UCQ UNIVERSITY CENTRE QUAYSIDE

# Student Welfare Policy

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# 1. Purpose

1.1 The Strategic Plan sets the missions of UCQ to have a safe and supportive community of staff and students, making a difference to every individual and organisation with whom we work. This Student Welfare Policy is underpinned by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Safeguarding Policy and appendices and sets out UCQ's student welfare arrangements to enable all students to participate fully in UCQ life.

# 2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all members of the UCQ community who have an interest in student welfare.

2.2 Although some key roles in UCQ have responsibility for developing and leading the implementation of student welfare strategies, the responsibility for student welfare lies with every member of the UCQ community.

2.3 Any significant and urgent concerns about a student's welfare should be notified to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

# 3 Definitions

**Accessibility**
The design and delivery of education, services, digital platforms, and physical environments to ensure that all students, including those with disabilities or additional needs, can access, participate in, and benefit from their studies on an equitable basis.

**Anti-discrimination policies**
Institutional policies and practices that prevent discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the basis of protected or personal characteristics (including, but not limited to, race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability, and age). These policies promote equality, inclusion, and fairness across all aspects of the student experience.

**Bullying and harassment**
Any unwanted behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment. This includes conduct by students, staff, or third parties and may involve a real or perceived power imbalance. Behaviours may be verbal, non-verbal, physical, written, or digital (including online environments).

**Confidentiality and privacy**
The principles and practices that protect students' personal and sensitive information, ensuring that it is handled lawfully, fairly, and securely. Information will only be shared where necessary, proportionate, and in line with legal obligations, safeguarding duties, and institutional policies.

**Mental health support**
Services, interventions, and preventative approaches designed to promote student mental wellbeing, reduce risk, and provide timely support. This includes access to counselling,

signposting to external services, crisis support, and initiatives that promote resilience and wellbeing.

**Safeguarding**
The proactive and responsive measures taken to protect students from harm, abuse, neglect, harassment, and exploitation. This includes creating a safe learning environment, identifying risks, responding appropriately to concerns, and supporting students who may be vulnerable or at risk. Safeguarding responsibilities extend to all staff and are aligned with regulatory expectations, including those relating to harassment and sexual misconduct.

**Sexual harassment and sexual misconduct**
Any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, including but not limited to sexual harassment, sexual assault, coercion, exploitation, stalking, or inappropriate relationships where there is an imbalance of power. UCQ adopts a zero-tolerance approach to such behaviours. Definitions, reporting processes, investigation procedures, and support mechanisms are set out in the SA-018b Sexual Misconduct Policy.

In line with the Office for Students Condition E6, the institution takes a whole-provider approach to the prevention of and response to harassment and sexual misconduct, including clear reporting routes, fair and transparent processes, and appropriate support for affected students.

**Student welfare**
The holistic support and protection of students' physical, emotional, and psychological wellbeing. This includes ensuring a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment; access to appropriate support services; and measures to prevent harm, including harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination, and abuse.

**Substance abuse prevention**
Education, policies, and support mechanisms aimed at preventing and reducing harm associated with the misuse of drugs, alcohol, or other substances. This includes awareness initiatives, early intervention, and access to appropriate support and rehabilitation services.

## 4 Other important UCQ policies and procedures

GP-001 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
GP-004/GP-015 Student Handbook
GP-011 Reasonable Adjustments Policy
GP-019 Access and Participation Statement
GP-024 Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
SA-002 Safeguarding Policy and Appendices
SA-018b Sexual Misconduct Policy: For Students
TLA-017 Learner Support Policy
TLA-019 Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure

# 5. Policy statement

5.1 University Centre Quayside (UCQ) is committed to fair and equitable treatment for all members of the UCQ community and the disclosure of any health issue or physical, social or cultural need, will be treated confidentially and will not put the student at a disadvantage.

5.2 UCQ will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the provision of appropriate welfare support is appropriately resourced based on the needs of students. The amount of support to be provided will be determined using demographic and demand needs and will focus on resilience and prevention as far as possible. Where there are external specialist services which are well placed to support our community UCQ will form links with them as far as possible in order to develop the best referral pathways, rather than replicating services.

