

Procedure 5.2 Welfare Services and Pastoral Care					
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Procedure Owner : Principal / CEO

- ❖ This procedure is shared with our students and/or can be obtained:
 - on our website <https://docklandsacademy.co.uk/policies-and-procedures>,
 - on the desktops of all computers in the library on the top floor,
 - by emailing us at info@docklandsacademy.co.uk.
- ❖ Also, our students are informed about the main aspects of the procedure in the Student Handbooks, Induction Seminar and Learning Agreement.
- ❖ The procedure is reviewed and monitored on a regular basis for currency and fitness as part of our Annual 1.9 Policy and Procedures Review.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The Academy takes its responsibility to student welfare very seriously. This document outlines the roles of welfare staff to ensure that every member of the Academy receives the utmost support to achieve to the best of their potential thus, the most recent guidance from the Government published document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' last updated in January 2021 (Post EU Exit), has been applied in this procedure.
- 1.2** Student welfare services are available to all students who may be experiencing problems such as difficulties with coursework, problems settling in, homesickness, bullying, financial difficulties, health and wellbeing issues, family problems and any forms of abuse. The Academy is committed to providing comprehensive and confidential services to our students. There are several referral points within the Academy where students can have assistance on their different issues and matters.
- 1.3** The Academy administration is aware of the importance of providing a high-quality educational experience for all its students and of providing appropriate advice to guide students for the future. The Academy offers a range of services for students and can assist with a variety of issues relating to students' individual needs and requirements. These include:
- giving impartial course guidance
 - providing general financial advice and information about accommodation
 - keeping students informed about travel assistance and other dispensations available
 - contacting external agencies on behalf of students
 - providing general careers advice and guidance
 - arranging external counselling support and guidance when necessary



2. Welfare service

The student welfare service operated by the Academy has the aim of being:

- professional and informative
- able to respond to enquiries by telephone, email, letter within two working days (in case of emergency request immediate response)
- delivered in accordance with equal opportunities and other relevant legislation
- customized to suit our students
- supportive to students in finding, understanding and using information
- inclusive in providing advice that is confidential, impartial, objective, relevant and current
- supportive, friendly, respectful and non-discriminatory

3. Expectations of students

The Academy expects students to respect our staff, environment, resources and equipment; to provide as much relevant information as possible to ensure we can provide an effective and appropriate service; to contact us promptly with any queries or concerns; to attend appointments promptly and to let us know if there are any problems with our service so we can work to improve it.

4. Undertakings about student welfare

4.1 Confidentiality

In order to provide the best possible service, we keep a record of student details, learning record and contacts with us. It is kept strictly in line with GDPR and our Procedure 1.7 and can only be accessed by authorized staff or representatives who need to see this information as part of their work. We will never pass on any information without agreement.

4.2 Equal Opportunities

The Academy welcomes enquiries from all students regardless of age, ethnic origin, disability, gender, marital status or civil partnership, sexual orientation, spent convictions, background or religion (see also Procedure 1.5 *Equal opportunities*).

4.3 Health and Safety

All services will be delivered in line with the Academy policy and procedures on Health and Safety.

4.4 Feedback, comments and complaints

To help us continually improve our service and address a wide range of student needs we value student suggestions, comments, compliments or complaints. These can be anonymous if preferred. If students wish to comment, praise, or make a complaint, relevant forms will be provided. All complaints are dealt within the strictest of confidence.

5. Practical details of student support offered by the Academy

5.1 Academy library

The Academy library stocks a number of publications related to coursework, journals, dictionaries, and journals. The library operates a lending system for some books and audio visual materials. Students are additionally encouraged to join the local public library, which is just a few minutes` walk from the Academy. Restricted internet access is available for free both at the Academy and public library (see Procedure 5.8)

5.2 Photocopying and printing facilities

Students may use the photocopy and print documents at the Academy at a nominal cost.

5.3 Travel information

On arrival at the Academy, students are advised on how to use public transport, how get concessions on tickets and how to plan journeys using local routes. In some situations, there may be up to 30% discounts available to full-time students. Full time students can apply for an Oyster card in order to benefit from discounts. The Academy is a registered institution on the TFL database.

5.4 Books and stationery

The Academy provides students, where applicable, with the relevant course materials. However, students are also expected to purchase their own textbooks from the Academy or elsewhere. The textbooks and other course materials form an essential part of class work and must be brought to classes. Students are expected to provide their own stationery.

5.5 English language support

Students who wish to enrol on full-time courses whose English requires improvement are encouraged to attend language classes prior to continuing with their studies.

5.6 Student drop in service

Students will be able to come and meet the Welfare Officer at any time during office hours every day. This drop-in service is to provide advice about all aspects of student welfare. Subjects covered could include Oyster Card information, job search assistance, advice and support over personal issues, advice about professional help from external bodies and where/how to access a GP, additional academic support, career support, work placement and work-related issues and advice on completing application forms.

