

Walbrook Code of Practice for Quality Assurance (Higher Education)

Chapter 6: Student Support and Guidance

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 We are committed to providing students with a supportive environment for academic, personal and professional development. This chapter sets out our approach to, and mechanisms for, student support and guidance.

6.1.2 This chapter aligns with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality code for Higher Education with particular consideration of the Advice and Guidance section on Enabling Student Achievement and applies to all students at both undergraduate and postgraduate level.

6.2 General Principles

6.2.1 In producing information about our higher education (HE) provision, we are guided by the following general principles:

- i. We recognise the diverse nature of our provision and the importance of providing a fair learning experience;
- ii. That opportunities for student development and achievement (academic, personal and professional) are made available to students, and take into consideration the needs of a diverse student body;
- iii. That the opportunities for student development and achievement offered by us enable students to take responsibility for their own learning.

6.3 Institutional and Strategic Planning

6.3.1 We have an established and robust academic governance structure through which we ensure a strategic and planned approach is taken to aspects of our operation that relate to student support and guidance. The membership of all Boards and Committees is carefully considered to ensure an appropriate balance of academic and administrative staff that is representative of the roles relevant to supporting student development and achievement. Student representatives sit on our deliberative committees and provide valuable input to discussions on the design, development and monitoring of our programmes and systems. The involvement of our students in quality systems is addressed in our Code of Practice Chapter 11: Student Engagement.

6.3.2 We have sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning opportunities and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience.

6.3.3 Our Higher Education strategy provides overarching direction to our activities in the areas of student support and guidance. Our code of practice

and related policies and procedures set out the operational approaches to guide staff and students.

- 6.3.4 Our Quality, Policy and Regulation team gives direction to quality assurance and enhancement approaches within the organisation and fosters a culture of quality enhancement through the Quality Assurance and Enhancement strategies, the identification of good practice and guidance and advice to teams across the organisation.
- 6.3.5 Departments within our organisation consider both formal and informal feedback from students as well as other data sources generated internally and externally (e.g. module level surveys, NSS, HESA, UCAS). This enables us to evaluate the effectiveness of our activities in relation to student support and guidance. A key mechanism for evaluation is programme annual monitoring, which makes recommendations on enhancements to learning, teaching, and student support and guidance. Our committee structure supports and enables the evaluation of feedback and data and puts in place programmes of action.
- 6.3.6 We have clearly defined processes for annual monitoring, syllabus updates, and module and programme review as set out in our Code of Practice Chapter 13: Programme Design, Approval, Monitoring and Review. We take advantage of the academic / practitioner blend of our faculty, as well as our strong links to industry to ensure that module and programme development and review takes account of industry feedback. Student feedback is also sought as part of programme developments and a student representative is invited to sit on all validation and review panels.

6.4 Roles and Responsibilities

- 6.4.1 We make roles and responsibilities for student support and guidance clear to staff through role descriptions, induction, our code of practice and associated policies and procedures which include signposting students and staff to appropriate departments.
- 6.4.2 We understand that participation in higher education provides students with the opportunity to develop academically, personally and professionally. Students have a responsibility to engage with the opportunities provided to them and these expectations are clearly set out in our [Student Charter](#), which is developed in partnership with our student body. Students are also made aware of the importance of our [General and Academic Regulations for Students](#). Programme handbooks, our website and student induction are some mechanisms employed to provide guidance and signposting to appropriate academic and pastoral services.
- 6.4.3 In our collaborative provision arrangements, we seek to enable an equivalent learning experience and our Code of Practice Chapter 14: Collaborative Provision defines and frames this approach. Furthermore, contractual documents make clear roles and responsibilities of collaborative partners for learning, teaching, assessment and student support and guidance.

