E3. Students’ Charter

E3.1 Introduction

At Brookes we aim to enable you to realise your potential and prepare you to fulfil your objectives in work, life and further study. Brookes strives to be a student-centred University, which means that we aim to put students’ needs at the heart of our work. In order to achieve this we need you to be a willing and active partner in the learning process. For this learning partnership to work effectively everyone needs to make commitments and do their best to honour those commitments. Our Students’ Charter is designed to tell you what you can expect from us and what we expect of you in return, so that together we can make your learning experience at Brookes a positive and productive one.

Brookes values feedback from its students so that we can continuously improve the quality of our work. The Students’ Charter will help you measure what we set out to provide. But it is a two-way process. Students have duties and responsibilities as well as rights and expectations. The Students’ Charter will help you to understand the role that you are expected to play.

Brookes is a diverse community. Our students come from many countries and different regions of the United Kingdom. Some may be school leavers and others are mature in years. They may be studying on programmes of different levels and types, in Oxford or elsewhere, full-time, part-time and by open learning. We seek to serve the needs of all our students and we value the diversity in our community; we expect you to respect the needs and wishes of others. We are also part of a wider local community so we expect you to conduct yourself well when outside the University.

Like any community, Brookes has rules and policies to guide the way we do things and the way we treat each other. Central to those rules is the premise that we are a community of adults, each of whom is responsible and accountable for his/her own actions. You are expected to make yourself familiar with and observe the rules and to help you do this we will ensure that information about the rules is available to you. If you believe that you have cause for complaint you should raise the matter with the member(s) of staff, academic school or support department concerned. Procedures exist for dealing with complaints and resolving disputes.

We hope that the Students’ Charter will serve as a guide both as to what to expect and what we expect of you and that the spirit of partnership it embodies will help to make your time at Brookes enjoyable and worthwhile.
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E3.2 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

You can expect:
1.1. to receive accurate and up-to-date information about the content, teaching methods, supervision arrangements, costs, attendance and assessment requirements of your programme of study or research, usually in the form of a course or field guide, handbook or equivalent information, in paper or electronic form. Where your programme involves choices of modules or options, you can expect to receive sufficient information to make those choices in an informed manner. You can expect to be notified of changes to your programme or its assessment that may affect you;

1.2. the learning outcomes for your programme to be specified and made available to you. You can also expect programmes of study to include appropriate teaching and learning strategies and assessment methods to allow you to achieve the learning outcomes and demonstrate that achievement;

1.3. work to be marked fairly, objectively and without bias and assessment criteria to be explicit and openly available. You can also expect written coursework that you submit on time to be marked and returned to you within the time period specified for your course, field or module, with constructive written or oral feedback. You should receive a reasonable amount of feedback on your performance in examinations if you request it;

1.4. to be provided with or given access to equipment, facilities and settings necessary to undertake your programme of study as described. If access or use is not suitable for you because of disability, we aim to provide reasonable alternative provision. Access to facilities provided by organisations other than the University, for example for placements and practice elements, may be dependent on you satisfying that organisation’s conditions of use or authority to practise. Permissible charges may be made for course materials, specialist equipment or some course activities (such as field trips).

In return you are expected to:
1.5. ensure that you are familiar with and observe the requirements of your programme of study or research and its regulations. If you have to make choices about modules or options, you should ensure that they meet the course requirements and best suit your learning and development needs, having taken academic advice if needed;
1.6. attend regularly and participate in your programme of study, manage your time effectively, meet any specified deadlines and submit work for assessment on time;

1.7. make your tutors and the relevant administrative office aware of any circumstances that might lead to failure to complete an assessment or affect your performance in an assessment. If you need to request an extension to a course work deadline because of illness or other circumstances you must do so before the submission date; failure to meet specified deadlines may result in penalties or the work may not be assessed. If you wish circumstances to be considered and, if accepted, taken into account at assessment you must provide evidence of them as soon as possible and normally before the Examination Committee meets;

1.8. use equipment and facilities with care and consideration for other users and comply with any regulations concerning their use and any health and safety requirements.
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E3.3 Feedback and participation

You can expect:

2.1. information on quality assurance procedures to be readily available and reports on the quality of programmes to be available on request (except reports that include the assessment of individual students or the evaluation of individual members of staff);

2.2. to be able to participate in the quality assurance procedures for your programme of study and, in particular, to be given opportunities to evaluate the quality and operation of the programme, and be told what action has been taken in response to feedback;

2.3. elected or nominated places for students to be provided on relevant University committees, boards, sub-groups and working parties (except those responsible for making assessment decisions or for confidential staffing matters such as promotion or disciplinary issues). If you become a student representative you will have access to training provided by the Students' Union.

