Learning Partnership Statement

Welcome to the University of Bolton. We want our students to be successful on their programmes of study, enjoy their studies and their time at the University, and make the most of opportunities available to them. We actively encourage staff and students at the University to work together to achieve this aim, and this partnership statement helps towards this. The Statement sits beside the Bolton Student Charter which was launched in January 2013. It describes the service the University aims to provide for you (whether you are full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, or on a short course) and the responsibilities we ask you to exercise in return. The Statement contains basic information and gives sources of further information. It covers the following six areas which we see as central to the provision of a rewarding and high quality student experience:

• pre-entry, application, admission and arrival
• organisation of programmes of study
• teaching, learning and assessment
• student support
• student/client representation, feedback and complaints procedures
• programme completion.

This partnership statement was developed by staff and students at the University and is based on the belief that the University is an educational and social community in which all members have expectations of each other. We believe that all students and staff will benefit from stating the major areas in which these apply, though we acknowledge that in some areas they can be more precisely stated than in others. We hope you find the Statement useful and informative, and we will strive to enhance the service we offer in all the areas covered by it. If you would like to comment on this partnership statement, please email LearningPartnerships@bolton.ac.uk.

Professor Rob Campbell, Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic), welcomes you to the University of Bolton and to our learning partnership.

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Pre-entry, application, admission and arrival

What the University seeks to do

- provide information on all its full-time, part-time and short course programmes, its admissions policies and its services for students, which is accurate, up-to-date and in an accessible format
- deal with individual enquiries courteously, speedily and efficiently, producing decisions on applications as soon as possible
- arrange open days and/or interviews to enable individuals to find out more about the University and its programmes of study
- require that all programmes have clear admissions criteria, in accordance with the University’s admissions policy and guidance, and that the criteria are communicated to applicants
- provide for the particular needs of international students at recruitment, pre-departure and arrival
- provide pre-application information and guidance for disabled students
- encourage access from groups which are under-represented in higher education as far as possible by both normal admissions policy and through special access and outreach activities
- provide guidance on sources of information relating to student financial support
- monitor admissions policies, processes and outcomes to ensure that they are meeting the objectives of widening access and providing equal opportunities
- provide guidance, assistance and information to help students find residential accommodation
- provide guidance and information about locally available childcare facilities, where applicable
- provide an efficient and speedy admissions system which treats you courteously and enables you to begin your studies without unnecessary delay
- provide clear criteria on the payment procedures for tuition fees including the provision of payment by instalment facilities
- provide a student diary or its equivalent for all students when they enrol for the first time
- require all programmes to provide applicants with clear guidance relating to additional course costs not currently covered by the tuition fees (e.g., core text books, course related equipment, specialist clothing required, cost of exhibitions)
- deal with individual enquiries courteously, speedily and efficiently, producing decisions on applications as soon as possible
- arrange open days and/or interviews to enable individuals to find out more about the University and its programmes of study

What the University asks you to do

- provide full and accurate information as required when you apply for a place on a University programme (at the main campus or with a partner institution)
- keep any appointment for interview, or contact the University beforehand if you are unable to attend
- respond within the specified time period to indicate if you wish to accept or reject an offer of a place or risk the withdrawal of the place
- take up a place offered if you accept it
- bring all necessary documents and payments (or proof of payment by a sponsor) when you come to enrol at the University
- adhere to the requirements concerning the payment of your tuition fees and Halls of Residence fees, when responsible for these, and pay all fees by the due date
- follow the University regulations, rules and contractual requirements if you decide to stay in University managed accommodation
- follow the University’s equal opportunities policy
- read, and follow, the University’s health and safety policy and information
Organisation of programmes of study

What the University seeks to do

- provide a Student Handbook, a Programme Handbook and other sources of information to every student which will provide details of:
  - staff responsibilities
  - the structure and organisation of the programme and how it will be timetabled
  - academic content
  - assessment and progression requirements and assessment regulations
  - attendance and performance requirements
  - personal tutoring, guidance and counselling arrangements
  - careers education
  - student representation
  - where to find out about resources and facilities available to students from Academic Groups and Central Services
  - peer mentoring
- continually strive to enhance the quality of its programmes of study
- provide learning resources to support programmes of study and strive to improve them within available financial resources
- provide you with stated periods of notice for changes to timetables, cancelled classes and rescheduling of content
- offer you the opportunity to express your views on your programmes of study through a variety of methods, give consideration to your views and, where feasible, implement suggestions that will enhance the student experience
- ensure consideration of ethical, environmental, equal opportunities issues, employability and personal development in programmes of study in accordance with University policies in these areas