6.5 Equality and Diversity

- 6.5.1 We are committed to creating a culture in which diversity and equality of opportunity are promoted and in which unlawful discrimination is not tolerated. We recognise the real educational and business benefits of having a diverse community of staff, students, members and subscribers to any service and therefore work towards building and maintaining an environment which values such diversity.
- 6.5.2 Our programmes are offered in a variety of modes to make our higher education qualifications accessible to students with different reasons for, and requirements relating to, the study of higher education.
- 6.5.3 We operate a mature entry policy that recognises that students access higher education at different times of their life / career cycle. Our policies and procedures in respect of the [Accreditation of Prior Learning](#) (both certified and experiential) further recognise the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students entering higher education.
- 6.5.4 Through our Access & Participation Plan we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and access to all degree programmes and to giving all students, regardless of background, the best opportunities to succeed. This commitment not only applies to the successful completion of an award but also to effective student support throughout the duration of their studies and a focus on equal access to progression opportunities enabling students to succeed in their chosen professional careers.
- 6.5.5 We have clear policies and procedures for supporting students with special educational needs as guided by our [Reasonable Adjustments Policy](#). Students requiring assistance in accessing reasonable adjustments can contact student support staff for assistance.
- 6.5.6 We have clear policies in place for data protection and the processing of personal data. Teams with student-facing roles are guided by codes of professionalism and care and sensitivity is taken when communicating confidential information about students to relevant members of staff.

6.6 Information for Students

- 6.6.1 We recognise the information needs of students including providing information that is accurate and appropriate to where in the student life-cycle students are. Our Code of Practice chapter, Chapter 15 Consumer Protection Law and Public Information, articulates our approach to the provision of information. In addition, documents including Programme and Module Specifications, Student and Programme Handbooks and our policies provide relevant information for students at different stages in their learning.
- 6.6.2 Information about admissions to our programmes is set out in our Code of Practice Chapter 2: Recruitment and Admissions to Higher Education. We make information about our programmes and admissions requirements clearly available on our website and through published material in the form of course prospectuses. This enables students to make informed decisions about courses and modes of study appropriate to their needs. Information

on the learning opportunities, including the learning resources available to students is set out in our Code of Practice Chapter 4: Learning and Teaching.

6.7 Institutional Procedures to Facilitate Successful Transition

6.7.1 We recognise the need to engage with students at an early stage to facilitate adjustment to studying at undergraduate or postgraduate level. Students have access to personal tutors, study coaches and support staff to assist with this transition via their online portal.

6.7.2 Students are provided with detailed information at the point of registration and have the opportunity, through induction, to familiarise themselves with their programme of study. For students studying online this information is made available via their virtual learning platform. As part of their induction, students are provided with contact details for both academic and pastoral support services.

6.7.3 We provide a number of Bursaries, Scholarships and Prizes for students, information on which can be found on our public website. Additional information is also available in our [Bursaries, Scholarships and Prizes Policy](#).

6.7.4 Our Support staff can provide advice and guidance to students on modes and level of study, as well as guidance on module choice. Students are encouraged to pace themselves through their studies to ensure they complete their programme of study within the required timeframe and can reach out for additional support with this, from student support services. Guidance on withdrawal from studies is provided in our [Student Withdrawal Policy](#).

6.7.5 Particular guidance is made available to students undertaking a Work-based Learning module with us. This recognises the work-related nature of the module, the different learning environment and the role of other stakeholders including the line manager / supervisor. More information is set out in our Code of Practice Chapter 5: Internships.

6.7.6 We recognise that things can go wrong, and we provide information to students on the processes in place should they wish to make a complaint or appeal as set out in our Code of Practice Chapter 10: Student Complaints and Appeals.

6.7.7 We are a member of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), an independent body established to review student complaints. Our students are able to escalate a complaint or Appeal to the OIA once all internal complaint procedures have been exhausted and if they meet OIA's criteria.

6.8 Academic, Personal and Professional Development

6.8.1 We are committed to providing students with an enabling environment for academic, personal and professional development, without barriers resulting from location of study, protected characteristics, financial or time constraints. Academic skills are developed through learning and teaching and our courses of study are developed in line with external and subject benchmarks to achieve the transfer of knowledge and skills development such as reasoning,

research, literacy, numeracy and communication. Our Code of Practice Chapter 4: HE Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy sets out approaches for effective learning and teaching. The role of assessment is also acknowledged as set out in our Code of Practice Chapter 7: Assessing Learning and Feedback.

