

The London Institute of Banking & Finance 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 all our deliberative committees including the Board of Governors. 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 Institutional Plans and strategies provide overarching direction to our activities in the areas of student support and guidance. We make our Institutional Plan available internally and

summaries of the quarterly updates are published on our website. However, more specific strategic direction relating to student support and guidance is provided in our [strategies](#). 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 Department 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 (eg 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, annual syllabus update, 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. Our HE Advisory Board is made up of industry professionals, as well as members of our Faculty and Professional Services teams. This Board also helps to shape the curriculum offered. 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.
- 6.5.5 Our programmes are offered in a variety of modes [full-time, part-time, distance and flexible learning] and in different geographic locations to make our higher education qualifications accessible to students with different reasons for, and requirements relating to, the study of higher education.
- 6.5.6 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.
- 6.5.7 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.
- 6.5.8 We have clear policies and procedures for supporting students with special educational needs as guided by our [Reasonable Adjustments Policy](#).
- 6.5.9 The allocation of a trained staff member as the main point of contact for a disabled student will ensure that the student's needs are sufficiently addressed and brought to the attention of colleagues as appropriate.
- 6.5.10 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 appropriate to where the student is in their period of study (prospective, current or former student). Our approach to the provision of information is captured in Code of Practice [Chapter 15: Public Information](#). Trained staff members are able to provide appropriate information to students. 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.

- 6.6.3 Our information provision takes into account the diversity of the student body including those with disabilities. Our publicity, programme details and general information are accessible to the wider student community, and include explanations of how the entitlements of disabled students are met. Any disabled student requesting information is provided this in a format that is suitable to their needs.
- 6.6.4 Disabled students receive programme information within an inclusive learning plan at the start of a programme of study. This sets down the arrangements and / or adjustments made to enable a disabled student to commence and complete the period of study

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. In acknowledgement of the diversity of provision offered by us in terms of mode, level and location of study, care is taken to ensure that students engage with their learning from the outset.
- 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 via distance-learning, this induction is made available via the course Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). The Programme Team is central to providing early engagement with the student and setting out expectations relating to a course of study, in particular at a point of progression [i.e. from one level, or stage to another].
- 6.7.3 A number of first year scholarships are available to recognise and reward high academic achievement by students for prior learning. In addition a number of first year scholarships are available to students who have already studied with us. These are awarded upon commencement of studies to the highest achieving students of our Certificate and Diploma in Financial Studies qualifications. Prizes are also available in subsequent years to not only recognise and reward high academic achievement in the preceding academic year, but to recognise student engagement. Additional information is available in our [Bursaries, Scholarships and Prizes Policy](#).
- 6.7.4 The Peer Mentor component of our Mentor Scheme acknowledges the desire of our students to speak to a member of their peer group rather than Faculty or staff members. Peer Mentors are tasked with hosting regularly scheduled Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) aimed at helping newly enrolled students to make friends on their course and adapt to and integrate into higher education life. This encourages and facilitates greater social engagement across the wider student body, particularly for those students who are not based on campus. [Please see 6.8.3 for additional information on the Mentor Scheme.]
- 6.7.5 Our HE Programme Teams are in regular contact with students and can provide advice and guidance on modes and level of study, as well as guidance on module choice. Communication is also made where a student appears to be struggling as indicated by, for example, poor attendance, poor assessment performance or failure to submit / sit an

assessment component. Our HE Programmes Team will contact students who have failed to register by the deadline to ensure they complete their programme of study within the required timeframe. Guidance on withdrawal from studies is provided in our [Student Withdrawal Policy](#).

- 6.7.6 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: Work-based and Placement Learning.
- 6.7.7 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.
- 6.7.8 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 to the OIA once all internal complaint procedures have been exhausted.

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: Learning and Teaching 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: Assessment.
- 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, work-based learning, and subscriptions to *Financial World* Magazine to encourage students to think about their future career objectives. The Careers & Employability service is available to conduct 1-2-1 career coaching sessions with students, designed to develop a comprehensive career plan for individual students, regardless of their mode of study.
- 6.8.3 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.
- 6.8.4 We have built strong links with key employers within the financial services industry, who have contributed to the development of qualifications for the student body. Our links with the industry 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 in the banking and financial services sector are looking for.

- 6.8.5 Our Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) refers to curriculum activities, and services provided by the Head of Careers & Employability, intended to enhance the career prospects of our students. The CEIAG of all students is managed by the Careers & Employability service.
- 6.8.6 Through curriculum activities, Alumni Services and organisational links with the financial services industry, we seek to equip students with the skills and resources to meet their CEIAG needs. Students at collaborative partners will have comparable opportunities, and we seek to share good CEIAG practice with such partners.
- 6.8.7 We offer a wide range of networking and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities to our members that can support their studies and ongoing professional development.
- 6.8.8 Information and resources regarding careers is provided through our website. The site contains resources and useful reference materials about:
- i. Career opportunities and potential employers;
 - ii. Through our Jobs Board;
 - iii. E-newsletters containing details of CPD opportunities; and
 - iv. Career evenings and events and webinars.
- 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 CPD, professional network events and our executive education through our *Financial World* magazine, e-newsletters and 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 recognise that our prime contribution in terms of careers advice and guidance for students already employed within the industry is best rooted in our CPD provision. We help members meet the challenges of a dynamic industry through the provision of the support essential to their personal and professional development. Details of CPD opportunities and career management and development are found on our website.
- 6.8.12 We subscribe to HESA, which promotes the National Student Survey (NSS) and Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) surveys, the outcomes of which are presented in the programme Key Information Set (KIS). 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.

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 (see our Code of Practice Chapter 11: Student Engagement). 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, location and level necessitates broad provision of learning resources both physical and digital, including core learning material and wider resources offered by *KnowledgeBank* – 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: Learning and Teaching.
- 6.10.2 We ensure that physical facilities for face-to-face teaching are appropriate for the needs of the learner 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 **myLIBF** 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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