What the University asks you to do

- read all information on your programme of study and familiarise yourself with all regulations and requirements
- attend regularly and comply with programme regulations and procedures
- provide up-to-date records of your term-time and home addresses so that you can be contacted quickly and easily
- inform the appropriate person(s) of any difficulties you are having in meeting the requirements of your programme
- respond to all requests for information relating to assessment, study choices and progression
- inform the appropriate person(s) in writing if you are absent, or wish to withdraw from the programme or suspend your studies
- use designated channels of communication to help ensure that communication between you, staff and peers is effective
Teaching, learning and assessment

What the University seeks to do

- provide authoritative teaching by appropriately qualified staff and continually seek to enhance the standard of teaching
- provide accommodation and learning resources to support the learning process and to assist you in meeting the requirements of your programme of study
- provide clearly defined systems of tutorial support for each programme of study
- provide appropriate supervisory and other support for the particular needs of research students
- ensure that teaching and learning environments comply with health and safety regulations
- provide assistance with study skills and learning support
- require staff to treat you with courtesy and respect
- provide fair and equitable assessment procedures which are described clearly and which are subject to internal and external scrutiny
- provide you with constructive feedback on marked coursework as quickly as possible (normally within three weeks of the approved handing in date)

What the University asks you to do

- familiarise yourself with all the teaching, learning and assessment requirements of your programme of study
- attend classes regularly and punctually in accordance with attendance requirements
- submit coursework in accordance with established deadlines and procedures
- use University facilities and resources carefully and responsibly
- follow the University’s and/or partner institutions’ requirements regarding health and safety, as appropriate
- behave courteously and responsibly to fellow students and to staff so that the teaching, learning and assessment processes can work effectively
- participate actively and diligently in programmes of study as required by the curriculum and the teaching and learning methods chosen for its delivery
- ask for clarification (e.g., lesson content, assessment requirements) and support with your work if you need it
Student support

What the University seeks to do

- provide information and guidance on access, accommodation, health and safety, equal opportunities, welfare, educational matters, careers and financial matters
- provide advice and guidance for disabled students, liaising with their academic subject groups and external agencies where appropriate
- provide you with a catering service which offers a range of food at reasonable prices, available during the working day (where off-campus partners do not have a catering service on their premises they will inform students of where they can access catering services)
- provide you with recreational facilities, including a range of individual and group sports and social activities
- provide support for your religious and spiritual needs in line with the culture of the country in which you are studying
- make available information and support relevant to the particular needs of international students
- provide a confidential personal counselling service and assistance with educational and personal difficulties
- treat all your personal information in confidence, within the context of University regulations and legal requirements
- provide access to appropriately resourced library and computing facilities (with published opening times and details of facilities) which enable you to meet the requirements of your programme of study

What the University asks you to do

- familiarise yourself with the services and facilities offered by the University, use them responsibly and comply with the policies and regulations which govern their use, including those on health and safety
- keep appointments, and provide the necessary information in an appropriate form in order to enable the University to deal with particular concerns
- comply with University policies and regulations which affect the general welfare of students and staff
- comply with the financial and general regulations of the University
- take responsibility for your part in the processes of academic, pastoral and personal counselling by regular communication with appropriate staff
- assist you to improve your English language proficiency, information technology awareness and study skills
- offer guidance on the use of all learning support facilities and other facilities which you use
- require all programme teams to document and operate arrangements for your academic and personal support
- provide guidance, information and signage to help you locate and use the University’s educational and social facilities
Student/client representation, feedback and complaints procedures

