



College Charter

2009 – 2010

COLLEGE CHARTER 2009 / 2010

This Charter sets out the standards of service we aspire to in relation to all our customers. There will, of course, be exceptional circumstances, but normally you should judge us by the following commitments.

1. Our Service Standards for Students

Before you join the College, we will:

- send you an application form for a full-time course within 3 working days of receipt of your request
- send you a prospectus within 3 working days of receipt of your request
- acknowledge all course applications within 5 working days
- send you confirmation of the outcome of an interview for a place within 5 working days following your interview
- provide appropriate impartial, specialist advice, guidance and information

When you join the College, we will:

- provide a student handbook incorporating an agreement between you and the College on our respective rights and responsibilities
- carry out an effective induction programme within the first week of you joining a course
- provide, during induction, all students on full-time courses and substantial part-time courses (over 120 hours), with a course handbook, incorporating an outline scheme of work and a schedule of internally assessed work for the academic year
- process HE Student Hardship Loan applications within 15 working days of receipt
- notify you of the outcome of your application for Learner Support Funds within 15 working days of receipt
- provide you with a free e-mail account
- give you the opportunity to join the Students' Union
- carry out screening to assess additional support needs of all appropriate students

During your course, teachers will:

- deliver well planned, organised and clearly structured classes / workshops to engage and sustain students' interest
- adopt varied teaching methods to reflect students' preferred learning styles
- ensure that all students get a fair share of attention and have opportunities to take an active part in classes / workshops
- seek to provide course materials and source texts which reflect the backgrounds and interests of different social / ethnic groups represented within student cohorts
- review the effectiveness of sessions and adjust their approach as appropriate

- adopt a variety of relevant assessment methods
- give clear guidance / written assessment criteria for appropriate assessed work
- assess and return all work promptly, normally within 15 working days
- give constructive written feedback on assessed work, explaining what students need to do to improve their performance
- draw attention to progress / improvements to engender a positive sense of achievement
- help students to develop study skills

During your course we will:

- give you opportunities to feedback to us via perception surveys / comments cards / the College "Talkback" suggestion scheme on your experience at College without identifying yourself unless you wish to do so
- give all students on substantial part-time courses of 5 hours or more per week and full-time courses, the opportunity to nominate 2 course representatives per year group who can attend minuted course team meetings (to be held at least once per term) to feedback to staff on course and other issues
- give course representatives some tutorial time to liaise with their student group to prepare for each meeting
- provide you with a nominated Progress Tutor to help plan your programme and qualification aims and review your progress on a regular basis
- ensure that all full-time and Skills for Life students have a negotiated individual learning plan
- post induction, ensure that all full-time students receive at least four further one-to-one tutorials per year
- ensure that part-time students on courses over 120 hours receive one one-to-one tutorial per term; other part-time students to receive one-to-ones as appropriate
- provide sufficient library and IT resources to support learning
- ensure that teaching and learning is monitored in order to improve standards
- give you a right of appeal on assessment / grading
- provide all students on 16-19 full-time courses with an appropriately timed written report on progress
- provide opportunities for additional support in literacy, numeracy, ESOL, Specific Learning Difficulties, health conditions and /or disabilities
- provide all students on 16-19 full-time courses with five Learner Management Weeks per year
- ensure that the returns which initiate EMA payments meet the required weekly deadline on the condition that your attendance meets the required level and any absences are properly notified
- ensure that queries from students regarding their attendance and which affect their EMA payments, are answered within five working days
- provide an enrichment programme of extra-curricular activities to be available to all 16-19 full-time students
- ensure that all students on 16-19 full-time courses can participate in an appropriate skills development programme

- ensure communal areas are clean and tidy
- provide clean and suitably equipped toilet facilities
- provide reasonably priced and readily available choice of good quality food and refreshments
- ensure that classes are taught and roomed as shown on your timetable and any changes are adequately communicated
- ensure that classrooms meet a minimum standard published on the College Website and the Student Intranet
- provide a comprehensive student support service eg careers, counselling, finances, welfare, specialist support etc
- support access to childcare facilities within available budgets
- discuss informal complaints within 2 working days
- acknowledge formal written complaints within 3 working days of receipt and respond in full within 10 working days

When you complete your course we will:

- contact you with exam results within 10 working days of receiving confirmation from the awarding body
- provide you with access to advice on, careers, job search and progression to Higher Education
- provide references for up to 3 years for students on courses of one year or more

If you are a **student with learning difficulties and / or disabilities** we will provide:

- on request, course details and other college publications in adapted formats eg in Braille, large print
- an appointment for a specialist assessment of your individual learning needs within 10 working days of your request
- feedback from this specialist assessment normally within 15 working days
- any reasonable adaptation to support teaching and learning, including specialist equipment and materials, within available budgets
- course assessments in adapted formats as appropriate
- recommendations for exam arrangements, if notified, in line with awarding body requirements

