

# INFORMATION ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION PROVISION POLICY



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<b>Summary:</b> This document defines the University's responsibility with regards to providing information about its provision to public audiences, prospective students, enrolled students, and graduates. It is informed by Part C of the UK Quality Code. Minor revisions were approved by Senate in May 2015. Referencces to 'Learning Network' replaced by 'Canvas' in August 2017	

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## INFORMATION ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This Policy sets out the University's requirements with regard to procedures and practices relating to information published in electronic or printed form. The information covered refers to academic programmes, services, corporate strategy and policies. It does not cover letters, verbal communication, presentations, teaching & learning materials, or staff recruitment advertisements.

Its aim is to ensure that the quality of information available to both internal and external stakeholders is accurate, fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy. Moreover, it serves as a document to guide staff practice, both so that responsibilities are clear, and that staff may know who to contact in relation to particular queries.

This Policy sets out how, through the Indicators of Sound Practice, the University can demonstrate it meets the Expectation of the UK Quality Code Part C: *Information about Higher Education Provision*. It also incorporates the requirements of the HEFCE Wider Information Set.

### 2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION

The following Principles are from the UK Quality Code Part C: *Information about Higher Education Provision*:<sup>1</sup>

**Principle 1:** *Information that higher education providers produce about themselves and the learning opportunities they offer should be clear, timely, current, transparent, and focused on the needs of the intended audiences.*

**Principle 2:** *Higher education providers are responsible and accountable for the information they produce about the higher education learning opportunities they offer. At the same time, providers have autonomy regarding the mechanisms and media they choose to communicate this information.* **Principle 3:** *Information should be available and retrievable where intended audiences and information users can reasonably expect to find it. The format and delivery of information should take account of the access requirements of a diverse audience.*

**Principle 4:** *Information produced by higher education providers should offer a fair and accurate reflection of the higher education learning opportunities they offer.*

The above principles are embodied in the **Expectation** set out below.

***'Higher education providers produce information for their intended audiences about the learning opportunities they offer that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.'***

Appendix A details those with responsibilities for each of the different areas of public information stated in this policy. Responsibility for producing and updating information may in practice be the individual(s) listed or their representative(s).

The tone and complexity of the information published shall be appropriate for the audience for which it is intended. Guidance from Marketing may be sought in this regard.

Information published on the University's website shall be clearly signposted and be located where a user would expect to find it.

Information shall be made available in alternative formats where practicable to cater for the access requirements of a diverse audience.

Any links to external material shall be checked regularly to ensure they are current and live.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Quality-Code-Part-C.pdf>

All arrangements with collaborative partners shall make clear the responsibilities they bear in relation to public information, and how the University may support them in this responsibility. Further details on this can be found in the *Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision Policy*.

### **3. INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDER**

#### **3.1 Indicator 1**

*Higher education providers publish information that describes their mission, values and overall strategy.*

The University shall publish on its website information that is of interest to the public at large. This information shall describe the nature of the University and enable external audiences to develop an accurate understanding of the institution.

This information shall be published in formats that suit both the University and the intended audiences' needs and purposes and shall be determined by the Senior Management Team. At a minimum, it shall include the following:

1. Mission and Values
2. Management and Governance
3. University of Winchester Strategic Plan, and other supporting strategies
4. Winchester facts and figures
5. Academic quality, including information on collaborative provision

This information shall be found in the 'About us' section of the University website. It shall also be made available in hard copy upon request.

This information shall be reviewed regularly and in line with agreed schedules for updating institutional level information, strategies and policies.

### **4. INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS**

#### **4.1 Indicator 2**

*Higher education providers describe the process for application and admission to the programme of study.*

The University shall publish on its website the latest information relating to admissions and applications and shall include entry requirements and full details of fees payable for the programmes of study and any additional costs associated with them.

At a minimum, it shall include:

1. Admissions policies (undergraduate and postgraduate) (including RPL)
2. Processes for the accreditation or recognition of prior learning
3. International student admissions criteria (eg English language requirements)
4. Fees, bursaries, scholarships and financial support available and eligibility
5. Additional costs (eg field trips) and general living expenses
6. Course entry requirements (as agreed by SMT)

Any programme specific entry requirements shall be detailed on the University's course pages and shall adhere to those detailed in the Programme Specification.

This information shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the owning bodies in the University.

