THE STUDENT CHARTER

Background

• In January 2011 a report was received by the Minister of State for Universities and Science, the Rt. Hon David Willetts MP from the Student Charter Group. The group was co-chaired by Janet Beer (Vice-Chancellor, Oxford Brookes) and Aaron Porter (NUS President) and membership included the Vice-Chancellor. The recommendation from this group was that each HEI should have a high level, succinct Student Charter drawn up in consultation with students which sets out the mutual expectations of universities and students.

• Although the University already had a Student Charter, the document was reviewed in light of the recommendations of the national group. A University working group was convened with representation from the faculties, Student Progress Services and the Students’ Union. The University Working Group considered the language of the Student Charter in detail and also took account of the ‘Newcastle Offer’ and other Project 2012 commitments. Additional considerations included the need for the Charter to apply to all students, regardless of the type of programme or the campus of study. An overarching Student Charter with relevant appendices was proposed.

• Following detailed deliberation by the group, and consultation with the Vice-Chancellor, a draft of the Charter was considered by the faculties, the Students’ Union, UTLSEC, Executive Board and was approved by Senate on 12 June.

The Charter and appendices will be:

  o included in 2012/13 guidance for Programme Handbooks;
  o included at the front of the Student Guide which is given to all new students when they register;
  o highlighted on periodic Campus Messaging screens;
  o referenced in Programme Handbooks;
  o highlighted in messages on the student home page;
  o provided in hardcopy in the King’s Road Centre (during Registration), King’s Gate and the Students’ Union.
  o Academic Units will include reference to the Student Charter during induction and initial tutorial sessions. The Students’ Union will also promote the Student Charter.
  o The Charter and related documents will be referenced in PVC newsletters and will also be sent to all members of teaching staff

The Charter will be considered for minor textual review at Easter 2013, largely to reflect updates to the ‘Newcastle Offer’. The scale of the annual review, thereafter, will be responsive to policy and other changes in the University.

Jeannette Strachan, Academic Registrar
Professor Suzanne Cholerton, PVC Learning and Teaching, on behalf of Executive Board

21 June 2012
Newcastle University Student Charter

Our vision is of Newcastle as a civic university with a global reputation for academic excellence.

Profound challenges confront societies in the UK and throughout the world and addressing those challenges has brought an enhanced sense of purpose and focus to our work.

This commitment to ‘Excellence with a Purpose’ is reflected in our key aims which are:

• to be a world-class, research-intensive university
• to deliver teaching and facilitate learning of the highest quality
• to play a leading role in the economic, social and cultural development of the North East of England.

Click on the link below to read more about our Vision:
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/about/values/publications.htm

Students are key partners in achieving these aims because University success depends upon student success. To encourage student success, the following summary of commitments has been agreed by the University community and signed off by the Vice-Chancellor and the President of the Students’ Union. The principles apply to all students, regardless of their course or mode of study. This Student Charter has been developed after detailed review and consultation with key academic staff and Students’ Union representatives. The document is reviewed annually. Important appendices to the Student Charter are the Supplementary Statements of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Newcastle University undertakes to:

• require its employees to demonstrate high standards of professional conduct
• treat students as full members of the University community
• require its employees to treat fellow staff & students respectfully
• promote equal opportunity for all students
• work in partnership with students to shape their University experience.

Newcastle University undertakes to provide:

• high standards of teaching, support, advice and guidance
• access to activities that will develop graduate and research skills and enhance personal development and employability
• access to professional support services for advice on health and wellbeing, accommodation, finance and careers
• access to excellent library and IT facilities
• support for student election of representatives and participation in academic and programme development.
Newcastle University undertakes to provide students with the following information:

- published programme costs, payment options and deadlines, and an estimate of necessary additional costs
- a programme handbook which outlines any professional requirements, contact hours, mode of course delivery, assessment criteria, examination arrangements and regulations, academic guidance and support, and appeals and complaints procedures
- clear deadlines and timeframes for feedback on submitted work
- appropriate periods of notice for planned changes to the timetable and curriculum.