5.7 Out of Hours Support

Should any student need support outside of the welfare office normal office working hours they will be able to contact an officer on the following number: 07545638680. This arrangement will be regularly monitored and reviewed in accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults or any changes within the Academy. It may also receive amendment following any issues or concerns raised about safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults within the Academy.

6. Information, advice and guidance

6.1 This is a confidential, impartial and objective service designed to help students make an informed decision if they want to find out how to improve their job prospects, get skills or qualifications or to get the most out of their current job.

6.2 Academy Services

- support during the programme and afterwards to assist the student's learning, personal development and career
- advice and services to enable students to learn effectively should they have a disability or additional requirements
- information on courses and opportunities
- information on job applications and interview support
- a signposting and referral service to other providers and sources of information if we are unable to provide the information or support the student's needs

7. Safeguarding Procedure

7.1 The Academy is committed to ensuring that all students at the Academy may study in a risk and abuse free environment. As part of its Health and Safety commitment, the Academy has recognised the necessity of formalising its stance in terms of safeguarding and who it considers to be a 'vulnerable adult' OR English students over 16 years old. A definition of a 'vulnerable adult' is:

"A person who is 18 years of age or above, and who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself, or unable to protect him/herself against serious harm or serious exploitation."

7.2 Though not specifically covered by the above reference, due to the language limitations and difficulties faced by some students at the Academy, all aspects of safeguarding will apply to students studying here. The safeguarding policy carried out by the Academy will cover all students studying English as a foreign language and all students who may find themselves in situations of vulnerability due to being away from their home countries.

Forms of abuse may include:

- Physical abuse, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanction
- Sexual abuse, including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or was pressured into consenting; in addition to the further information and guidance set out in the legislation 'Sexual Offences Act 2003'
- Psychological abuse, including emotional abuse, threats of harm, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment or verbal abuse
- Financial or material abuse, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- Discriminatory abuse, including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment
- Honour-based abuse, including any form of abuse or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community.

7.3 All Academy staff and students are required to take shared responsibility for the safeguarding and safety on Academy premises. Academy staff is in a position of trust, in particular those staff who teach, support, guide or in any way interact with students, young people and vulnerable adults visiting the Academy. As a result of this, the Academy has quality systems in place whereby all employees must submit a DBS certificate.

7.4 The Student Welfare Officer ensures that there are appropriate support services in place. The role of the Student Welfare Officer (in relation to safeguarding) is:

- to receive information about events that are planned in the Academy that may involve young people or vulnerable adults, and plans that indicate how safeguarding will be covered
- to receive information from any staff, volunteers, children, parents or carers who have child safeguarding concerns and record it
- to assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying and obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate
- to record statements from any member of staff who feels that a young person or vulnerable adult has indulged in inappropriate behaviour.

- to refer, where necessary, any and all information to relevant statutory safeguarding agencies or the police
- 7.5 Any incidents occurring within the Academy of suspected abuse or inappropriate behaviour involving staff or students, should be reported immediately to the Student Welfare Officer or the Principal.
- 7.6 The Academy will protect its students from access to extremist materials by ensuring the following:
- **Online safety:** Filters will be in use to restrict extremist websites. Induction will include use of internet with reference to Prevent Duty and accessing of extremist material on personal emails. In addition to these provisions, the Academy will also ask students to sign a declaration on Online Safety, which outlines the key actions a student should be aware of or follow to ensure online safety is maintained. Necessary or further guidance can be drawn from the UK Safer Internet Centre.
 - **Materials displayed:** Student handouts/notices posted on campus, especially those not in English will be checked.
 - **Outside speakers / sub-lets:** Outside users of the campus will be checked by the Prevent Officer as required through enquiries and researching internet data such as websites, prior to collaboration.

8. Student Sickness Procedures

8.1 Reporting requirements

8.1.1 Students must call and inform the Academy the day they are going to be absent **before 9.00 am** (phone: 0207 515 9695). Students can also email to inform the Academy on the day they are going to be absent **before 9.00 am**. info@docklandsacademy.co.uk

8.1.2 The Information Desk will complete a form recording all absence and will inform the student that they must complete a self-certification form upon return to the Academy. If the student has been absent for less than 2 consecutive expected contact days, they can complete the form with no medical evidence required. If the student has been absent for more than 2 consecutive expected contact days, they must provide a medical note to support their certificate and absence. A Welfare Officer will be called to discuss all self-certificates submitted of this nature.

8.2 Sickness recording

All student absences are recorded on the Welfare database. The information desk will pass on all information received at the end of the day to Compliance. Compliance will record on the physical records, soft records, and welfare database all absences which have been self-certified and were under seven consecutive days. Compliance will pass on all self-certificate forms which have been submitted over seven days and have supporting medical certificates to the Welfare Office. This is for additional monitoring.