#### **4.2 Indicator 3**

*Higher education providers make available to prospective students information to help them select their programme with an understanding of the academic environment in which they will be studying and the support that will be made available to them.*

In order that prospective students are able to make an informed decision about their proposed programme, the University shall publish the following information, as a minimum, on its website:

1. Prospectuses
2. Links with industry, business and professions, including links with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs), service users for professional programmes, and employers
3. Opportunities for work-based learning and study abroad
4. Practice placement opportunities, if appropriate.

Updating the content of this information shall be done in line with existing University processes and normally on an annual basis.

The Courses pages on the University's website shall give prospective students an up to date, accurate and fair representation of:

1. Course leaflets
2. Entry requirements
3. Programme content
4. Learning, teaching and assessment methods
5. Any professional accreditation
6. Careers and employability
7. Results of external surveys, via UNISTATS (see section 5 below)
8. Any other programme specific information

This information is supplemented by Programme Specifications. These are updated annually by Programme Leaders and placed on the University's webpages.

Results of internal student surveys shall be available internally only.

The University website shall also contain up to date and accurate information to aid a prospective student's understanding of the learning environment and support available to them on commencement of study with the University. This information shall cover, as a minimum:

1. Student support services, including Academic Skills support
2. Careers
3. Library and IT resources
4. Faith at the University
5. Campus information (including accommodation, Student Union, leisure facilities, catering etc)

Prospective research students shall be able to access information on the webpages about prospective supervisors, and the experience of being a research student at the University.

## 5. KEY INFORMATION SETS (KIS)

The University will ensure the accuracy of the data submitted annually to HEFCE/HESA relating to Key Information Sets (KIS). The University will, on an annual basis, undertake a review of:

1. Undergraduate programmes meeting the criteria for requiring a KIS record
2. Accommodation costs of both institution owned and privately provided student accommodation for the next academic year
3. Module level Learning, Teaching and Assessment KIS data for the current academic year. This shall be in line with the appropriate sections in the module descriptor
4. Courses with professional accreditation and the nature of the type of accreditation this offers students on completion of their studies

The KIS widget will appear on the course pages of the website and shall also include information on student satisfaction (from the NSS) and graduate employment (from the DLHE).

It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader to ensure that all information required for KIS is made available in an accurate and timely manner. Deans of Faculty are responsible for signing off this data.

Faculties shall ensure that all KIS information and is reviewed prior to being submitted to HEFCE/HESA is accurate by checking their courses on the Unistats website and the KIS widgets displayed on the University course pages, following their publication in September each year. Any inaccuracies or changes to information displayed under KIS must be communicated to the University's Academic Data Quality Co-ordinator.

Further information and guidance for the completion of the KIS Templates shall be published on the University Intranet.

## 6. INFORMATION FOR CURRENT STUDENTS

### 6.1 Indicator 4

*Information on the programme of study is made available to current students at the start of their programme and throughout their studies.*

The following information shall be provided for new students prior to their arrival at the University both in hard copy and electronic format on the University website:

**Welcome Pack** which shall contain:

1. general information relating to registration and enrolment, timetables and ID cards
2. Arrival times and arrangements for Welcome Week
3. Introduction to the Faculties
4. Information on support services (Student Services, IT and Library, Personal Tutoring, Faith at the University, volunteering)
5. Student Union information
6. P&G Wells Booksellers
7. Study Skills
8. Sports facilities
9. Campus Map
10. Separate information for Distance Learning students

A **Student Handbook** shall be provided for new students on arrival at the University and shall be available both in hard copy and, where appropriate, electronically on the University website. This shall provide an overview of the academic and personal support available to students and where to access that support. As a minimum it shall include information relating to (with signposts to where further information may be found):

1. Faculties and academic related information
2. Semester dates
3. Policies, guidelines and regulations
4. Personal tutoring
5. Relevant Professional Services
6. Academic matters (including a hard copy of the relevant academic regulations)
7. The Student Charter

PGR students shall be provided with equivalent information in the form of a *PGR Student Handbook*, which shall be approved by RDQC on annual basis. All other information specific to postgraduate study and research, including administrative and supervisory arrangements shall be made available either electronically on the University intranet or in hard copy.

Current students on taught programmes shall be able to access programme and/or module level handbooks or the equivalent. These shall be made available electronically on Canvas pages for the programme and shall relate to the current year. Hard copies will be available upon request.

Information given to students in the form of Module and Programme Handbooks shall follow the guidance provided in the Programme Leaders Handbook (available on the Intranet) in current operation.

Programme Specifications shall also be published in line with the guidance in Appendix B to this Policy. These will be made available to current students and shall be updated on an annual basis in preparation for programme delivery in the following academic year. Current Programme Specifications shall be published on the University's website under 'Academic Quality' and on programme Canvas pages.