- 6.8.2 We recognise the employability needs of our students, irrespective of mode of study or current role outside of study, and takes steps – through workshops, presentations, professional networking opportunities and work-based learning, to encourage students to think about their future career objectives.
- 6.8.3 For students undertaking Walbrook’s programmes, career support is also provided to students through the Online Professional Mentor Scheme, which builds connections between a student and an experienced member of the financial services sector, who is willing and able to assist them in making the transition from higher education to the professional workplace.
- 6.8.4 We support students, throughout their studies, to gain access to information on internship / graduate schemes in order to give their careers a head start. Students also receive guidance on CV / cover letter preparation and assessment centre techniques.
- 6.8.5 We have built strong links with leading companies within various industries who have contributed to the development of qualifications for students. Our links with leading companies enable our students to be kept informed of changes in relevant employment markets. We invite guest speakers to provide career advice and inform students of the skills companies are looking for.
- 6.8.6 Our Careers & Employability Team manages all curriculum activities and other services that intend to enhance career prospects of all students.
- 6.8.7 Through Alumni Services we seek to equip students with the skills and resources to meet their career development needs.
- 6.8.8 We offer a wide range of networking and continuing professional development for all alumni and current students
- 6.8.9 Collaborative partners delivering our programmes are encouraged to link with our professional networks to provide opportunities for students to attend events and / or take advantage of networking opportunities with alumni and Institute members. Overseas students are able to connect, where applicable, with available professional networks that provide networking opportunities and access to key employers in their country.
- 6.8.10 We are committed to providing lifelong learning opportunities for our alumni and members. We provide information about continued professional development professional network events and our executive education through our web portal. Such events provide opportunities for students to network with alumni and members, exchange information and enhance understanding about work-related and current employment issues.
- 6.8.11 We help members meet the challenges of a dynamic industry through the provision of support essential to their personal and professional development.
- 6.8.12 We subscribe to HESA, which promotes the National Student Survey (NSS) and Graduate Outcomes surveys. The outcomes of which are presented in

published datasets, contribute to OfS Student Outcomes dashboards and on the Discover Uni website. Results from these surveys are monitored and considered together with wider feedback from students and employers in the context of the continuing relevance of the curriculum and skills development of those graduating from the programmes. This applies to all students that studied in the UK for a period of 8 weeks or more at any point during their course.

6.9 Staff Development

- 6.9.1 Our staff in a variety of academic, pastoral and administrative roles are involved in the development and achievement of students, whether directly or indirectly. This may also include staff at other organisations e.g. those providing work-based learning / internship opportunities for our students.
- 6.9.2 Staff dealing with any aspect of student support, undergo training that includes information on current practices and reflect differing requirements. The subject matter is discussed at induction; supported through the Staff and Lecturer Handbooks; and followed through in departmental training.
- 6.9.3 We encourage and support our staff to recognise and understand their specific role and responsibilities in enabling student achievement, and we provide them with transparent, effective and appropriate mechanisms for liaising with, and referring, students to the full range of expert sources of information, advice and guidance available.
- 6.9.4 We acknowledge that external bodies provide reference points for good practice when considering development, training or the review of policies and procedures, including the HEA, UCAS, ISE (Institute for Student Employers) and SPA (Supporting Professionalism in Admissions).
- 6.9.5 We have various methods for feedback (e.g. Module Level Surveys, DLHE) from current and former students. Comments relating to student support and guidance are used, together with other mechanisms e.g. staff and lecturer appraisal, to inform approaches to the development of staff.
- 6.9.6 The CPD of academic and administrative staff is covered in more detail in our Code of Practice Chapter 12: Staff Development.

6.10 Learning Resources and Support

- 6.10.1 We develop appropriate learning opportunities to support our programmes of study; these are identified in the programme design and development stage. The diversity of our programme delivery in terms of mode and level necessitates broad provision of learning resources both physical and digital, including core learning material and wider resources offered through our e-library. In addition, the Henry Grunfeld Library at our Lovat Lane building provides students with a physical learning space and access to a professional team of Librarians. The learning resources and support available to students are set out in our Code of Practice Chapter 4: HE Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy.
- 6.10.2 We ensure that physical facilities for face-to-face teaching are appropriate for the needs of the learners including where delivery is managed with partners. See our Code of Practice Chapter 14: Collaborative Provision.

6.10.3 Programme Teams engage with students via the VLE and make use of forums to involve students in discussion and debate. The Learning Resources and Libraries (LR&L) team is professionally qualified and provides support and training on the use of appropriate technologies, information literacy and navigating the resources available through the VLE. The LR&L team supports a programme of on-going development and enhancement in learning technologies and online learning pedagogies.

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