5.3 The UCQ website has a range of health and wellbeing services freely available to support students on all provision: https://ucq.ac.uk/support-links/

# 6. Responsibilities

**6.1 Senior Leadership Team**

The Senior Leadership Team will ensure the appropriate allocation of resources to support student welfare. All policies and procedures, including those relating to academic matters, should take into account any impact on student welfare.

**6.2 Safeguarding Team**

The Safeguarding Team are responsible for developing and delivering appropriate welfare policies, procedures and services and for dealing with individual issues of student welfare. They are also responsible for signposting and arranging for specialist welfare support, at all times acting in accordance with any relevant professional body requirements. The Safeguarding Team are the first point of contact for staff and students who may have concerns for their own, or other students' welfare.

**6.3 Academic and Professional Staff**

All academic and professional services staff have a responsibility to act on any concerns raised about a student's welfare. These staff are not expected to be experts in student welfare support but to know where to signpost students for appropriate support.

**6.4 Students**

Students have responsibility for being proactive in managing their own welfare and in seeking support as and when appropriate. In particular students must provide information about any situation or condition that will impact on welfare and for which they would like support from UCQ, or which may impact upon their time on their programme of study.

## 7. Professional Development Assessors

7.1 Each higher education student is assigned a dedicated Professional Development Assessor (PDA) to support them throughout their programme of study. The PDA provides professional, pastoral and career development advice and guidance. UCQ work closely with the student's employer to develop skills and pave a career pathway within their organisation. The PDAs are committed to supporting students and would be happy to discuss how the programme can assist students within their management career. With honest, open discussions with their employer and armed with new skills, knowledge and behaviours, UCQ are confident students will develop greater self-awareness, self-confidence and have the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world. Students are also provided with pastoral and academic support through the Academic Support Tutor.

## 8. Counselling

8.1 UCQ offer a confidential non-judgmental space where students can talk about any emotional or psychological problems which may be affecting their ability to work or study. Students can expect the counsellor to respect them and not impose opinions on them. The aim of counselling is to help students find their own answers and to become more in charge of their life. The Safeguarding Team are responsible for referring and making the necessary arrangements for access to this service.

## 9. Mental Health First Aider

9.1 One in four will experience mental ill health at some point in their lives. It is therefore important that everyone take steps to promote positive mental health and support those experiencing mental health issues.

9.2 Ben Devine is UCQ's dedicated Mental Health First Aider and available to support students and signpost them to further resources. Ben can be contacted at[ben.devine@ucq.ac.uk](mailto:ben.devine@ucq.ac.uk) / 07366 564 165.

## 10. Disability services

10.1 UCQ actively promotes equality and diversity in all aspects of its work and aims to provide an environment where all individuals have the opportunity to achieve their full potential with a feeling of positive self-esteem. Whatever your disability or learning support need, UCQ will seek to arrange the support you need to benefit from your programme experience.

10.2 The Equality Act (2010) defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This may include:

- A specific learning difficulty such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia or ADHD
- A visual impairment
- A hearing impairment
- A physical condition affecting your mobility
- A mental health condition
- A long-term medical condition

10.3 All students will undertake an initial assessment during induction to determine whether additional support may be of benefit. As a follow up, students will be able to talk with their Tutor or PDA about help that may be available. The PDA will work with individual students to create an individual learning plan that is specific to their support needs. This plan will address any additional support required in order to achieve the programme learning outcomes. Additional support may be provided through:

- Special arrangements during examinations and/or assessments
- Teaching materials in alternative forms such as Braille, tape or large print
- Portable loop system or communicator
- Extra curriculum support if required

10.4 UCQ have appointed an academic support tutor to provide students with additional academic and educational need support.

## 11. Financial advice and guidance

11.1 Any student requiring financial advice and guidance will be referred to an appropriate service by the Safeguarding Team.

11.2 The provision delivered by UCQ is funded by either the Department for Education/Devolved Authority, the employer, or Student Loans Company (SLC). Normally, students will not need to make any financial contribution towards their course, unless expressly agreed and published.