In return you are expected to:

2.4. assist in improving the quality of programmes by participating in evaluation and feedback, giving your views honestly, fully and constructively;

2.5. participate in processes to nominate or elect student representatives and ensure that representatives are made aware of your views and the issues that they should raise on students' behalf. If you are a student representative, you are expected to attend the committee or other body to which you have been elected or nominated and to seek and convey the views of the students you are representing.
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E3.4 Appeals, complaints and disciplinary matters

You can expect:

3.1. information to be readily accessible about how to appeal against assessment decisions or raise a complaint, and how disciplinary matters are handled. This information is available on the Brookes intranet and from the Directorate of Academic and Student Affairs Office, Student Services and the Students' Union Advice Centre;

3.2. independent advice, support and, if you wish, representation to be available from the Students' Union Advice Centre. You are entitled to be accompanied by a friend or representative at complaint, disciplinary and appeal hearings;

3.3. any complaint, appeal or disciplinary matter to be dealt with fairly, impartially and without fear of recrimination. Where justified, you can expect to be offered a reasonable and appropriate means of resolution or remedy.

In return you are expected to:

3.4. familiarise yourself with the complaints, appeals and disciplinary procedures. If you wish to make an appeal or complaint, or you become involved in a disciplinary matter, you are expected to seek appropriate advice and to keep to the relevant procedures. You are also expected to be willing to accept reasonable resolutions to disputes. If you make a complaint that is malicious or vexatious it can be dismissed and disciplinary action can be taken against you.
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E3.5 Facilities and services

You can expect:

**Teaching and learning accommodation**
4.1. reasonable access to teaching, library and laboratory facilities and computer rooms that are fit for the purpose and in accordance with health and safety requirements;

**Residential accommodation**
4.2. to receive an Accommodation Handbook and application form by the end of July in the year you are due to commence studying at Brookes to enable you to make an application for a place in a hall of residence. You can expect to receive a decision on your hall application in sufficient time to enable you to make a reasonable search for other accommodation. If your application for a hall of residence place is unsuccessful, you can expect to receive helpful advice and information from the University's Accommodation Office about alternative kinds of accommodation available to you. If you are a 'late summer' or 'clearing' applicant, you will receive information about residential accommodation shortly after receiving an unconditional offer;

4.3. information and advice to be available from the Students' Union Advice Centre on your rights as a tenant in University owned/managed property or in property owned by private landlords;

4.4. in your second and subsequent years at the University, information and support in finding accommodation and the opportunity to apply for a place in one of the off-campus shared houses managed by the University;

**Catering**
4.5. reasonably priced food and drink either through cafeteria or vending services at all campuses; a nutritionally balanced menu at main mealtimes, including a vegetarian course; a bar service provided by the Students' Union;

**Health**
4.6. a range of medical services to be available through the medical centre located at Gipsy Lane and the opportunity to register with the general practice operating that medical centre. There will also be the
opportunity to register with other general practices if one is located nearer to your place of residence;

**Social and cultural facilities**
4.7. the University and the Students' Union to work together to provide a wide range of social, cultural and sports facilities for recreational and competitive purposes, as well as to provide opportunities outside the curriculum for your personal development. Your rights and entitlements to some facilities may be affected by the 1994 Education Act which deals with Students' Unions;

**Childcare**
4.8. to be able to apply for one of the places reserved for the children of students in the University nursery. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis and there may be a waiting list.

*Childcare fees for students*
Fees for students during the academic year 2009/10 are £38 per day / £20.75 per morning / £18.75 per afternoon.

