

STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY

THE STUDENT CHARTER

INTRODUCTION

The University's Student Charter has been produced jointly by the University and the Students' Union. It provides students with details of what they can expect from the University in terms of the learning opportunities and related services which we offer together with the main services provided by the Students' Union. It also sets out, where appropriate, what is expected from students so that a positive learning partnership can be established and developed, resulting in both an enjoyable and a successful learning experience.

The Charter is seen as an evolving document which will continue to be developed in the light of comment and experience. It is not intended to be contractually binding but aims to offer details of how the student-university partnership can work in practice.

The Charter applies to all students undertaking University validated awards regardless of where the awards are delivered. It is intended to cover the needs of all our students whether they be part-time or full-time, postgraduate or undergraduate, on or off-campus or in-company.

The Charter covers the following areas and full details are available on the University's web site at <http://www.staffs.ac.uk> under Student Information:

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Further general information about the University, our programmes and courses and our support services is also available on the same web site (<http://www.staffs.ac.uk>).

In addition, further information, help and guidance can be obtained from:

- Faculty/School Offices:

FACULTY/SCHOOL	LOCATION
Arts, Media & Design	Flaxman Building, College Road, Stoke
Business School	Brindley Building, Leek Road, Stoke
Computing, Engineering & Technology	Octagon Building, Stafford Brindley Building, Leek Road, Stoke
Health	Blackheath Lane, Stafford Brindley Building, Stoke The Shropshire and Telford Hospitals Robert Jones & Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital, Oswestry Brindley Building, Leek Road, Stoke
Law School	Leek Road, Stoke
Sciences	Mellor Building, College Road, Stoke

- Staffordshire University Lichfield Centre, The Friary, Lichfield

- The Information Centres on the first floor of the Flaxman Building, College Road, Stoke-on-Trent and the ground floor of Beacon Building, Stafford.
- The Students' Union Advice Centres in the Students' Union building, College Road, Stoke-on-Trent and the Students' Union office on the ground floor of the Beacon Building at Stafford

1. ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

1.1 General

You can expect:

- To receive accurate and relevant information, advice and guidance in order to make informed judgements and decisions
- To receive information, advice and guidance as completely as possible when first contact is made
- To be treated in a non-judgemental, impartial and professional manner
- To receive information, advice and guidance in a welcoming environment

1.2 Student Recruitment

You can expect:

- To receive information and advice on a wide range of full-time, part-time and postgraduate study programmes
- To receive advice on routes into Higher Education
- To be referred to other appropriate sources of information, advice and guidance, both internal and external
- To receive information, advice and guidance via the telephone, email or by post if you are unable to come into the University
- Despatch current prospectuses and other relative literature within seven working days
- Your personal data to be kept in accordance with the University registration under the Data Protection Act

You are expected to:

- To provide an appropriate level of relevant information
- To take ownership of information, advice and guidance offered
- To keep appointments made on your behalf

1.3 University Information Centre

You can expect:

- To receive information, advice and guidance via the telephone, post or e-mail if you are unable to come into the Information Centre
- To be referred to other sources of information, advice and guidance where appropriate, including the Students' Union Student Advice and Information Centre
- Your personal data to be kept in accordance with the University registration under the Data Protection Act
- Process applications to the Access for Learning Funding within 20 working days of receipt of completed application form and all supporting documents.

You are expected to:

- Provide accurate information at all times
- Register each academic year prior to the commencement of your course in that year
- Inform the Information Centre of changes of address or other facts given on your registration form

1.4 Students' Union Advice Centre

You can expect:

- The completion of any agreed follow up work within 5 working days
- The provision of a wide and comprehensive range of up-to-date information leaflets

- To be referred to outside organisations where appropriate
- To receive assistance via the telephone, post or e-mail if you are unable to come into the advice centre
- To receive support and training, if appointed, as a student academic representative on University/Faculty/School Boards and Committees

You are expected to:

- Behave in accordance with the standards of behaviour detailed in the Charter and the University's Student Behaviour Policy
- Provide accurate information at all times
- Abide by the Students' Union confidentiality policy if a conflict of interest occurs

2. ADMISSION PROCEDURES

2.1 General

Before you apply you can expect:

- Clear and accurate information about the University and our programmes of study at the time of going to press
- Despatch of current prospectuses and course information normally within 7 working days of receiving your request
- To receive updates of information on major changes to programmes of study as appropriate to your application

When you apply for a place you can expect:

- Your application to be handled efficiently and fairly
- To be given an opportunity to visit the University and discuss your requirements before you need to reach a final decision on accepting a place
- Any letter of enquiry requesting further information to be answered normally within 7 working days of receipt