Students undertake to:

- demonstrate high standards of personal conduct in their interactions with the University and the local community
- treat staff and their fellow students respectfully.
- attend orientation and induction sessions and meetings with tutors
- familiarise themselves with information provided by the University and follow recognised procedures
- be punctual, attend all timetabled sessions and participate fully in classes and group learning activities
- take responsibility to manage their learning and ensure that they regularly spend sufficient time in private study
- obtain agreement from their academic unit, where possible in advance, for essential absences
- submit assessed work by stated deadlines, collect marked work and learn from feedback
- participate in opportunities to develop and improve provision, such as supporting student representatives and completing feedback forms
- respect the physical environment within and beyond the University.

The Students’ Union undertakes to:

- promote high standards of student personal conduct
- support student engagement with the local community
- support all students to ensure they receive equal treatment and are aware of their rights and responsibilities
- support student representation in a wide range of contexts to ensure that students contribute to the development and improvement of provision
- work in partnership with the University to ensure that student views inform the development and improvement of provision, and the wider student experience
- assist students with academic and welfare problems
- represent the interests of all Newcastle University students at local and national level
- encourage student personal and professional development by provision of a range of information and media, sports clubs, societies and activities.

Date last reviewed: XXXX

Signature
Professor Chris Brink, Vice-Chancellor

Signature
Laura Perry, President of the Students’ Union

For further information contact:
Head of the Student Progress Service: maggie.donnelly@ncl.ac.uk
Student Union Welfare and Equality Officer: welfare.union@ncl.ac.uk
Appendix 1: Supplementary Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities for Students on Taught Programmes

This Appendix expands on points in the Student Charter. Students enrolled on professionally-accredited or international campus programmes may have additional/alternative responsibilities that are detailed in their programme handbooks.

STANDARDS OF PERSONAL CONDUCT

You can expect the University and the Students' Union to:

- respect the needs of the diverse community of students and staff
- treat you with courtesy, fairness, dignity and respect regardless of race, ethnic origin, age, gender, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, religion and belief, disability or political view and to respect your privacy as described in the University's diversity policies at www.ncl.ac.uk/diversity/ and the Students' Union policies at www.nusu.co.uk/content/715283/doc_library/
- endeavour to provide a safe and secure environment free from fear, intimidation or harassment
- promote professional standards of behaviour by all members of the University including confidentiality
- ensure that serious breaches of University rules result in disciplinary procedures against a student, or group of students, as detailed in the University's Student Disciplinary Procedure at www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/ and the Students' Union Disciplinary Procedure at www.nusu.co.uk/content/715283/doc_library/
- comply with UK laws and for our overseas campuses in addition the law of the country in which the campus is based.

You are expected to:

- observe University rules for the use of University facilities and behave responsibly on campus, in University accommodation and in the community
- observe a general duty of care to fellow students, the University and any relevant professional body
- express your opinions in a mature and constructive way
- treat fellow students, members of staff, neighbours and other people in the community with courtesy, fairness and respect regardless of their personal circumstances, race, ethnic origin, age, gender, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, religion and belief, disability or political views and respect the privacy of students and staff
- treat buildings and facilities on campus, at your accommodation and in the community with care and respect
- demonstrate the above standards in all verbal and written communication, including via social media and e-mail.

YOUR ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

You can expect, as part of the Teaching Code of Practice, to:

- receive support to develop as an independent, self-directed learner and as a critical thinker able to synthesise, communicate, evaluate and apply opinions and ideas in a variety of contexts
- receive timely and relevant information about what is expected of you and about support available to you, during your orientation and induction sessions and in your programme handbook and regulations
- be given clear specifications of the intended learning outcomes of your programme
- experience a programme of study that uses a mix of teaching, learning and assessment methods
• experience research-informed teaching which may involve undertaking a research dissertation or project
• have the opportunities detailed in the Graduate Skills Framework to develop skills for learning, life and work
• be taught in appropriate facilities
• have a programme that is supported by a range of web, library, IT and other information and learning resources
• be taught by staff who are subject experts and who deliver a coherent and up-to-date programme
• have academic staff contact appropriate to the programme and stage: a full-time stage one undergraduate student will receive at least 9 hours of academic staff contact time per week as an average across 24 teaching and learning weeks
• have access to module materials within a Virtual Learning Environment
• have access to an e-Portfolio
• be given reasonable notice of changes to your programme of study, timetable or curriculum, where these are known in advance
• receive fair and consistent treatment in line with the regulations, policies and procedures of the University.

You are expected to:
• take responsibility for your learning and endeavour to become an independent, self-reliant student
• familiarise yourself with the requirements outlined in your programme handbook
• take responsibility for your own choices about your programme of study, including your choices about study and assessment
• participate fully in all activities specified in your programme
• undertake sufficient private study to meet the requirements of your programme which the University estimates to be approximately 40 hours per week for a full-time student, including private study. (Note, on average, 10 study credits require 100 hours of study).
• reflect critically on the subjects that you study to develop a deeper understanding
• make positive contributions to group-work and treat other group members with respect
• be responsible for effective time management
• manage your University e-mail account and check daily the e-mails and electronic notice boards for your programme
• take full advantage of the University’s learning resources
• seek advice and support promptly
• fulfil agreements that you have made about your programme of study.

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

You can expect, as part of the Teaching Code of Practice:
• clear information about how your programme will be assessed and an explanation of the assessment criteria
• assessment by a range of different methods
• fairness in the design and marking of your assessments
• timely information about coursework deadlines and examination schedules
• to receive your marks and feedback on in-course assignments within 20 working days of submission (except when extenuating circumstances prevent this)
• useful feedback on assessments, including general feedback on examinations
• feedback that enables you to improve your performance in future assessments.

You are expected to:
• be available for examinations during all formal examination periods, including re-sit examinations or other periods specified for your programme
• check your examination timetable carefully and arrive on time for examinations
• be familiar with and abide by the Rules Governing the Conduct of Examinations which can be found at www.ncl.ac.uk/examinations
• submit in-course assessed work on time, unless you have obtained an extension
• take pro-active responsibility for telling your tutor and other relevant staff about illness or anything that might affect your learning or assessment, as described in the information about Personal Externating Circumstances procedure available at www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/student-resources/help/.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT

You can expect, as part of the Teaching Code of Practice:
• the University to promote high standards of academic conduct
• to receive information on good academic practice, including the avoidance of plagiarism
• the University to use plagiarism detection software
• a clear procedure for handling cases of academic misconduct - www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/assets/documents/assess_irreg.pdf

You are expected to:
• maintain high standards of academic conduct and honesty
• be familiar with and apply the guidance provided on good academic practice including the avoidance of plagiarism
• ensure that your submitted work is your own and that you acknowledge appropriately any use made of the work of others as recommended at www.ncl.ac.uk/right-cite/
• abide by the Rules Governing the Conduct of Examinations which can be found at www.ncl.ac.uk/examinations.

TUTORIAL SUPPORT ON YOUR PROGRAMME

It is important that you feel supported throughout your time at Newcastle so you will be assigned a personal tutor who will guide your personal and general academic development, signpost you to other sources of support when appropriate, and provide you with a consistent personal contact within the University. This is in line with the University's Framework for Personal Tutoring. There may be reasons why you want to change your tutor, for more information see www.ncl.ac.uk/quilt/resources/engagement/tutoring.htm

You can expect, as part of the Framework for Personal Tutoring and the Teaching Code of Practice, your tutor to:
• assist you with your induction and familiarisation into academic life
• respond promptly to any communication from you. In addition, your tutor will arrange to meet you at least twice during your first semester at the University and offer tutorial contact at least once each semester thereafter.
• offer general academic advice on your progress and development and guide you towards relevant skills development provision and careers advice
• listen to you and offer you pastoral care, confidential help and non-academic advice, and to direct you to other student services when appropriate
• liaise with other academic and administrative staff about you, when appropriate, to support your positive development and progress
• provide references for you
• offer you guidance or advice on University processes including disciplinary procedures and extenuating circumstances.