8.3 Abuse of the self-certification system

All students who submit a self-certification form will have the number of forms submitted recorded on the welfare database by the Welfare Officer. Should this number reach more than 3 in an academic year, the welfare office will be informed by the information desk and the student will be contacted to meet a Welfare Officer to discuss their repeated absences. Should the Welfare Officer conclude that this student is abusing the system, their details will be passed onto management and upon receipt of their next self-certificate they will receive a written warning.

8.4 Welfare monitoring

8.4.1 Any student who submits a medical certificate for a period of absence over 2 consecutive expected contact days will be added to the welfare monitoring list on the welfare database.

Students can also be referred to welfare monitoring by their lecturer/a member of Academy staff if the lecturer raises a concern about their welfare.

8.4.2 Any student who has had a large period of missed absences and has been to attend a student review meeting can be referred for welfare monitoring by the Academic Department. The Welfare Officer will meet all students on the welfare database monitoring list as regularly as deemed necessary for any particular case. Welfare monitoring is provided to help and support students through difficult situations and liaise between academic, compliance and external bodies to ensure the welfare of the student.

8.5 Compassionate leave

8.5.1 Students can make a request for emergency or compassionate leave from their studies using the request form located at registry. Should a student request this, the Welfare Officer will meet with the student, take notes and any evidence and pass findings and a recommendation to the Academic Department. Upon receipt of this request the Principal will make a decision and will inform the concerned Welfare Officer of the result. The result will be passed to the student by the Welfare Officer within 3 working days.

8.5.2 Should emergency or compassionate leave be granted, a letter will be written and filed with the dates of the student's absence. Their record of attendance will be frozen from the leave start date and recommence on the return date. Upon the return date the student will be added to the welfare database on the monitoring list. Welfare will initiate the first monitoring session within the first week of the student's return and facilitate for extra academic support and make any other arrangements deemed necessary to support the student.

8.6 Long Term Conditions

8.6.1 During the application process any students who declare themselves as having any long term condition which may affect learning during their studies will be identified.

8.6.2 These students will be added to the welfare database monitoring list and the welfare office will initiate a meeting to offer support and liaise between the academic department, examination office and external sources to make any special arrangements and ensure the welfare of the student.

9. Related Documents

9.1 Policies

- 2 Academic Management
- 3 Teaching Learning Assessment
- 4 Admissions
- 5 Student Support, Engagement and Learning Resources
- 7 Information

9.2 Procedures

- 1.5 Equal Opportunities
- 1.9 Review and Revision of Policies and Procedures
- 2.13 Access and Participation Statement
- 3.1 Expectations of Staff in Teaching Delivery
- 3.3 Encouraging Independent Learning
- 3.4 Tutorial Arrangements
- 3.8 Feedback to Students

- 4.1 Enrolment and Selection
- 4.3 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- 4.6 Student Induction
- 4.13 Transfers Suspensions Withdrawals Closure and Change of HE Provision
- 4.14 Fees Charges and Financial Support
- 5.1 Student Code of Conduct
- 5.3 Equality, Diversity and Special Needs
- 5.7 Reviewing Learning resources
- 6.15 Safeguarding
- 6.16 Prevent Duty (Racist, Discriminatory, Abusive and Extremist Behaviour)
- 7.1 Review and Sign off PI
- 7.4 HE Public Information

9.3 Terms and Conditions

9.4 External Reference Points

- Office for Students (OfS) Requirements and Guidance at <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/>
- UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/admissions-recruitment-and-widening-access>
- UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Assessment at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/assessment>
- UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Concerns, Complaints and Appeals at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/concerns-complaints-and-appeals>
- UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Course Design & Development at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/course-design-and-development>
- UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Enabling Student Achievement at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/enabling-student-achievement>
- UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – External Expertise at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/external-expertise>
- UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Monitoring & Evaluation at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/monitoring-and-evaluation>
- UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Learning and Teaching at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/learning-and-teaching>
- UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Student Engagement at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/student-engagement>
- Higher Education Code of Governance (Committee of University Chairs, December 2014) at <https://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CUC-HE-Code-of-Governance-publication-final.pdf>
- Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) principles of Good Governance for Independent Training Providers at <https://www.aelp.org.uk/media/2595/code-of-governance-final-sept-2018.pdf>
- OIA The Good Practice Framework for Complaints and Appeals at <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/resources-and-publications/good-practice-framework/>
- OIA The Good Practice Framework: Handling Students Complaints and Academic Appeals at <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/1859/oia-good-practice-framework.pdf>
- Pearson Recognition of Prior Learning Policy at https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/policies-for-centres-learners-and-employees/Recognition_of_prior_learning_and_process_policy.pdf



- UKCISA Code of Ethics at <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Membership/Codes-of-practice/Code-of-ethics>
- Equality Act – 2010 at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Related QAA guidance: Understanding assessment: its role in safeguarding academic standards and quality in higher education: [Sept 2012]