- For full-time undergraduate awards, a decision on your application to be despatched to UCAS, normally within 7 working days of receipt or within 7 working days of an interview

You are expected to:

- Provide full and accurate information on the application form
- Keep the University informed of any change of address or change in your situation
- Attend an interview if requested to do so and, if you are unable to do so, to contact the University as soon as possible prior to the date of interview to arrange a mutually convenient time
- Reply to any offer of a place from the University within the period specified in the letter because failure to do so may result in the offer being withdrawn
- Inform the University as soon as possible, in writing, if you decide that you are no longer interested in pursuing your application and/or accepting a place
- Pay all fees properly due to the University at the required times

2.2 Disabled Students Applications and Admission

You can expect:

- To receive information prior to application and admission relating to the support and/or facilities which we can offer you in an appropriate format
- Advice and assistance with application for funding from your Local Authority and Social Services Department for additional allowances for which you may be eligible or for the cost of extra support provided by our support worker scheme
- Your application to be considered on the basis of your academic or other qualifications for entry
- An opportunity for your needs to be assessed and advice given to you

You are expected to:

- Provide all relevant information about your additional needs at the time of application
- Negotiate any reasonable adjustments with the University
- Provide appropriate additional information to the University upon request

3. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 General

You can expect us to provide:

- Appropriate and up-to-date materials and facilities to support your learning including the opportunity to engage in a Personal Development Planning programme
- Encouragement and empowerment for you to become independent learners
- Accurate information about the teaching and assessment timetable
- Appropriately staffed programmed classes and as much notice as possible of any alterations to the published timetable
- The return of marked assignments in reasonable time (standards will be published by Faculties)
- Accommodation and facilities that are fit for purpose and comply with all Legislative requirements
- Details of the structure and content of all programmes of study and how they will be taught and assessed
- A fair assessment process
- All examination papers and coursework (where appropriate) to be marked anonymously
- A policy on the publication of assessment results

You are expected to:

- Attend timetabled classes, hand work in on time and notify your tutor(s) if for any reason you are not able to keep up your attendance
- Consult appropriate staff and complete any necessary paperwork if you change modules/options
- Adhere to the assessment timetable
- Respond to reasonable requests from University staff without delay
- Make appropriate use of the facilities provided

3.2 Study Support

You can expect to:

- Have a named personal tutor whose responsibility it is to provide you with general support and guidance
- Be provided with virtual and electronic support whether you are studying on campus or at a distance
- Have the times indicated to you at which your tutor will be available for consultation
- Be provided with opportunities to assess your progress during programmes
- Receive notification of progress and credits obtained at least on an annual basis
- Have a personal University e-mail account allocated to you when you enrol

You are expected to:

- Make contact with your tutor(s) whenever you require help and at other times when requested
- Participate actively in any tutoring system
- Check your University e-mail at least once per week
- Respond to requests to meet with University staff

3.3 Employability

You can expect :

- Have the opportunity to gain work/community-related experience through the wealth of curriculum based and extra-curricular opportunities at the University
- Enhance your professional skills relevant to your discipline and transferable skills (such as problem-solving and analytical skills)
- To develop the ability to make and implement realistic, well-informed decisions about your career
- To engage in a Personal Development Planning programme
- To be encouraged and supported in considering starting and running a business as a genuine career choice

You are expected to:

- Actively utilise the positive opportunities provided to you by the University to enhance your employability
- Present yourself appropriately as representatives of Staffordshire University

3.4 Student Feedback

You can expect to:

- Be provided with opportunities to express your views on your learning experience on at least an annual basis, both formally and informally, and to receive a response to your views where appropriate
- Be provided with opportunities to make suggestions on how we can improve

You are expected to:

- Be an active participant in the learning process and in the improvement of that process

- Take the opportunity of completing student questionnaires at the end of modules and awards including the University's Student Viewfinder Survey and the National Student Survey

4. LEARNING/INFORMATION SUPPORT SERVICES

You can expect:

- Access to central, library and information services and facilities over extended hours and for 7 days per week during term time
- Help, information and guidance to services through individual support, tutorial sessions or printed leaflets/ guides
- Personal IT accounts giving access to a range of facilities including email, the Internet and WorldWide Web, central file storage, printing, learning environments and library records
- Provision of a range of printed, audio visual and electronic resources to support learning and, where possible, the exploitation of new technology to enable access to resources on and off campus
- Provision of a loans service of learning resources and equipment
- Provision of a welcoming and appropriate environment in which to undertake learning and study

You are expected to:

- Abide by the appropriate University Regulations including the University's e-mail policy
- Respect the rights of users to access and use the resources and facilities available
- Support the maintenance of an appropriate learning and study environment
- Utilise the facilities responsibly
- Keep your IT account details private to prevent unauthorised use of facilities or abuse of your account
- Take responsibility for all items on loan to you and the due dates

for returning/reviewing these items

5. SPORTING FACILITIES

You can expect:

- Access to a range of indoor and outdoor sport and recreational facilities at the Stoke and Stafford Campuses

You are expected to:

- Utilise the facilities responsibly

6. UNIVERSITY STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

6.1 General

You can expect:

- The services to be open during advertised times
- Fully qualified and experienced staff to be available to help you.

