Student Welfare Policy

London College of Business (LCB) recognises the need for pastoral (non-academic) support for all students. This is especially important with overseas students, who need support and advice in adapting to a new living environment, as well as a new learning culture.

QAA Quality Code Chapter B4: Indicator 1
Through strategic and operational planning, and quality assurance and enhancement, higher education providers determine and evaluate how they enable student development and achievement.

Student Culture

Many students may be returning to study after a number of years; others may be studying in the UK for the first time. Whatever the reason, the study ethic of the College and its awarding bodies may not yet be fully embedded within new students. If left unguided this may lead to increased absence, a lack of engagement, or even unfair practices.

All students are required to participate in an induction course which endeavours, among other things, to familiarise new students with assignment writing expectations and plagiarism policies. The Admissions Policy provides additional detail in this area.

QAA Quality Code Chapter B4: Indicator 3
A commitment to equity guides higher education providers in enabling student development and achievement.

Researching and Writing

The Research Methods module, and the Study Skills and Assignment Writing sessions, available to all students, start with an explanation of assignment writing techniques, plagiarism issues and mock assignments to allow students to gain experience, without being penalised if they make mistakes. All assignments are to be submitted online and marked online wherever possible, thus ensuring that checking the plagiarism checking software is an integral part of the marking process.

QAA Quality Code Chapter B4: Indicator 2
Higher education providers define, coordinate, monitor and evaluate roles and responsibilities for enabling student development and achievement both internally and in cooperation with other organisations.

Student Attendance and Engagement

Student attendance and engagement is monitored to ensure that students do not ever just disappear. In the case of face-to-face students, monitoring attendance and participation is a normal straightforward process, whereas almost all aspects of an online student's activities can be

monitored in real-time and retrospectively. There are regular reviews of student progress, which should take place to allow early intervention where required.

If a student is experiencing academic or non-academic difficulties this is often signified by a pattern of increasing absence. In this situation College staff will attempt to contact them via email, telephone or using the sort-message-service (SMS). If all else fails, fellow students who are known to have a relationship with the absent student can be asked to attempt to help contact them. The College recognises that it has a pastoral responsibility to help students to resolve issues that may prevent their full engagement.

For modules that have assignment based assessment, the increased regularity of assignment submission deadlines will encourage student participation. For other modules regular formative assessment can be arranged using classroom techniques and the available online tools.

Other aspects of the College Online Learning Management System, which is available to all students, encourage engagement in the wider student community. These include personal blogs, discussion forums, virtual meeting rooms and direct tutor and student messaging.

QAA Quality Code Chapter B5: Indicator 1
Providers, in partnership with their student body, define and promote the range of opportunities for any student to engage in educational enhancement and quality assurance.

The Role of the Tutor

Students who require assistance that their peers cannot offer can arrange face-to-face or virtual meetings with their tutors, or attend one of the regular tutorials or online surgeries. Tutors are contracted to deliver lectures as well as spend time answering student messages and emails. They are also required to be available for online drop in surgeries to answer student queries of those who choose to attend. Each tutor will be expected to handle no more than 40 students, with associate tutors assisting if there are more. If however there is a need, then this threshold can be reduced. What is important is that no tutor is overburdened such that students get neglected.

Each student is allocated two personal contact points within the College. The first will be an academic contact the second administrative. The Academic Committee in liaison with the Administrative Sub-Committee meets regularly and is responsible for responding to student feedback from Student Representatives.

QAA Quality Code Chapter B4: Indicator 6
Higher education providers ensure all students have opportunities to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression.

We encourage senior students (second trimester or second year) who can offer a successful student's perspective to engage with newer online students using our online collaboration tools. This replicates natural phenomena seen within our cohorts with the "seniors" providing encouragement to new students. Such pairing is easily achieved within the online system, as students can be allocated private meeting rooms or discussion forums. It has been observed that many College students are extremely helpful towards their fellow students, particularly if they share

a common culture or country of origin. Often students are also trying to gain valuable experience for their CVs, to distinguish themselves from others. It is highly likely that such students will see it as an honour to undertake such a buddy role. The College can also offer financial incentives to encourage seniors if necessary.

All staff should be monitoring student engagement and raising concerns in the weekly All Staff Meeting. Specific sub-committees are tasked to regularly report students' attendance, engagement, attitude and ability.

QAA Quality Code Chapter B6: Indicator 10
Through inclusive design wherever possible, and through individual reasonable adjustments wherever required, assessment tasks provide every student with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement.

Pastoral Care

It is our experience that further education and undergraduate higher education students need a more specific kind of support than the more mature postgraduate students. Such extra support can be summarised in the following:

The College should provide free access to a trained career advisor (where available) or a careers service, available to all students face-to-face and via email, and regular careers focused drop-in surgeries using the online virtual meeting space.

New applicants may be assessed on numeracy, literacy, business English and basic business knowledge and will be offered extra support classes to bridge any gaps. These can be taken before starting the programme, or alongside. Severely challenged students should be given the option to be placed on a more basic foundation programme, prior to starting their chosen programme.

Being able to search for and source learning materials may not be a skill that new students possess, so we should provide our core books in our library and online to all of our students wherever possible, available to students at no extra cost, or in some cases at a low price. We should provide these as online e-books, but can deliver to students if necessary.

QAA Quality Code Chapter B3: Indicator 2
Learning and teaching activities and associated resources provide every student with an equal and effective opportunity to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

The academic staff assigned to a cohort of students should play an active role in encouraging student attendance and engagement. They will regularly monitor attendance and the assigned tutor should contact students for every missed appointment. Students who are showing signs of disengagement will be required to enter into an attendance contract with possible mark penalties applied for infractions. Such penalties may include capping module marks at a percentage linked to their attendance percentage.

With regard to students studying online, specially appointed local College representatives may play a bigger role in the pastoral care of our students. We will expect them to organise proper student

societies, holding regular online and face-to-face events to encourage students to interact with each other, and hence provide an important social aspect to the student experience. Appointment of such representatives will be dependent on a number of College students living within a specific locality.

The College should encourage and support such representatives with setting up work placement programmes for online students, to enable students to complete an internship after finishing their programme, possibly including this as part of their research for a dissertation / project module.

QAA Quality Code Chapter B5: Indicator 3
Arrangements exist for the effective representation of the collective student voice at all organisational levels, and these arrangements provide opportunities for all students to be heard.

Student Welfare Officer

The Student Welfare Officer is available to all students at all times, either on the phone or in person; to discuss any matter that the student feels has not satisfactorily been addressed elsewhere. The Student Welfare Officer should be invited to all meetings related to students or policies, in order that they remain well informed of matters, to be able to swiftly respond to student enquiries.

QAA Quality Code Chapter B3: Indicator 9
Every student is enabled to monitor their progress and further their academic development through the provision of regular opportunities to reflect on feedback and engage in dialogue with staff.

Student Representation

Each cohort of students should each year elect a representative who will attend a regular meeting with all student representatives, the Student Welfare Officer and staff representatives from each of the committees and sub-committees. Here they will have an opportunity to input into all matters of the student experience, academic, pastoral or administrative. The induction process will inform students of the role and process of student representation.

QAA Quality Code Chapter B5: Indicators 4 and 7
The effectiveness of student engagement is monitored and reviewed at least annually, using pre-defined key performance indicators, and policies and processes enhanced where required.
Higher education providers ensure that student representatives and staff have access to training and ongoing support to equip them to fulfil their roles in educational enhancement and quality assurance effectively.