

## STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMMITMENTS <sup>1</sup>

### SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL CHANGES

#### General changes

The document has been reviewed and is re-issued without amendment.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This Statement summarises the responsibilities and commitments of students and staff which are essential for the continued success of the University of Hertfordshire community<sup>2</sup>. It should be read in conjunction with the Student Code of Conduct<sup>3</sup>.

## 2 SCOPE

The Statement applies to all members of staff and all students, regardless of their mode of study, who are following taught programmes or programmes of research training which lead to awards of the University and which are provided at the University of Hertfordshire.

## 3 COMMITMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 3.1 The student and staff community

Our University is a student-focused, multi-ethnic community of students and staff who work and study together closely and it is important that they are able to do so without disruption. The student community includes those enrolled on undergraduate, taught postgraduate and Continuing Professional Development programmes and those registered for research degrees.

### 3.2 The local and wider community

The University of Hertfordshire takes seriously its responsibilities to the local and wider community, recognises its broader social responsibilities as a Higher Education institution and is committed to upholding, through its aims, objectives and mission, certain standards and values. The University shall at all times be entitled to uphold and protect its good name and reputation and, therefore, reserves the right to take disciplinary action against students where there is reason to believe that they may have breached University regulations or brought the University into disrepute through their behaviour on University premises or elsewhere.

### 3.3 Equality and Diversity and Access to the University of Hertfordshire

3.3.1 The University is committed to being an equal opportunities educational institution and seeks to create a climate of equality of opportunity in the process of recruitment and selection of students and in the provision of education.

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#### Note 1 for Partner Organisations (UK and overseas)

<sup>1</sup> **The Statement of Responsibilities and Commitments does not apply to Partner Organisations.**

<sup>2</sup> **Terminology** - This document uses the terminology set out in UPR GV08 'Terminology – Glossary of Approved University Terminology'

**Approval - Academic Board: Minutes** 724.4, 15 March 2000; 795.2, 14 March 2000; 867.2, 6 March 2002; 956, 5 March 2003; 62.2, 10 March 2004; 155.2, 9 March 2005; 257.3.2, 1 March 2006; 369, 7 March 2007; 574.3, 11 March 2009, 9, 16 March 2011; 123, 14 March 2012; 359.5.2, 12 March 2014, refer.

Board of Governors: Minute 424, Board of Governors, 30 March 2000, refer.

**Disclaimer** - The University of Hertfordshire disclaims its liability to the fullest extent permitted by law in accordance with the notice published in the University Prospectus a copy of which may be viewed on-line via: <http://www.herts.ac.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> UPR SA01 'Student Code of Conduct'

3.3.2 The University's commitment to equal opportunities is set out in its Equality and Diversity Policy<sup>4</sup>. The University aims to ensure that no-one receives less favourable treatment because of characteristics protected by UK legislation<sup>5</sup> or because of family or care responsibilities, social class, trade union activity, being an ex-offender or other unreasonable grounds.

### 3.4 **Pre-entry information**

3.4.1 The University will:

- i provide a statement of its taught courses, research training programmes, entry requirements and facilities in the appropriate University prospectus, electronic media and other relevant promotional material;
- ii make available not less than four (4) months prior to registration, information concerning those fees which are determined by the University and any concessionary rates, grants, bursaries and scholarships which are available;
- iii provide outline timetables for taught full-time and sandwich courses at the time of registration, although it should be noted that this information may be subject to change;
- iv by the time of registration, provide information for applicants concerning tuition fees agreed with agencies outside the University, such as the Higher Education Funding Council for England and any concessionary rates, grants, bursaries and scholarships that are available;
- v by the time of registration, provide information concerning other costs such as those for car parking and Universitybus (Uno) fares;
- vi provide applicants with information concerning the cost and availability of University-controlled student residential accommodation.

3.4.2 Students are expected to:

- i familiarise themselves with the relevant pre-entry information and
- ii have sufficient funds to meet their financial commitments;
- iii have met, as necessary, any visa and other requirements of the UK Visa Agency (UKVI).

### 3.5 **A fair admissions policy**

3.5.1 The University will:

- i treat all applicants fairly and consider applications in accordance with the relevant published criteria and procedures;
- ii offer Open Days to applicants who wish to visit the University prior to admission;
- iii at all stages of the admissions process, make decisions on offers and/or interviews as rapidly as possible;

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<sup>4</sup> UPR EQ03 'Equality and Diversity Policy'

<sup>5</sup> **Equality Act 2010 – Protected Characteristics**

The following are defined as protected characteristics by the Act:  
age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- iv send information about University-controlled student residential accommodation to applicants intending to study full-time once they have confirmed their acceptance of a place;
- v make joining information available electronically for new entrants before their arrival at the University (information for students enrolling on Continuing Professional Development programmes may not be available electronically).

3.5.2 Applicants are expected to:

- i provide full and accurate information in a timely manner during the application process;
- ii honour their commitment to the University if they have accepted an offer of a place.

**3.6 Learning, teaching and research – taught programmes**

3.6.1 The University will:

- i ensure staff have the appropriate expertise and experience to deliver the courses on which students are enrolled;
- ii provide appropriate facilities for learning;
- iii provide appropriate IT facilities, laboratory accommodation and equipment to support students' learning;
- iv provide up-to-date and well-equipped Learning Resources Centres;
- v ensure that:
  - a staff specify assignment tasks clearly and make information available to students about the criteria that will be used to assess their performance and determine the grades which are to be awarded;
  - b staff mark students' work fairly and that they give constructive feedback on assessed coursework;
  - c students' coursework is returned to them together with feedback no later than four (4) calendar weeks after the submission deadline<sup>6</sup> unless the work is of an on-going nature, such as a major project or dissertation, in which case, supervising staff will ensure that students are provided with feedback at interim stages;
  - d when timetabling in-course assessments, staff will, where practicable, have regard for other assessment deadlines which students are being set;
  - e examinations and assessments are held in appropriate surroundings;
  - f with the exception of 'out-of-time' examinations which are timetabled on an individual basis, re-sit examinations and assessments set in the first four (4) weeks of the Semester, the dates of examinations and assessments are published four (4) weeks before they are due to take place.