6.2 Careers Centres

You can expect:

- Friendly, helpful and welcoming staff working to nationally recognised and regularly inspected quality standards
- Experienced and qualified advisers available to help you
- A booking system for individual careers guidance
- Advocacy and action on your behalf where appropriate
- Up-to-date careers information in the careers libraries
- A well maintained website
- Links with employers
- Regular vacancy information before and after graduation

You are expected to:

- Make every effort to attend pre-booked appointments or careers events and give as much notice as possible in the event of cancellation
- Give feedback, when required, about your experience of the service so that evaluation and any improvements can be made

6.3 Catering

You can expect:

- Reasonably priced quality food and drink from the catering outlets
- To have opportunities to make comments and suggestions for changes and improvements to the service
- An extensive range of good quality and Fairtrade food and drink available at appropriate times

You are expected to:

- Use the catering facilities responsibly

6.4 Childcare

You can expect:

- Professional qualified and experienced core team of childcare staff offering care and education for children from birth to five years
- Advice and support on childcare related issues
- Ofsted registered childcare provisions at the Stoke and Stafford campuses
- Quality, affordable childcare and education
- Nursery places to be allocated fairly through an application made directly to the Childcare Services

You are expected :

- To ensure all invoices are paid within the due period
- To give four weeks written notice to cancel any bookings you no longer require

- To pay a retainer fee when you are not using the Service during the vacation periods
- To give feedback as required about your experience of the service in order for us to evaluate and make any improvements as required

6.5 Counselling

You can expect:

- Any counselling provided usually to be confidential – for further details please see www.staffs.ac.uk/uniservices
- To be offered an initial appointment (at the Stoke and Stafford campuses) usually within 5 working days
- To be referred to another support agency where appropriate

You are expected to:

- Make every effort to keep appointments and give as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend an appointment.

6.6 Employability

You can expect to :

- Have the opportunity to gain work/community-related experience through the wealth of curriculum based and extra-curricular opportunities at the University
- Enhance your employability skills relevant to your discipline and transferable skills (such as problem-solving and analytical skills)
- Develop the ability to make and implement realistic, well-informed decisions about your career
- Engage in a Personal Development Planning programme
- Be encouraged and supported in considering starting and running a business as a genuine career choice

You are expected to:

- Actively utilise the positive opportunities provided to you by the University to enhance your employability
- Present yourself appropriately as representatives of Staffordshire University

6.7 Faith

You can expect dedicated staff to:

- Help you to contact other members of your faith community within or outside the University
- Be available for help with spiritual matters, hospital visiting, help and counselling in situations of bereavement or spiritual crisis
- Help to provide a link to local faith communities, especially for international students
- Be available to offer support to those of a religious faith and those of none
- Provide a quiet space for personal reflection at the Stoke and Stafford campus

6.8 Financial Services

You can expect:

- The services to be open during advertised times
- A variety of ways to make payments of monies due to the University
- Advice and assistance in matters relating to monies owed to the University carried out by experienced staff.
- Emails sent to your University email account to advise you of outstanding monies once they become overdue

You are expected to :

- Make payments when they are due
- Notify us of any payment difficulties as early as possible

- Respond to our communication relating to overdue monies in the time indicated.

6.9 Financial Support

You can expect:

- Access to Learning Funds support to be widely advertised and your applications to be dealt with promptly in accordance with the University's procedures
- An opportunity to pay your fees and other bills by instalments by direct debit for no extra charge

You are expected to:

- Produce a student registration card and, if required, confirmation of attendance, when collecting any cheques from the Information Centre
- Meet the application deadlines and produce the required documentation when applying for Access to Learning Funds and other forms of financial support
- Reply to any communications from the University regarding applications for financial support

6.10 Health

You can expect:

- Appropriate confidentiality

You are expected to:

- Register with a local general practice at the time of enrolment if appropriate
- Use the Health Service responsibly
- Comply with all appropriate University health and safety policies, guidelines and procedures

6.11 Student Enabling Centres

You can expect:

- A formal assessment of your study needs
- Support in obtaining personal and academic support and equipment

You are expected to:

- Provide appropriate, timely information about your support needs
- Inform the University when your circumstances change
- Accept responsibility for your role in managing your support

6.12 Student Residential Accommodation

You can expect:

- An offer of accommodation to be made if you have applied by a specified date and put the University as your first choice
- To receive confirmation of your offer when your results are known
- To receive a copy of the Agreement between the University and the student if you occupy University managed accommodation
- An up-to-date list of private sector accommodation available on our online searchable database
- Assistance in finding accommodation in the private sector; such accommodation to fulfil all legal requirements
- Advice on legal rights as tenants (in conjunction with the Students' Union)
- A prompt response to queries and requested repairs

You are expected to:

- Pay all licence and associated fees as soon as they become due
- Behave in an understanding and responsible manner whilst living in an environment shared with other students
- Respect the rights and feelings of neighbours and others when living in accommodation in the local community

- Comply with the University's regulations regarding student accommodation including the use of IT.
- Leave the facilities in the condition in which you find them
- Vacate your accommodation when required to do so

7. STUDENTS' UNION

7.1 Membership

You can expect:

- An automatic right to membership of the Students' Union
- To have the right not to be a member of the Union and not to be unfairly disadvantaged in exercising this right

You are expected to:

- Collect a joint University/Students' Union membership card at the time of your enrolment/registration if you wish to become a member of the Union

7.2 Representation

You can expect:

- The opportunity to stand in the full and part-time officer elections
- The opportunity to be part of various union standing committees
- The opportunity to vote in elections and referenda

You are expected to:

- Participate in the democratic processes of the Union, including elections and referendum
- Abide by the Constitution and Policies of the Union

7.3 Trading

You can expect:

- Equal access to all venues and social space
- An emphasis on value for money
- A friendly, efficient service
- A safe and clean environment
- A responsive entertainment programme in the venues
- A varied product range in the shops including fair trade products
- A varied range of food and drink in the venues

You are expected to:

- Maintain a clean and safe environment
- Behave in a responsible manner whilst in venues and abide by the University and Students' Union Policies
- Have an active input into all aspects of the entertainment programme

7.4 Student Activities

You can expect:

- Information about the Union clubs and societies and other student activities such as "Try it you might like it" to be available from the elected Student Officers, Student Activities Co-ordinators, and during Welcome Week
- An open service available to you at all sites via the Student Activities areas
- The Union to negotiate facilities and provision for student sport, seeking the most acceptable costs, times and standard
- The Union to represent the interests of sporting students both within the institution and to external bodies including the British Universities Sports Association and the National Sports Governing Bodies
- The support and advice of staff in organising and developing activities through staff time, IT and communication resources and financial subsidy

- The opportunity for volunteering positions within the University and the local Community with support from the Community Action Coordinator

You are expected to:

- Maintain a responsible level of behaviour in representing your Union and University
- Follow departmental regulations, as laid down by the Student Activities Department, University and Students' Union policies

7.5 Feedback and Complaints

You can expect:

- To be able to make suggestions or provide feedback at any time, be it through the Unions' Suggestion Scheme or by meeting with full time officers or staff, or through the University Complaints Procedure
- All constructive points to be responded to and wherever possible, the Union to strive to improve its services as a result
- Students' Union staff and the Union's Executive Committee to strive to resolve the complaint
- Staff to record all complaints received in a log, which will be monitored by the appropriate service manager
- To have the opportunity, in the first instance, to discuss the situation with the appropriate service manager/supervisor
- To be advised of the Union's formal complaints procedure and have this available at all Union Information Centres
- To be assisted by Union Staff and Full Time Officers in using the University's complaints procedure

You are expected to:

- Access the Students' Union complaints procedures when necessary

- Take the opportunity to make suggestions and provide feedback

8. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

You can expect:

- To be treated with respect and in a reasonable manner by the University at all times
- Staff to be polite and courteous at all times

You are expected:

- To respect students and staff and behave in a reasonable manner at all times
- Not to bring yourself, the University or others into disrepute
- To be polite and courteous to staff and other students at all times

9. REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

You can expect:

- To have access through the University's web site to Student Information which includes details of all the University's regulations and procedures
- To receive a copy of Faculty or specific course regulations at the start of each academic year

You are expected to:

- Make sure that you have read and understood all appropriate University and Faculty regulations and procedures
- Abide by all relevant University and Faculty regulations and procedures

10. SUGGESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

You can expect:

- A responsive and effective University complaints procedure

- The opportunity to make suggestions through University-wide and/or Faculty or Service based suggestion schemes

You are expected:

- To make proper use of the University's complaints procedure
- To try and resolve complaints at an informal stage if possible
- To take the opportunity to make suggestions

August 2010