You are expected to:
• attend all meetings arranged with your tutor and respond promptly to any communication from them
• arrange additional meetings if required
• prepare for meetings with your tutor
• make appropriate use of all the support and guidance offered at Newcastle University
• take the opportunity to raise academic or personal problems as soon as possible
• let your academic unit or tutor know as soon as possible when you are ill or have other good reason for non-attendance or for failure to meet deadlines
• keep records of meetings, and agreed actions, including personal development planning
• ensure that you prepare a record of your discussion after each tutorial meeting that includes follow-up actions and agree with your tutor that the record is accurate
• discuss reference requests with your tutor in a timely manner.

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE UNIVERSITY

You can expect the University and the Students’ Union to:
• notify you of all important systems and procedures
• apply systems and procedures in a fair and consistent manner with due regard to equality and diversity legislation
• provide a range of opportunities for you, or student representatives, to contribute to the development of your programme, facilities and services
• provide a fair process for you to raise complaints - www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/assets/documents/StudentComplaintsFormandProcedure.doc.

You are expected to:
• complete the registration process and take responsibility for the accuracy of your student record on the Student Self Service Portal (S3P) at https://s3p.ncl.ac.uk/login/index.aspx
• familiarise yourself with systems and procedures that apply to you and follow required protocols in a timely manner
• demonstrate positive engagement with assessment feedback and opportunities to develop your graduate skills
• raise concerns about the University in a timely and constructive manner.

THE ENVIRONMENT

We are committed to providing a pleasant, clean environment for students and staff to enjoy at Newcastle: See the University’s Sustainability Policy at www.ncl.ac.uk/estates/environment/home.htm

You can expect the University and the Students’ Union to:
• be committed to environmental protection and sustainable development in all its activities
• meet or exceed environmental regulatory requirements
• champion research activity that supports the above aims
• support staff and students in their endeavours to minimise negative environmental impact and improve environmental sustainability.

You are expected to:
• be aware of issues that may impact on climate change and the environment.
• minimise your own use of energy and natural resources and to use and encourage the use of public transport and recycling facilities.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

The health and happiness of all our students is paramount and we aim to ensure that in several ways:
See the University’s Safety Policy at www.safety.ncl.ac.uk/universitypolicy.aspx
See the University’s Wellbeing policies at www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/about/policies.htm
You can expect the University and the Students' Union to:

- take all reasonable measures to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees, students and visitors
- provide you with appropriate safety information and training for activities you are doing whether they are on University property or elsewhere
- ensure that buildings and external areas controlled by the University are safe and in good repair
- provide a smoke free campus
- ensure compliance with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act and any other legislation.

You are expected to:

- take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your actions
- co-operate to enable the University / Students' Union to discharge their safety duties.
- be aware of the wellbeing of your friends and fellow students
- promptly report all accidents to the Safety Office www.safety.ncl.ac.uk/forms.aspx
- provide up-to-date contact details to the University, including details of who to contact in an emergency
- abide by the rules of the University's smoke-free campus.
Appendix 2: Supplementary Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities for Students on Research Programmes

This Appendix expands on points in the Student Charter. Students enrolled on professionally-accredited programmes may have additional responsibilities that are detailed in their handbooks. Research students should also refer to the Handbook for Research Students, particularly the Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes: www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/staff-resources/pg-research/index.htm.

