

## Consumer Protection Statement

### 1: Overall approach to ensuring compliance with consumer protection law

The City College seeks to be compliant with consumer protection law and has taken steps to implement the guidance issued by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) on the application of consumer protection legislation within the higher education sector.

The College's approach to compliance with consumer protection law is overseen by the Senior Leadership Team and the Academic Board, the latter having ultimate responsibility for all academic matters. Information and contracts are reviewed on a termly or annual basis. There is also a fully qualified in-house legal counsel who is consulted where necessary regarding consumer protection issues. Oversight has included acting to ensure that:

- information provided to prospective and current students is accessible, accurate, comprehensive, timely, transparent and unambiguous
- information provided is available through a variety of appropriate means, for example the website, downloads, handbooks and the intranet
- terms and conditions are fair and balanced
- policies, procedures, and terms and conditions are all made available to students prior to application
- there is consultation as appropriate with existing students through the student representative system and other feedback mechanisms
- the complaint handling procedure is accessible and fair, with clear steps identified for progressing any complaint that may arise
- students are advised they have the option of approaching the Office of the Independent Adjudicator if they are not satisfied with the handling of any complaint, once the internal system has been exhausted.

All student and staff personal data is handled and managed with a high level of sensitivity and confidentiality. Such records are securely stored and locked in the office of the Director of Studies.

### 2: Approach to providing information to applicants and students: research and application stage, offer stage and enrolment stage

#### 2.1: Research and application stage

The college websites provide all the key information needed regarding, for example, courses, admissions, and fees.

#### Course details

Course information includes, for example, starts dates, mode of study, duration, awarding body, qualification title and level, fees, who the course is intended for, aims of the course,

## Consumer Protection Statement

course structure, course content, opportunities for further study or employment, entry requirements, application process, and English language ability.

- Business: <https://citycollege.ac.uk/course/business-management/btec-higher-national-diploma-in-business-management/>
- Hospitality: <https://citycollege.ac.uk/course/hospitality/btec-higher-national-diploma-in-hospitality-management/>
- Travel and Tourism: <https://citycollege.ac.uk/course/tourism/btec-higher-national-diploma-in-travel-and-tourism-management/>
- Healthcare Practice: <https://citycollege.ac.uk/course/health-and-social-care/btec-higher-national-diploma-in-healthcare-practice/>
- Social and Community Work: <https://citycollege.ac.uk/course/health-and-social-care/btec-higher-national-diploma-in-social-and-community-work/>
- Education: <https://citycollege.ac.uk/product-category/education-and-training/>
- Acupuncture course: <http://citycollegeofacupuncture.apps-1and1.net/courses/la-3yr/>
- Tui Na (year 1): <http://citycollegeofacupuncture.apps-1and1.net/courses/ltn-1yr/>
- Tui Na (year 2): <http://citycollegeofacupuncture.apps-1and1.net/courses/ltn-2yr/>

### Admissions

- <https://citycollege.ac.uk/advice-and-guidance/>
- <http://citycollegeofacupuncture.com/acupuncture-admissions/>
- <http://citycollegeofacupuncture.com/what-is-tui-na/>

### Fees

- <https://citycollege.ac.uk/fees/>
- <http://citycollegeofacupuncture.com/fees/>
- <http://citycollegeofacupuncture.com/fees/>

Course information is also provided in programme handbooks. All information is checked on a termly or annual basis to keep it accurate and up-to-date.

### 2.2: Offer stage

By the offer stage students will have been provided with all the key information required, including terms and conditions, sat any entry tests, and been interviewed in a one-to-one situation. The interview is designed to ensure that students are fully aware of what to expect. A copy of the student interview sheet identifying key information is provided for students after the interview and this is signed and dated by both the student and the interviewer.

## Consumer Protection Statement

The offer letter is sent by regular post in line with a requirement identified by the QAA. The letter confirms the offer of a place based on the documents provided by the student, background information, interview, and entry tests (if applicable). Students are reminded about the fee requirements and that enrolment can not be confirmed until payment toward the first-year fees has been received. Neither can registration occur with the awarding body (Pearson).

Students are also reminded that progression to year 2 of an HND programme is dependent on successful completion of Year 1, and of any work placement requirements if one is necessary.

The students also receive an emailed confirmation that an offer is being made, along with a student handbook, timetable, and invitation to an induction event.

### 2.3: Enrolment stage

Enrolment is confirmed once payment toward the first-year fees has been received. By this time students have been made fully aware of requirements and expectations as indicated above.

### 2.4 Dealing with changes

Where previously unforeseen changes in course information occur, these changes would be communicated to students via letter, email or in person to ensure the message is received. Responsibility for this process lies with the Director of Studies or Principal.

## 3: Contract terms and conditions

**Terms** and conditions, including rules and regulations, are made available to students through the application form, student interview sheet, learning agreement, and student handbooks. These are all provided to students before enrolment and we ensure that terms and conditions and regulations are clear and understandable. Enrolment is confirmed only after student finance has been approved and students have agreed to the terms and conditions.

Students seeking enrolment onto a health and social care or education programme are also advised about DBS check requirements.

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

## 4. Complaint handling processes and practices

The College complaints procedure is made available at <https://citycollege.ac.uk/college-complaints-procedure/> as well as being featured at student induction, made available on the intranet and made available in student handbooks.

## Consumer Protection Statement



The complaints procedure is comprised of an informal stage intended for an early resolution through discussion, a formal stage where the complaint is written down and investigated by senior staff, and a review stage where the formal complaint decision can be looked at again if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome.

A strong 'open door' policy is operated at the College and students are encouraged to bring any concerns they may have directly to senior staff.

If after the review stage the complainant is still not satisfied, a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued by the College and complainants have the option of taking their complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The College ensures that complainants are fully aware of this option. It is expected that complainants will complete the College's internal complaints procedure before proceeding to the OIA.

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator's good practice framework is used for guidance and to help ensure that the College's policy is compliant with expectations regarding accessibility, fairness, clarity, independence, proportionality, confidentiality, timeliness, and used to improve the student experience. To this end, the OIA are also leading workshops with students and staff at the College in October 2018 as part of the OIA outreach programme. The workshops will focus on the principles and practices for complaints and academic appeals as well as the development of college policy and procedures.

Senior staff are responsible for managing the complaints procedure and several OIA training sessions and webinars have been attended and completed to increase awareness and demonstrate engagement and compliance.