



## **Code of Professional Practice**

This Code of Professional Practice applies to all members of Student Services staff <sup>1</sup>.

### **Professionalism**

Student Services staff accept a general responsibility to:

- reflect upon the standards of professional conduct and appearance appropriate to their roles and seek to maintain these in all circumstances;
- act in the best interests of the client, while respecting institutional policies, statutory and legal requirements and the legitimate interests of others;
- recognise the power and influence that may come with their role and ensure that it is not used inappropriately;
- be alert to ethical dilemmas and potential conflicts of interest and seek guidance when they arise;
- share professional knowledge and skills and contribute to the professional development of colleagues;
- follow the latest available guidance and best practice in undertaking their duties, including that promulgated by relevant professional bodies and associations (for example, UUK, AGCAS, BACP, AMOSSHE, NASMA, UKCOSA).

### **Professional Development**

In discharging their professional functions, staff providing information, advice, guidance or counselling shall:

- accurately represent their areas of expertise, education, training and experience when so requested;
- recognise the limits of their job descriptions, qualifications and competence, seeking guidance and/or making appropriate referrals when faced with situations that fall outside their remit and/or experience;
- familiarise themselves with the Student Services' Staff Development Policy and actively seek to promote their own professional development, upgrade their skills and keep themselves informed of recent developments in their fields;
- in relation to their area of expertise, keep themselves informed of any developments in statutory and case law, regulations and institutional policies.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this code, the Student Services are the Careers Centre, the Dean of Students' Office and the University Counselling Service.

## **Equal Opportunities**

In their dealings with clients and colleagues, those providing information, advice or guidance shall:

- act in good faith and with consideration, fairness and objectivity;
- recognise their own cultural and personal values and prejudices, and be aware of how these may affect their interactions with other people;
- be aware of, and show appropriate sensitivity to and respect for, other cultures and value systems;
- work within the framework, and adhere to the principles, of the University's<sup>2</sup> equal opportunities policies and statements;
- Adhere to the Student Services guidance on Confidentiality and Data Protection.

## **Professional Conduct**

In their dealings with clients, those advising clients shall:

- ensure that clients are fully aware of the limits of their knowledge and skills;
- make clear to clients the differences between information provision, advice and counselling and ensure that their input is consistent with their role;
- recommend other services as appropriate;
- provide clients with the information they need to make informed choices or decisions;
- be aware of any actual or potential conflict of interest in any personal relationship with a client or with any member of UEA staff and seek advice as necessary from their line manager or head of service;
- accept only gifts (including hospitality) of nominal value and only where they do not seem intended to influence the manner in which professional responsibilities are exercised, while remaining sensitive to the varying significance of gifts in different cultures. Seek guidance from a more senior manager in any circumstance where it may seem appropriate to accept a gift of more than nominal value;
- ensure that clients are fully advised of complaints procedures as appropriate.

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<sup>2</sup> The University aims to create an atmosphere of learning that is tolerant and respectful of differences and encourages all members of the University to value diversity. The University of East Anglia endeavours to ensure that no student or applicant for study will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, marital status, race, colour, ethnic origins, sexual orientation, disability, political or religious belief or any other criterion accepted as irrelevant by the University Council. It will seek to ensure fair treatment for all students in access to learning opportunities, teaching, assessment and support and welfare services.

## **Client Responsibilities**

Staff have a right to expect that clients seeking assistance shall:

- accept that they need to take responsibility for themselves and that an adviser or other service provider can only assist in addressing their concerns;
- be prepared to take an active role in exploring the options and opportunities offered by the student services and their staff;
- keep appointments and notify the relevant service if unable to attend;
- provide relevant documentation as requested;
- treat staff and other clients with respect and courtesy and in accordance with University Regulations;
- not demonstrate any discrimination against staff or fellow clients on the grounds of age, gender, marital status, race, colour, ethnic origins, sexual orientation, disability, political or religious belief;
- if wishing to complain, address complaints appropriately, either informally by speaking or writing to the appropriate member of staff, the head of service or the Dean of Students, or formally in accordance with the University's complaints procedures.

## **Confidentiality**

All users of the Student Services must have confidence that any personal information given to Centre staff is treated with sensitivity, care and discretion in accordance with the Students Services *Confidentiality and Data Protection Statement*.

## **Record keeping and contact**

Student Services staff:

- should record service use in order to monitor demand for services and to identify any practical or policy issues related to the provision of those services;
- are responsible for ensuring that statistical records given to third parties are produced in a form that ensures that individuals cannot be identified;
- must ensure that the management of the records they keep is in compliance with Data Protection legislation and good practice;
- needing to contact clients are responsible for confirming with the client the appropriate contact details. When making telephone contact through a third party, staff must ensure they make no reference to the purpose of the call.

The UEA Student Services thanks the University of Leicester for permission to adapt and develop its policy in this area.

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