3.6.2 Students following taught programmes are expected to:

- i attend and participate, as appropriate, in their lectures, tutorials, workshops, laboratory and other timetabled classes and to be punctual;

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<sup>6</sup> Any exceptions to this must be agreed by the relevant Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality Assurance) or the Associate Dean of School (Learning and Teaching), and notified to students in advance of the expiration of the four week period.

- ii as required by the Student Code of Conduct<sup>3</sup>, behave in an acceptable and considerate way during lectures, tutorials and all other activities concerned with the learning experience held either at the University or elsewhere, for example, field trips or clinical or practice placements;
- iii comply with the University's Health and Safety regulations, particularly when using equipment and potentially hazardous materials and whilst working in laboratories;
- iv undertake on their own and in untutored groups, the amount of study specified in the Definitive Module Document for each of the modules for which they are registered;
- v complete and hand in all assignments by the relevant published deadline;
- vi give responsible feedback on their learning experience when asked, for example, through the National Student Survey;
- vii ensure that they comply with those University regulations which have particular relevance within the context of learning and teaching, especially those relating to cheating, plagiarism, other academic misconduct, ethics, examinations and assessments;
- viii comply with any external regulations affecting their studies.

### **3.7 Programmes of research training**

#### **3.7.1 The University will:**

- i appoint a supervision team with appropriate subject expertise and experience of supervising research students to a successful research degree submission;
- ii allocate appropriate resources to support the programme of research training;
- iii provide the opportunity for the student to undertake research training in a supportive environment;
- iv provide opportunities for training in generic and discipline-specific research skills and methodology;
- v ensure that the student registers on a programme of research training that can be achieved in the normal completion times;
- vi ensure that research degree supervisors give constructive feedback on research students' progression assessments and draft thesis or portfolio chapters;
- vii ensure that oral examinations for research degrees are conducted by appropriately qualified examiners.

#### **3.7.2 Research students are expected to:**

- i undertake their research in accordance with national ethical and professional standards;
- ii give research seminars on the progress of their research in accordance with School policies;
- iii submit regular progress reports to their supervisors in accordance with a jointly agreed timetable;

- iv comply with the University's Health and Safety regulations, particularly when using equipment and potentially hazardous materials and whilst working in laboratories;
- v ensure that they comply with University regulations, especially those relating to cheating, plagiarism, other academic misconduct, ethics, examinations and assessments;
- vi assign the intellectual property rights of their research to the University where this is required by the relevant University regulations.

### **3.8 Services and facilities**

#### **3.8.1 The University will:**

provide access to a range of services and facilities additional to normal academic provision. These will be set out in detail in 'A-Z of the University of Hertfordshire' published to students each September.

#### **3.8.2 Students will:**

- i use these services and facilities in accordance with the relevant University regulations and the operational guidelines established by the Head of each service;
- ii take reasonable precautions to protect themselves and their personal property;
- iii carry their University Identity Cards whilst on University premises;
- iv for all on-campus taught programmes, record attendance at least once each week using the appropriate mechanism provided by the University;
- v for research students, record attendance as stipulated in the Research Degrees Handbook;
- vi ensure their personal details are kept up-to-date on the University's systems;
- vii take responsibility for regularly checking their communications from the University, including e-mail and StudyNet.

### **3.9 Student Engagement**

#### **3.9.1 The University will:**

work in partnership with the student body and Students' Union to provide a range of opportunities for students to engage in the enhancement of their student experience. Mechanisms involving students include surveys, student discussion fora and student representation. Representatives of the Students' Union have assured places and the opportunity to have an active role on the Board of Governors, the Academic Board and where appropriate, on committees of these two Boards. Within Schools, student representatives will have places on Programme Committees and, as appropriate, on other School committees and groups.

#### **3.9.2 The Executive of the Students' Union will:**

work in partnership with the University to ensure effective student engagement and representation. This includes electing representatives from the student body, consisting of an agreed number of full-time remunerated student officers.

**3.10 Queries and complaints**

**3.10.1 The University will:**

- i provide defined policies and procedures to enable students to take forward any queries, complaints or appeals that they may have whether of an academic or non-academic nature;
- ii endeavour to resolve all issues informally and at a local level, with formal processes being reserved only for those occasions where this has not been possible.

**3.11 Conduct**

**3.11.1 Members of staff will:**

- i at all times act in a professional manner in their dealings with students and with respect to punctuality;
- ii be available at stated times, to deal with any queries, concerns and other matters raised by students.

**3.11.2 Students will:**

have agreed, at registration, to comply with University regulations which include the Student Code of Conduct<sup>3</sup>. University regulations are published as a series of documents called 'University Policies and Regulations' (UPRs) and may be viewed on-line at the following location:

<http://www.herts.ac.uk/secreg/>

**3.12 Monitoring**

**3.12.1** The University's provision, outlined in this Statement, and its operation, are monitored internally by the Dean of Students by various means, including the National Student Survey, Module Feedback Questionnaire and School annual reports.

**3.12.2** Externally, the University will be monitored through independent reviews carried out by the Quality Assurance Agency, OFSTED and, where appropriate, other agencies.

Mrs S C Grant  
Secretary and Registrar  
Signed: **1 August 2017**