The latest versions of Module Descriptors shall also be made available for current students by programmes. Module Descriptors shall be publicly available upon request.

The Examination Timetable and procedures shall be made available to current students electronically or in hard copy in a clear and timely manner by the University's Registry.

Opportunities for study abroad, work based learning or volunteering shall be made available to current students by programmes, working with central University departments where appropriate. This shall be up to date and accurate and include information on who to contact and the administrative processes to follow in order to take up these opportunities.

Regulations and policies relating to academic study at the University shall be made available electronically on the University website under Freedom of Information>Public Documents or in hard copy. Current students shall be made aware of the location of these documents via the Student Handbook, PGR Student Handbook, and programme handbooks/programme Canvas pages.

## **6.2 Indicator 5**

*Higher education providers set out what they expect of current students and what current students can expect of the higher education provider.*

The Student Union shall work with Academic Quality and Development to aid awareness of the Student Charter. The Student Charter details the responsibilities of students, as well as the nature of the partnership between students and the University.

Current students shall easily find clear, up to date and accurate information on the Intranet on the following:

1. Student advice and support
2. Money and finance

It shall be made clear to students how the University engages with its students at a Programme/Faculty/University level. This shall include:

1. Arrangements for gathering and responding to student feedback
2. How student representatives are elected
3. Making external examiners report available to relevant current students
4. Minutes of Programme/Faculty/University level committees with student representation

The University shall ensure that regulations and procedures relevant to a student's studies are made available and this information shall include:

- Interruption of studies
- Extenuating Circumstances required for seeking an extension or deferral of assessments
- Academic Misconduct
- Academic Appeals
- Complaints
- Research Ethics
- Student conduct
- Professional conduct (where relevant)
- Fitness to Study

## **7. INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS ON COMPLETION OF THEIR STUDIES**

### **7.1 Indicator 6**

*When students leave their programme of study, higher education providers issue to them a detailed record of their studies, which gives evidence to others of the students' achievement in their academic programme.*

On completion of their studies, students will be provided with a record of their academic achievement in the form of an Award Certificate and a European Diploma Supplement or HEAR. The exception to this is students on PGR programmes with no modular elements, who receive an Award Certificate only. Exit Qualifications and a HEAR or European Diploma Supplement shall be supplied to eligible students who exit their programme before completion.

The University Registry shall have clear and documented processes for archiving and retrieving academic records, and for verifying the identity of those who seek additional or replacement transcripts. The *Records Management Policy* should also be consulted.

## **8. INFORMATION FOR THOSE WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY**

### **8.1 Indicator 7**

*Higher education providers:*

- *set out their framework for managing academic standards and quality assurance and enhancement and describe the data and information used to support its implementation*
- *maintain records (by type and category) of all collaborative activity that is subject to a formal agreement.*

Information relating to academic standards and quality shall normally be made available on the University's Intranet, but shall also be available externally upon request. However, information of specific interest to an

external audience or that which requires access from an external source shall be made available on the University website, at the discretion of the Director of Academic Quality and Development.

The University Quality and Standards Handbook, available virtually on the Quality Office pages on the Intranet, shall be reviewed on a regular basis and updated in line with external reference points including the UK Quality Code. It is available in hard copy upon request.

Information held on the Quality Office Intranet pages shall, at a minimum, include the following:

1. Programme Approval and Withdrawal
2. Assessment, Moderation, and Exam Boards
3. External examining
4. Annual monitoring
5. Collaborative arrangements
6. Interim Validation and Programme Amendment processes
7. Constitutions of the relevant committees at the University with the responsibility to integrate assurance and enhancement
8. Other academic related regulations, policies and procedures

Information relating to the institutional responsibilities for quality assurance shall be made publicly available. A Register of Collaborative Provision shall be publicly available on the Internet, as will the University's *Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision Policy*. Details of the following processes and procedures shall also be made available on the Internet: External Examining; and Programme Approval. The following documents shall also be publicly available via the Quality Office's Internet pages: the latest version of the University's QAA Institutional Report; the PSRB Register; and Programme Specifications. Outcomes of other external reviews shall be made available to those with a specific interest.

Information on the University's committee structure, agendas, papers and minutes of meetings shall be made available in the Sharing and Collaboration area of the Intranet. Committee papers shall also be stored on the Internet, for public access, where appropriate.

Data and management information to be used in the effective management of standards and quality shall be available at a minimum as follows:

- The annual monitoring process (see relevant section of the Quality Office Intranet pages)
- Bespoke quantitative data (available from the Planning Office)
- Student Survey data (NSS), Postgraduate Surveys (PTES/PRES) will be distributed to departments via the Planning Office

All management information shall be used in line with the University policies on Data Protection.