2. Our Service Standards for all Customers:

- customers will be treated in a courteous, helpful, efficient and effective way in all areas of the College
- customers waiting for service will be acknowledged within one minute and wait no longer than 3 minutes before being attended to
- outside phone calls to Reception will be answered within 6 rings
- external letters will, where appropriate, be responded to within 10 working days
- e-mails, where appropriate, will be responded to within 3 working days
- voicemail, where appropriate, will be responded to within 1 working day

3. Our Service Standards for Students in Host Family or Other College Arranged Accommodation

City College will seek to:

- provide safe and comfortable private lodgings with local host families in line with the College Codes of Practice for Host Family Accommodation (PSV Students & International Students – available on the Student Intranet)

In addition for **International Students, City College will:**

- encourage students to speak English within the host setting to assist those learning English as a foreign language.

4. Our other commitments:

The College will seek to provide:

- up-to-date and easily accessible course information
- a wide range of programmes and ways of studying
- equality of opportunity in accordance with the Equality & Diversity Policy
- training and education provision to meet the needs of the individual, the local community and local employers
- opportunities for employers / learners / community representation in the planning and decision making processes of the College
- parents / guardians / carers of full-time students, under 18 years of age, with an appropriately timed up-date on performance
- sponsoring employers with a written progress report on request
- open days
- parent / guardian / carer consultation evenings at least once per year for all full-time students under 18 years of age and those consenting full-time students over 18 years of age

5. If you feel we have not met our commitments:

If at any time you feel we have not lived up to these standards, please contact the Customer Liaison Co-ordinator, on 024 76791635 or e-mail customers@staff.covcollege.ac.uk



College / Student Agreement

This agreement is automatically entered into jointly by you and the College when you enrol. It is designed to clarify the entitlement and obligations of both parties and to improve the service offered by the College.

The College agrees to:

- provide a safe and healthy environment
- meet all its service standards for students as detailed in its current charter.

You agree to:

- undertake your studies with maximum effort in order to achieve your qualification aim
- ensure your identity card is visible at all times and produce it when asked by a member of staff
- attend ALL your classes and ensure that you inform your tutors or your admin office as soon as possible of any unavoidable absence
- be punctual and prepared for the start of each class
- submit assignments / homework / coursework within the agreed deadlines
- abide by the College's disciplinary rules
- show respect for others by NOT spitting, swearing, being aggressive, obstructing entrances / corridors or disturbing study areas
- abide by the Health and Safety requirements of the College
- act in a responsible manner in all parts of the College and on visits / placements
- respect the individual rights of all members of the College and behave according to the principles of the College's Equality & Diversity Policy
- attend additional support sessions that may be agreed with you by your progress tutor as conditions of entry or as essential parts of your learning programme
- attend all exams and tests for which you are entered and notify the Exams department of any unavoidable absences as soon as possible
- use the College computer facilities responsibly and avoid using them for any purpose that could bring the College into disrepute or result in legal action. In particular, not uploading / downloading or running material liable to cause offence to staff or students
- refrain from modifying the set-up or installation of any computer unless instructed to do so by a member of staff as part of a specialised course

- refrain from removing any College property without written permission
- keep mobile phones turned off in classrooms, workshops, and Learning Resource Centres.
- refrain from using portable music players in classrooms and workshops unless given permission by teaching staff
- refrain from consuming meals other than in designated refectory areas (bottled-water is permitted in classrooms / workshops at the discretion of staff)
- refrain from smoking inside and in front of any College building in line with the 'College Smoke Free Policy' and Government legislation with effect from 1st July 2007
- respect the College environment in terms of litter, chewing gum, noise and graffiti

What to do if you have a complaint:

We are always looking at ways in which we can improve our service to students. Your feedback, therefore, is very important to us. You can let us know what you think through perception surveys and comments cards.

If things go wrong, you should contact the College by telephone or personal visit to see if we can resolve the matter informally. Your first point of contact should be your Progress Tutor or Course Organiser. If you are still not happy, then you should contact the Head of School responsible for your course.

If having approached these people, you are still not satisfied, then you should make a formal complaint, in writing, to the Customer Liaison Co-ordinator. Alternatively, you can e-mail: customers@staff.covcollege.ac.uk.

Copies of the full complaints procedure are available from Student Services staff there will be happy to help you at any stage of the complaint process. Please feel free to contact the team on 024 76791082.

What to do to challenge a grade:

If you are not happy with the grade you are given for an assessed piece of work or an exam, there is an Assessment Appeals Procedure. In the first instance you should speak to your Progress Tutor.