A limited number of additional sessions are available from 8.00am to 8.30am and 5.25pm to 5.55pm (all charged at £3.00 per session) but must be booked in advance - tel ext 5050

**Religious faith**
4.9. chaplaincy facilities to be provided by the main Christian denominations and prayer facilities for students whose faith is Islam. Students of other religious faiths can expect information about links with local representatives of their faith;

**Administration**
4.10. courteous and efficient processing of any administrative matters that you need to enter into with the Student Administration Office, the Finance Department, a school office or any other area of the University. You should be given information about the time taken to complete routine processes, together with an explanation and an indication of the likely period of delay if problems or complications seem likely;

**Finance**
4.11. to receive accurate information about the arrangements that are in place within the University for the distribution of student loan payments and the payment of tuition fees and accommodation charges;

4.12. to be able to apply for assistance from the Access to Learning Fund or Emergency Fund if you are eligible. Information about the procedures for application and for making decisions about applications will be available;
4.13. accurate information about tuition fees, accommodation charges and any other institutional charges (including the cost of field trips) to be available to prospective and enrolled students;

4.14. free, confidential and independent advice on personal financial matters (other than investments) to be available from the Students’ Union Advice Centre.

In return you are expected to:
4.15. behave responsibly when using any facility or service and comply with any regulations for their use that are in place;

4.16. provide full, accurate and truthful information when applying for financial assistance of any kind;

4.17. provide complete and accurate information by the required deadline when involved in any University administrative procedure;

4.18. make known any changes in personal circumstances which may have implications for the outcome of any application or administrative procedure or for your use of any facility or service;

4.19. pay promptly any fees or charges that are due
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E3.6 Support and guidance

You can expect:

Teaching and learning accommodation

5.1. the University and the Students’ Union to work together to provide support and guidance that will help you to: make the transition to university; take responsibility for managing your own learning; pursue appropriate educational, vocational and personal goals and realise your potential; manage the various legal, regulatory and contractual issues associated with being a student. Details of these services will be published in accessible printed and electronic publications;

5.2. to be able to take part in an induction or orientation programme after you first enrol at the University. This programme will provide a general introduction to the University and its systems, as well as offering information on sources of support and guidance and how to access them;

5.3. to have access by appointment to a personal tutor (or another named person) who can act as a ‘first point of contact’ on a wide range of matters but who should also be available from time to time to help you plan your learning programme and review your overall performance. Wherever appropriate, these latter meetings will be informed by the University’s Personal Development Planning (PDP) procedures in that they will focus on the relationship between your programme of study and your overall progress and development, as well as your goals after completion of your course. Personal tutors will be available to meet you at reasonably accessible times and details of these times will be made available to you.

In return you are expected to:

5.4. take part in orientation or other introductory programmes;

5.5. make timely and responsible use of the various support and guidance services made available to you by personal tutors, the Counselling and Advisory Unit of Student Services, the Careers Centre, and the Students’ Union Advice Centre.
E3.7 Equal opportunities

You can expect:

6.1. the University to implement its policy on equal opportunities for students which commits us to:

- promoting access for all who can benefit, including those for whom higher education has traditionally not been accessible;
- encouraging equality of opportunity by creating a diverse learning environment within which individual characteristics are recognised and valued;
- eliminating unfair discrimination in recruitment and admissions processes and in assessment decisions;

6.2. the University to have selection criteria for admission to its courses to provide a framework for fair selection based on merit, qualification, experience and potential;

6.3. the University to be sensitive to the needs of individual students. In particular, you can expect the way that courses are organised, delivered and examined to take account of the needs of those with caring responsibilities, disabilities or cultural and religious commitments. Where it is not possible to organise part of a course in such a way that a student can participate fully, consideration will be given to the provision of alternative learning and assessment methods;

6.4. the University to provide pre-admission advice and information for disabled students and go on to offer continuing support after admission;

6.5. the University to pay particular attention to improving access for disabled students when buildings are modified;

6.6. the University to strive to create a community where you are free from discrimination and harassment associated with such things as your age, gender, religion, beliefs, disability, ethnicity, marital status or sexual orientation;

6.7. the University to investigate any complaint of harassment sensitively, fairly and promptly and in accordance with the procedures laid down in the policy and procedure for dealing with harassment and bullying.
In return you are expected to:

6.8. provide information to enable the University to be aware of needs and commitments which may affect your participation in a programme of study and/or require the University to make reasonable adjustments to enable you to participate;

6.9. follow any procedures for making arrangements for disabled students;

6.10. respect and treat with dignity all members of a multicultural and diverse University community;

6.11. ensure that your behaviour does not discriminate or harass.

Approved by the Academic Board
25 June 1999 and updated annually