STANDARDS OF PERSONAL CONDUCT

You can expect the University and the Students’ Union to:

- respect the needs of the diverse community of students and staff
- treat you with courtesy, fairness, dignity and respect regardless of race, ethnic origin, age, gender, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, religion and belief, disability or political view and to respect your privacy as described in the University’s diversity policies at www.ncl.ac.uk/diversity/ and the Students’ Union policies at www.nusu.co.uk/content/715283/doc_library/
- endeavour to provide a safe and secure environment free from fear, intimidation or harassment
- promote professional standards of behaviour by all members of the University including confidentiality
- ensure that serious breaches of University rules result in disciplinary procedures against a student, or group of students, as detailed in the University’s Student Disciplinary Procedure at www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/ and the Students’ Union Disciplinary Procedure at www.nusu.co.uk/content/715283/doc_library/
- comply with UK laws and for our overseas campuses in addition the law of the country in which the campus is based.

You are expected to:

- observe University rules for the use of University facilities and behave responsibly on campus, in University accommodation and in the community
- observe a general duty of care to fellow students, the University and any relevant professional body
- express your opinions in a mature and constructive way
- treat fellow students, members of staff, neighbours and other people in the community with courtesy, fairness and respect regardless of their personal circumstances, race, ethnic origin, age, gender, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, religion and belief, disability or political views and respect the privacy of students and staff
- treat buildings and facilities on campus, at your accommodation and in the community with care and respect
- demonstrate the above standards in all verbal and written communication, including via social media and e-mail.

YOUR ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

You can expect, as part of the Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes to:

- be supported by staff who are subject experts
- have a supervisory team of at least 2 staff with appropriate research skills and knowledge
- receive support to develop as an independent, self-directed researcher and as a critical thinker able to synthesise, communicate, evaluate and apply opinions and ideas in a variety of contexts
• receive timely and relevant information about what is expected of you and about support available to you, during your orientation and induction sessions and in your handbook and regulations
• be given clear information about the required outputs of your research programme and about progression requirements
• you will have regular meetings about your research with your supervisory team and your supervisor. While you can expect regular contact throughout your time at Newcastle if you are a full-time student you will have a minimum of 10 formally recorded meetings per year with your main supervisor and 3 per year with your full supervisory team
• have the opportunities detailed in the Researcher Development Framework to develop skills for learning, life and work
• have access to appropriate facilities for your study
• have a programme that is supported by a range of web, library, IT and other information and learning resources
• have access to an e-Portfolio
• be given reasonable notice of changes to your programme of study where these are known in advance
• receive fair and consistent treatment in line with the regulations, policies and procedures of the University.

You are expected to:
• take responsibility for your learning and endeavour to become an independent, self-reliant researcher
• sign your learning agreement and submit a project proposal
• familiarise yourself with the requirements outlined in your handbook
• take responsibility for your own choices about your research programme
• participate fully in all activities specified for your programme
• undertake sufficient study to meet the requirements of your research programme
• reflect critically on the subjects that you study to develop a deeper understanding
• make positive contributions to the research culture and treat other research group members with respect
• be responsible for effective time management
• manage your University e-mail account and check daily the e-mails and electronic notice boards for your research programme and your researcher development programme
• take full advantage of the University’s learning resources
• seek advice and support promptly
• fulfil agreements that you have made about your research.

ASSESSMENT

You can expect:
• clear information about milestones in your research programme, how your progress and research will be assessed and an explanation of the assessment criteria
• fairness in the design and assessment of your progress and research
• feedback that enables you to improve your performance.

You are expected to:
• be available for progress panels and assessments
• submit required work on time
• take pro-active responsibility for telling your supervisor(s) and other relevant staff about illness or anything that might affect your progression on your research programme.
ACADEMIC CONDUCT

You can expect:
- the University to promote high standards of academic conduct
- to receive information on good academic practice, including the avoidance of plagiarism
- the University to use plagiarism detection software
- a clear procedure for handling cases of academic misconduct - www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/assets/documents/assess_irreg.pdf

You are expected to:
- maintain high standards of academic conduct and honesty
- be familiar with and apply the guidance provided on good academic practice including the avoidance of plagiarism
- ensure that your submitted work is your own and that you acknowledge appropriately any use made of the work of others as recommended at www.ncl.ac.uk/right-cite/
- abide by the Rules Governing the Conduct of Examinations which can be found at www.ncl.ac.uk/examinations.