## 12. Prayer facilities

12.1 UCQ provides space/s for prayer and religious observance or quiet contemplation. For those students attending the UCQ Head Office in Newcastle, room 106, 107 or 113 will be made available for use and can be arranged by the Student Services Team. For sites outside of UCQ's Head Office the Student Services Team will liaise with the centre contact to ensure a space is arranged when required.

## 13. Compliance and enforcement

13.1 The Strategic Safeguarding Lead takes overall responsibility for ensuring compliance and enforcement of this policy across the organisation. Where non-compliance is identified, staff will be supported to undertake additional training as required. In some cases, non-compliance will be treated with disciplinary action.

## 14. Training and communication

14.1 All staff will receive annual safeguarding training. Students are invited to review the wealth of resources available on UCQ's safeguarding, Prevent and wellbeing page, available at https://ucq.ac.uk/safeguarding-and-prevent/

14.2 Ongoing support will be provided by the Safeguarding Team. This policy will be made available on the UCQ website for all stakeholders to access.

## 15. Review and revision

15.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier as required to ensure best practice.

## 16. Document history

| ISSUE NO. | DATE | PAGE | REVIEWER | DETAIL OF AMENDMENT |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 28/03/2024 | All | Michelle Elliott | Periodic review conducted.<br>Formatting revised to fit recommended document template as specified in quality procedure QP02 with new sections 2, 3, 13, 14, 15 & 16 added.<br>Paragraph numbers updated accordingly |
| 5 | 20/03/2026 | All | Tara Henderson | Para 9.1 – Reference to Student Space removed as the site no longer operates this function;<br>References to ESFA removed<br>E&D Policy updated to ED&I Policy |

## 17. Initial Equalities Impact Assessment

| **Department:** All | **Completed by:** Tara Henderson, Head of Policy & Governance | **Date of initial assessment:** 20/01/21 |
|---|---|---|
| **Area to be assessed:** | SA-015 Student Welfare Policy | |
| **Existing or new policy/procedure:** | New | |
| **What evidence has been used to inform the assessment and policy? (please list only)** | | |
| **External guidance and requirements:**<br>➢ UK Quality Code for Higher Education<br>➢ Ofsted Education Inspection Framework<br>➢ Equality Act 2010<br>**Internal guidance and requirements:**<br>➢ Equality and Diversity Policy<br>➢ Safeguarding Policy and supporting appendices<br>➢ Consultation with Safeguarding Team | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Describe the aims, objectives or purpose of the policy/procedure** | | This Student Welfare Policy is underpinned by the Equality and Diversity Policy and Safeguarding Policy and sets out UCQ's student welfare arrangements to enable all students to participate fully in UCQ life. | | |
| **2. Which stakeholders/groups are intended to benefit from this policy/procedure?** | | All students | | |
| **The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to have 'due regard' to the need to:-**<br>(1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization<br>(2) Advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and<br>(3) Foster good relations between different groups | | **3. Could the policy/procedure have a disproportionately negative effect impact in terms of the aims set out in (1) to (3) of the Act on any of the protected characteristics?:-**<br>**High**<br>**Medium**<br>**Low**<br>**No effect** | **4. Briefly explain how the policy/procedure furthers or prevents the aims set out in (1) to (3).** | **5. If there is a disproportionately negative impact on any protected characteristics, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality or any other reason? If yes, please explain.** |
| **Protected characteristics** | **Age** | No effect | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| | **Disability** | No effect | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| | **Gender** | No effect | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| | **Gender reassignment** | No effect | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| | **Marriage and Civil Partnership** | No effect | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| | **Pregnancy and Maternity** | No effect | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| | **Race** | No effect | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| | **Religion or Belief** | No effect | Not applicable | Not applicable |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Sexual Orientation** | No effect | Not applicable | Not applicable |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **6. Has there been any consultation/engagement with the appropriate protected characteristics?** | | Not applicable as no PC impact identified |
| **7. What action(s) will you take to reduce any disproportionately negative impact, if any?** | | None required |
| **8. Based on the information in sections 1 to 7, should this policy/procedure proceed to Full Impact Assessment?** (recommended if one or more 'High' under section 2) | | No |
| **Assessor signature:** | **Approved by:**<br>**Michelle Elliott** | **Date approved:**<br>20/01/2021 |