

Consumer



## LONDON BROOKES COLLEGE

### Self-Assessment on Consumer Protection Law

London Brookes College seeks to continually improve the quality of its services and strives to meet student and legal expectations. It is committed to providing Higher Education (HE) students with a high-quality educational experience, supported by academic, administrative, and pastoral support services.

This document has been submitted as part of our registration process with the Office for Students (OfS). It outlines the approach that LBC takes to complying with consumer protection law and the mechanisms we use to monitor and ensure compliance with consumer protection law.

We have given due regard to and believe that we are compliant with consumer protection law. We think this because we:-

- Have clear policies and procedures relating to information for staff and students, complaints procedures, Ethics protocols and terms and conditions, with the key and most onerous terms summarised in application form.
- Policies, procedures, and terms and conditions are all made available to students prior to application in a policies section of the LBC website, and are also made available to staff and students on the student and student portal;
- Consumer protection law issues are discussed in relevant committees and panels within the LBC governance structure including the Academic Board (who deal with all complaints, student registration, and non-academic appeals), Admissions committee (who deal with student enrolment), and the Academic Misconduct, Plagiarism are dealt in College Committees;
- There is an annual review of all contracts with students, and all LBC policies and procedures by LBC senior management. All contracts and policies in which consumer law issues arise are further referred to the solicitor for review before being sent to the Board of Governors for approval.

The evidence that demonstrates this is set out below.

#### **Training and Dissemination of Staff:**

CMA information is shared with all academic and support staff and where appropriate, training sessions for relevant staff involved in the delivery and quality monitoring are implemented. Monitoring of compliance is carried out by the college.

#### **Student Engagement & Awareness:**

The college ensures that students are engaged with, and made aware of, their consumer rights at induction and via printed and web-based material as confirmed above. Engagement is also

achieved via student voice involvement in policy making and review and the Student-Staff Committee meetings.

### **Providing information to applicants and students: research and application stage, offer stage and enrolment stage:**

The college has a history of working closely with awarding partners to ensure that processes align with their requirements and that admissions decisions are based on agreed entry requirements. Admissions staff are aware of the admissions policies and procedures and confirm that the LBC supports them to fulfil their role through internal training, workshops with external experts, access to resources including webinars and guidance on judging new or non-traditional qualifications.

Students are informed that they are required to undertake language and maths and ICT tests where appropriate and all undertake an interview to confirm both academic suitability and motivation to their course.

At enrolment stage, applicants are fully informed of the requirements of enrolment prior to their actual enrolment day, i.e., payment of fees, and the college Tuition Fees, Refunds policy. This is achieved through the sending of letters to all applicants which is overseen by the senior manager.

Enrolment is undertaken in the college, overseen by the head of the department where further information relating to their programme such as the finalised timetable may be given.

Where previously unforeseen changes in course information occur (for example, an increase in cost of an external visit), these changes are communicated to students via letter, email and in person to ensure the message is received. Responsibility for this process lies with the module leaders and is overseen by their relevant line manager.

### **Contract terms and conditions:**

We have the following contracts with students: -

- Enrolment terms and conditions (incorporating the code of conduct);
- Work Placement Agreements (if needed) ;
- DBS Checking Agreement (if needed);

Our terms and conditions, including policies and procedures, and awarding bodies regulations, are made available to students through the policies section of our website and student portal. The terms and conditions of enrolment are also displayed prior to enrolment and enclosed by email with the offer letter sent after enrolment.

We ensure that terms and conditions and regulations are clear and understandable to students by summarising the key terms in the offer letter (e.g., payment terms and situations in which a refund of pre-payments may be refused) and highlighting the most onerous or important terms in bold in the terms and conditions.

We ensure the terms are fair by ensuring that any change to the terms of conditions is made only after review by our solicitor, in consideration of the CMA Guidance.

We ensure that terms and conditions and regulations are clear and understandable to students. Terms and conditions are held on the LBC's website (<https://www.londonbrookescollege.co.uk>) and as with all policies, terms and conditions are subject to review and audit to ensure information is clear and accessible to all stakeholders.

### **Complaint handling processes and practises:**

LBC has a defined internal complaints and appeals procedures which students must follow in the first instance. Subsequently, the college manages referrals of formal complaints and appeals within the procedures determined by its formal agreements with relevant awarding partners.

There are four stages in the Complaints Procedure:

Stage 1:	Conciliation
Stage 2:	Formal complaint
Stage 3:	Appeal to the Director of Quality
Stage 4:	Independent Review

The complaints and appeals procedures are clear and accessible to students via LBC's website (<https://www.londonbrookescollege.co.uk>), handbooks and the VLE and explained during induction. Students are made aware of how official complaints can be made during their initial induction session with the college. In addition, they are informed that they can raise issues informally with staff at any time. Student Services provide advice and support for any students making a complaint or appeal within the college's processes.