What the University seeks to do

- provide for student representation on the Board of Governors, Senate, Senate Committees, Course/Programme Committees, Equal Opportunities Committee and other representative bodies
- encourage you to take up positions as representatives on institutional committees and groups, encourage your participation in the Students’ Union and the development of its service to you
- actively seek the views of all students, including those of the Students’ Union, take their views into account at all levels and take appropriate action where necessary
- require all programmes of study to have methods of obtaining student feedback on teaching and learning, assessment, programme operation, student support and the learning environment, to act upon it as appropriate and inform you about actions taken as a result of student feedback
- require all support services to monitor your views, and those of other clients, on their services and to act upon the feedback as appropriate
- implement a University-wide student feedback questionnaire on all aspects of academic programmes and support services and inform students about actions taken as a result of their feedback
- operate a simple, confidential and accessible student complaints procedure (with an initial reply to a complaint within 10 working days) for all matters relating to academic programmes, services and facilities, and publish the procedure via the University website and the student diary
- operate a University academic appeals procedure under the authority of Senate and provide procedures and codes for the resolution of issues relating to equal opportunities and discipline
- provide advice from Student Services in the Student Centre, and permit representations from representatives and officers of the Students’ Union when considering complaints or appeals
- keep employers informed about the University’s programmes of study, where appropriate
- implement a University-wide student feedback questionnaire on all aspects of academic programmes and support services and inform students about actions taken as a result of their feedback
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- keep employers informed about the University’s programmes of study, where appropriate

What the University asks you to do

- find out what forms of representation and feedback mechanisms exist and use them responsibly
- if elected as a student representative, consult widely with fellow students so as to represent their views fairly and respond to requests for feedback on the University’s programmes of study and support services
- raise any concerns with the appropriate person informally and, if necessary, make formal complaints in writing via the approved procedures
- read the University’s documentation on mitigating circumstances and, where possible, follow the procedures if you feel that you have mitigating circumstances
- read the University’s documentation on academic appeals and only lodge a request for an appeal on the approved grounds of personal mitigating circumstances where you were unwilling or unable to make your circumstances known to the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, administrative error or irregularity of procedure
- respond appropriately to the outcomes of University procedures and to the decisions of procedural committees / panels
Programme completion

What the University seeks to do

- offer careers guidance and information to assist you to find employment or go on to further study
- provide timely publication of your assessment results and confirmation of your awards, provided you have complied with all University regulations including payment of fees
- provide relevant academic information on your behalf to assist you in progressing to employment or further study
- respond appropriately to reference requests
- offer you the opportunity to attend an awards ceremony if you have successfully completed a final award
- provide the appropriate certificates as proof of final awards you have obtained and any necessary transcripts of your achievement
- provide ways of maintaining contact with you once you have left the University and provide you with news and information about the University

Please stay in touch ...

register with the University of Bolton Alumni and Friends Association (BAFA)

What the University asks you to do

- make use of the careers guidance service and attend any interviews or briefing sessions arranged for you
- provide up-to-date records of your term-time and home addresses so that results and other information can be forwarded to you
- seek the permission of staff before you use them as educational referees
- reply to correspondence from the University about results, award ceremonies, first employment/further training and other matters following completion
- comply with all University regulations and financial requirements before you complete your programme
Further guidance

University of Bolton’s DVD - Essential Information for New Students
The Bolton Student Charter

Pre-entry, application, admission and arrival

- Academic Office
- Student Centre
- University website
- The University of Bolton prospectuses for full-time and part-time students
- Leaflets on accommodation and student finance matters
- Pre-arrival guidance and information for disabled students (available online via the University website) available
- Pre-arrival guidance and information for International Students (available online via the University website)

Organisation of programmes of study

- Student Handbook (available online via the University website)
- Course and Programme Handbooks (available from the University website and Moodle)
- The University of Bolton Academic Regulations, policies and procedures (available online via the University website)

Teaching, learning and assessment

- Student Handbook (available online via the University website)
- Course and Programme Handbooks (available from the University website and Moodle)
- The University of Bolton Academic Regulations (available online via the University website)
- The University of Bolton Examination Regulations (available online via the University website)

Student support

- The Student Diary or its equivalent (issued at enrolment by Student Services)
- Publications of the Student Centre
- Library help guides and booklets
- Course and Programme Handbooks (available from the University website)
- Students’ Union Publications (available from the Students’ Union)
- International student handbook (given at induction and orientation)
- Student Handbook (available on the university website)
- University Information Security Policy

Student/client representation, feedback and complaints procedures

- The Student Diary (issued at enrolment by Student Services)
- Student Handbook (available online via the University website)
- Course and Programme Handbooks (available from the University website)
- The University of Bolton Examination Regulations (available online via the University website)
- The University of Bolton Student Complaints Procedure (available from the Student Centre, the Students’ Union and online via the University website)

Contributors

Thank you to the following staff and students who contributed to the development of this Learning Partnership Statement.

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