## APPENDIX A: RESPONSIBILITIES FOR INFORMATION

The table below identifies the areas of information made publically available and who has responsibility to ensure that the information is accurate, up to date and accessible.

Type of Public Information	Responsibility
<b>Information for the public about the higher education provider</b>	
News stories, home page content	Head of Marketing
Institutional level information	Relevant content owners
<b>Information for prospective students</b>	
Undergraduate and Postgraduate Admissions Policies	Dean of Admissions/Director of RKE
International Students Admissions Criteria	Dean of Admissions
Fees, Bursaries, Scholarships and financial support	Director of Student Services
Information relating specifically to postgraduate research and the RKE Centre	Director of RKE
Course level entry requirements (UG and PGT)	Dean of Admissions (following agreement by UMG and SMT)
Course level entry requirements (PGR)	Research Degrees Quality Committee
Prospectus	Vice-Chancellor – advised by senior officers of the University
Accessibility of course pages on website	Head of Marketing
Content of courses pages on website	First DVC
Accessibility of Programme Specifications	Director of Academic Quality and Development
Content and updating of Programme Specifications	Programme Leaders
Information about Faculty staff, programmes, facilities, etc	Deans of Faculty
Links with employers and industry, including opportunities for work-based/placement learning	Head of Marketing with programme teams and Head of Careers
Opportunities for Study Abroad	Director of Internationalisation
Register of Collaborative Provision	Director of Academic Quality and Development
Student Support	Director of Student Services
Careers	Head of Careers
IT Resources	Director of Information Technology Services
Library	Librarian
Religion and Faith	Dean of Chapel
Campus Information (relating to facilities, catering, accommodation etc)	Director of Estates and Facilities Services
Open Days	Dean of Admissions
Key Information Sets	Academic Registrar
Information provided by Collaborative Partners	Director of Academic Quality and Development
<b>Information for current students</b>	
Welcome Pack	Academic Registrar
Student Handbook	Academic Registrar
Programme and/module handbooks	Programme Leaders/team, with oversight from FADC; for Collaborative Provision oversight is provided by the ALOs/ALTs
Programme Specifications and module descriptions	Programme Leaders and team (with Quality Office), as appropriate

Exam Timetables and procedures	Academic Registrar
Study Abroad and Work Based Learning	Programmes/Departments/Faculties/Director of Internationalisation
Academic Regulations and associated policies	Director of Academic Quality and Development
Postgraduate research and the RKE Centre	Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange
Student Support and Guidance	Director of Student Services
Financial Support	Director of Student Services
Extenuating Circumstances	Director of Academic Quality and Development
Academic Appeals	Director of Academic Quality and Development
Academic Misconduct	Director of Academic Quality and Development
Student Complaints	University Ombudsman
Student Academic Representation (STAR)	Student Union
External Examiner Reports	Programme Leaders/team
Programme Committee minutes	Programme Leaders/Programme Administrator
Faculty Academic Development Committee minutes	Chairs of FADCs
Student Charter	Student Union, in partnership with AQD
<b>Information for students on completion of their studies</b>	
Diploma Supplement/HEAR	Academic Registrar
Policies for archiving and retrieving student academic records	Academic Registrar
<b>Information for those with responsibility for academic standards and quality</b>	
All information	Director of Academic Quality and Development

## **APPENDIX B: UPDATING OF PROGRAMME SPECIFICATIONS/MODULES**

### **Purpose**

Once initially approved through formal validation or revalidation procedures, all programme specifications for undergraduate and postgraduate provision shall be updated on an annual basis. The purpose of annual updating is to ensure the continued accuracy of the programme specifications for the benefit of stakeholders (including students and prospective students).

### **Requirements**

All programme specifications shall follow the requirements of the template specified within the Quality and Standards Handbook, under 'Programme Approval and Withdrawal'

(<https://intranet.winchester.ac.uk/information-bank/quality-office/SitePages/Home.aspx> )

Programme Specifications shall be posted on the 'About Us' public webpages of the University and should be made available to current students on relevant programme Canvas (or equivalent) pages. Programmes should also make available the most up to date copy of the validated modules on programme Canvas pages. This process is supported by arrangements Quality Office supports.

### **Process**

The Quality Office shall email Programme Leaders to send their updated Programme Specifications for graduating students and (later in the calendar year), current students. Programme Specifications shall be posted on the public webpage by Quality Office.