) provide advice and information for students with disabilities;
- e) provide a calendar for the academic year and a timetable for the semester;
- f) provide details of tutorials and other learning support arrangements, including who the course coordinators are, and how to contact them;
- g) provide a statement about what the student needs to do to complete the course and what happens if the student does not pass key assessments;
- h) give information about:
 - the Students' Union;

- how the student can contribute to the decision making process of the institution;
- policies on health, safety, smoking, the environment and equality and diversity;
- financial matters, including what support is available in case of difficulties;
- the services offered to students;
- the student complaints procedure.

4.2 The institution will expect the student to:

- a) participate in the induction and orientation programme provided;
- b) familiarise himself/herself with the Student Code of Conduct and comply with it;
- c) access information about the institution's policies, regulations, services and procedures on the institution's website;
- d) act at all times in accordance with the institution's regulations and procedures.

5. TEACHING, LEARNING AND RESEARCH

5.1 The student can expect the institution to:

- a) have suitably qualified teaching and support staff to provide courses which are well planned, student centred and supported by appropriate up to date materials;
- b) provide accurate information about the teaching and learning timetable;
- c) ensure that staff are punctual for all lectures, seminars, workshops, practical and tutorials;
- d) provide a range of assessment methods and learning activities;
- e) assess work fairly and provide feedback, where applicable;
- f) assist in the arrangements of work placements if these are requirements of the course;
- g) ensure that the students achievements are recorded in a clear and comprehensive way during and at the end of the study;
- h) deal with the student enquiries in a courteous and effective manner ;
- i) provide the student with an opportunity to express his/her views on the learning experience;

- j) provide students with disabilities with tailored support;
- k) provide a schedule of assignments for each unit, where applicable, with published hand in dates and hand back dates;
- l) give regular opportunities to discuss the course and obtain study advice;
- m) give as much warning as possible if the teaching arrangements change. A notice will be put on the relevant classroom door and where possible a group email will be sent out notifying the changes/cancellation and the reason for the above;
- n) provide a learning environment that values the diverse student population that acknowledges and makes use of students' diverse experiences and perspectives;
- o) provide learning and teaching that complies with the institution's Equality and Diversity Policy and Quality standards;
- p) provide details of the marking scheme for assessments, where applicable;
- q) give guidelines for project/dissertation write-up, the marking criteria and what form the supervision will take.

5. 2 The institution will expect the student to:

- a) be an active participant in the learning process, avail himself/herself of the core texts for the classes/learning materials;
- b) attend all timetabled classes within the course/tutorials;
- c) properly prepare for the classes, arrive on time, switch off mobile phone and seek to make the most of this learning activity while respecting the rights of fellow students;
- d) take the opportunities provided to learn how to use the resources in the Library and/or Learning Resource Centre;
- e) complete learning tasks and activities outside of class attendance as specified in his/her unit study guides or set out by the module convenor;
- f) complete/submit all assignments on time;
- g) explain to the module convenor/tutor reasons for any missed attendance;
- h) participate in unit and course evaluations;
- i) inform the module convenor/programme coordinator as soon as possible of any difficulty or illness which might affect his/her studies;

- j) inform the office of any change in circumstances as soon as they occur; follow the study and assessment requirements of the placement organisation, if on placement.

6. ASSESSMENT

The institution must aim at high-quality, fair, thorough and clear assessment procedures and practice.

6.1 The student can expect the institution to

- a) provide conditions for assessment in each module;
- b) provide information on what will happen upon late submission, plagiarism or other examples of cheating;
- c) give feedback on assessment within a reasonable time;
- d) publish details of results as per regulations.

6.2 The institution can expect the student to

- a) hand in the coursework on the given dates;
- b) know the dates and times of the exams;
- c) attend the exams and do not disturb other students;
- d) inform the institution if he/she is suffering from a disability.

7. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

7.1 The student can expect the institution to:

- a) provide information on:
 - statutory student support (e.g. student loans, supplementary grants);
 - the institution scholarship/bursary scheme.
- b) provide advice on how best the student can manage his/her money.

7.2 The institution will expect the student to:

- a) provide full and accurate information on his/her application form;
- b) contact the institution if he/she is experiencing any financial difficulties.

8. LIBRARIES, IT FACILITIES AND SKILLS SUPPORT

The Libraries and the Resources Centre are organised to help students in their studies whilst at the institution, and dedicated areas have been specifically developed to support study and research. The quality of the environment depends heavily upon the attitude and behaviours of users.

8.1 The student can expect the resource centre and Library to provide:

- a) an environment which is safe, comfortable and conducive to study;
- b) friendly, helpful advice and support from the staff;
- c) training sessions in IT and information literacy to help students;
- d) specialist staff available to support the use of resources;
- e) networked IT facilities giving access to a range of software and online databases which support the study and assignment needs;
- f) handouts to help students study and use the resources effectively;
- g) a comprehensive, easy to use library catalogue and website;
- h) a system for reserving books and other materials.

8.2 The institution will expect the student to:

- a) always have his/her Identification Card available and notify the institution immediately if it is lost, stolen or damaged;
- b) comply to the regulations for the use of IT – security policy;
- c) use equipment for study/learning purposes only;
- d) report any equipment damage or faults (including the discovery of computer viruses) and any damage to learning materials;
- e) take good care of books taken on loan and to return same on due date.

9. COMPLAINTS

If a student has a problem, he/she can contact the faculty office. The institution must have a formal procedure for student complaints. The best way to sort out a problem is to take it up as quickly as possible.

9.1 The student can expect the institution to:

- a) raise awareness of its complaints procedures in the student handbook;
- b) treat complaints seriously and fairly;
- c) respect confidentiality at all times;

- d) monitor the number of complaints received and their outcomes;
- e) support and encourage him/her to get help through the students' union.

9.2 The institution can expect the student to:

- a) sort out problems informally if possible;
- b) seek help from either students, the students' union, student services staff, academic staff;
- c) follow the student complaint procedures;
- d) deal with all correspondence from the institution;
- e) inform the institution immediately of any change in address.

10. APPEALS PROCEDURE

The appeals procedure is the method of appealing an academic decision made, for example, by a Board of Examiners. There are very tight timescales for making appeals. Information regarding appeal procedures will be made available in the Student Handbook or online.

11. STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The student should note that there are disciplinary procedures for students who break institution regulations or fail to comply with instructions regarding conduct. Further information will be made available in the Student Handbook or online.

12. AFTER THE STUDENT LEAVES

The relationship with the institution will be one which a student values both during the time at the institution and after he/she leaves.

The student can expect

- a) that he/she will automatically become a member of the Alumni Association
- b) that the institution will send students copies of its alumni magazine, which provides information on developments at the institution, other graduates and any meeting.

13. Reference

While formulating this Student Charter, reference has been made to the following:

1. The Charter for Higher Education, Department for Education
2. Student Charter, University of Ulster
3. Student Charter, University of East London

14. Names and addresses

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