PASTORAL SUPPORT ON YOUR PROGRAMME

You will be assigned a supervisory team who will support your general academic development, signpost you to other sources of support when appropriate, and provide a consistent individual contact within the University. You will also have access to confidential advice and support from a nominated contact outside the supervisory team e.g. Senior Tutor, Head of School, Postgraduate Co-ordinator.

You can expect your supervisory team to:
- assist you with your induction and familiarisation into academic life as a researcher
- respond promptly to any communication from you
- offer general academic advice on your progress and development and guide you towards relevant skills development provision and careers advice
- listen to you and offer you pastoral care, confidential help and non-academic advice, and to direct you to other student services when appropriate
- liaise with other academic and administrative staff about you, when appropriate, to support your positive development and progress
- provide references for you
- offer you guidance or advice on University processes
- while you can expect regular contact with your supervisory team, in addition they will arrange to meet you at at least 10 times per year for a full-time student.

You are expected to:
- attend all meetings arranged with your supervisor(s) and respond promptly to any communication from them
- arrange additional meetings if required
- prepare for meetings with your supervisor(s)
- make appropriate use of all the support and guidance offered at Newcastle University
- take the initiative to raise academic or personal problems at the earliest possible opportunity
- report promptly to your academic unit or supervisor(s) when you are ill or have other good reason for non-attendance or for failure to meet deadlines
- keep records of meetings with your supervisory team, and agreed actions including personal development planning, in e-Portfolio
- ensure that you prepare a record of your discussion after each supervisory meeting that includes follow-up actions and agree with your supervisor(s) that the record is accurate
- discuss reference requests with your supervisor(s) in a timely manner.
ENGAGEMENT WITH THE UNIVERSITY

You can expect the University and the Students’ Union to:

- notify you of all important systems and procedures
- apply systems and procedures in a fair and consistent manner with due regard to equality and diversity legislation
- provide a range of opportunities for you, or student representatives, to contribute to the development of your programme, facilities and services
- provide a fair process for you to raise complaints - www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/assets/documents/StudentComplaintsFormandProcedure.doc.

You are expected to:

- complete the registration process and take responsibility for the accuracy of your student record on the Student Self Service Portal (S3P) at https://s3p.ncl.ac.uk/login/index.aspx
- familiarise yourself with systems and procedures that apply to you and follow required protocols in a timely manner
- demonstrate positive engagement with assessment feedback and opportunities to develop your graduate skills
- raise concerns about the University in a timely and constructive manner.

THE ENVIRONMENT
See the University’s Sustainability Policy at www.ncl.ac.uk/estates/environment/home.htm

You can expect the University and the Students’ Union to:

- be committed to environmental protection and sustainable development in all its activities
- meet or exceed environmental regulatory requirements
- champion research activity that supports the above aims
- support staff and students in their endeavours to minimise negative environmental impact and improve environmental sustainability.

You are expected to:

- be aware of issues that may impact on climate change and the environment.
- minimise your own use of energy and natural resources and to use and encourage the use of public transport and recycling facilities.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING
See the University’s Safety Policy at www.safety.ncl.ac.uk/universitypolicy.aspx
See the University’s Wellbeing policies at www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/about/policies.htm

You can expect the University and the Students' Union to:

- take all reasonable measures to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees, students and visitors
- provide you with appropriate safety information and training for activities you are doing whether they are on University property or elsewhere
- ensure that buildings and external areas controlled by the University are safe and in good repair
- provide a smoke free campus
- ensure compliance with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act and any other legislation.
You are expected to:

- take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your actions
- co-operate to enable the University / Students' Union to discharge their safety duties.
- be aware of the wellbeing of your friends and fellow students
- promptly report all accidents to the Safety Office www.safety.ncl.ac.uk/forms.aspx
- provide up-to-date contact details to the University, including details of who to contact in an emergency
- abide by the rules of the University’s smoke-free campus