Open Study College

Policy Document

Last updated: December 2021

Introduction

This document is in place to provide tutors, students, staff and external organisations with details of Open Study College's policies and procedures.

To avoid confusion, please destroy any previous versions as updates are received. Please also make sure that you use them when communicating our policies to students or external bodies. If you need to copy them for inclusion in course submissions or other documents, you can obtain a master set from the Academic team.

Monitoring and updating policies

Open Study College policies are reviewed each year to ensure that any changes in legislation are reflected and ensure that policies remain fit for purpose. This document is reviewed every December.

Version Control Process

To ensure standardisation all relevant documents and policies are version controlled. The version control document will show all changes to content, person responsible along with dates. A copy of the version control document can be found in appendix A.

Contacts

If staff or tutors need to inform OSC of any safeguarding issues, please contact the following designated safeguarding officers, who are responsible for that awarding organisation.

Designated Safeguarding Officers

CACHE: Zoe Walters zoe.walters@openstudycollege.com

All other awarding organisations: carole.smout@openstudycollege.com

For all other issues regarding OSC policies, please contact the Academic Manager, Carole Smout on carole.smout@openstudycollege.com

Policies   Page

Statements

Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy (POSC01) version 1

Introduction

All members of the College have the right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of harassment or bullying. The College deplores all forms of harassment and bullying and seeks to create an environment in which such behaviour does not occur. This policy is published to inform all members of the College of the types of behaviour that are unacceptable and to provide those who are the victims of harassment or bullying with a means of redress. It is recognised that the College has a duty to implement this policy and that all members of the College are required to comply with it.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all members of the College feel valued. The College is, therefore, committed to creating and maintaining a working and learning environment that is safe, secure and free from any form of bullying and harassment for all members of the college. Where bullying or harassment does occur, individuals should feel supported in reporting incidents. The college takes bullying and harassment very seriously, any breach of this policy could lead to disciplinary procedures.

Scope

The college is: Open Study College

Members of the college are defined as: staff (full time and part time), students, freelance & contractors.

This policy applies to all members of the College within the offices, learning environment including any practical sessions organised by the college for students, social functions and external staff training.

The College is not directly responsible for bullying or harassment that takes place outside the learning environment and off-college premises but will take appropriate action if activities out of College have an impact on a member of the College.

Defining Bullying & Harassment

The College views harassment or bullying as inappropriate or unwanted behaviour by one member of the College towards another, this includes student against staff. It can be physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct which affects an individual's dignity or self-esteem. It may be persistent or an isolated incident, take the form of telephone conversations, digital communications, social media interactions or face to face confrontations.

Examples include:

- swearing and threats of physical abuse
- abusive, intimidating, threatening or insulting conduct;
- unwelcome touching or invasion of private space;
- abusive comments of a lewd or sexual nature;
- inappropriate sexual advances;
- the display of offensive writing or materials;
- insensitive jokes and pranks;
- isolation or suspension from activities
- public humiliation or the abuse of power, position or knowledge

This list is not exhaustive.

It should be noted that it is the impact of the harassment which is relevant and not the motive or intent behind it. Bullying is where the action (s) taken are deliberately intended to intimidate.

Procedure

The College takes all allegations of bullying and harassment very seriously and investigates them thoroughly. Disciplinary action will be taken against any member of the college found to have harassed or bullied someone else. Members of the college should refer their complaint to either their line manager, senior manager or the Academic Manager for investigation.

Where a complaint is shown to be unfounded, guidance will be provided to resolve the issue.

The College reserves the right to initiate disciplinary proceedings against any member of the College who, after investigation, has been found to have made a malicious allegation.

Disability Policy (POSC02) version 2

Head Office and Contracted Tutors

This document covers OSC LTD's responsibilities towards disabled persons in relation to the Equality Act, 2010.

Objectives

- To provide equal opportunities for disabled persons in recruitment, promotion and training
- To ensure that all staff are aware of OSC LTD's policy on the employment of disabled persons
- To ensure that where possible disabled persons are provided with equipment and facilities to enable them to carry out their duties
- To provide a safe working environment for disabled staff;
- To ensure that the special needs of disabled staff, arising directly or indirectly because of their work, are met.

Recruitment

- Every vacancy will be open to suitably qualified disabled persons subject to safety considerations
- All vacancies will be notified to the local Disability Employment Advisor and the principal voluntary organisations connected with people with disabilities, and will contain a statement that suitably qualified persons will be considered.

Duties and working conditions

The duties and responsibilities of disabled employees will be reviewed periodically in the light of any changes in their condition.

Training

Disabled employees will be given full and fair consideration for inclusion in training programmes.

Premises

The OSC LTD offices are fully compliant with disability regulations and include ramp access.

Rehabilitation

If a disabled employee is unable to continue carrying out existing duties every effort will be made to find suitable alternative employment within the OSC LTD's service with retraining being provided if necessary. This would automatically apply to other OSC LTD employees who become disabled.

Equality and Diversity Policy (POSC03) version 2

Aim

The aim of the Equality and Diversity policy is to ensure that no member of staff, contractors or learners receives less favourable treatment on the ground of the 9

protected characteristics within Equality Act 2010 or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. These are.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Scope

This policy applies to all OSC staff, contractors and learners.

1. Introduction

OSC LTD recognises that it is essential to provide equal opportunities to all persons without discrimination. This policy sets out the organisation's position on equal opportunity in all aspects of employment, selecting contractors and learning, including recruitment, promotion and marketing, and provides guidance and encouragement to employees, tutors and learners at all levels to act fairly and prevent discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religious belief, sex or sexual orientation as defined by the Equality Act, 2010.

2. Definition of Discrimination

(a) Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Both forms of discrimination must be avoided.

(b) Direct discrimination occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another on grounds relating to age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religious belief, sex or sexual orientation.

(c) Indirect discrimination occurs where a requirement is imposed which can be complied with by a smaller proportion of persons of a particular age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, than persons in another group and which is not objectively justifiable in the given situation.

Examples include:

- seeking job applications only from persons under 27 years of age and with five years' post-graduate experience;
- demanding qualifications for a course which are not strictly necessary;
- sending only full-time employees on training courses.

3. Statement of policy

(a)   It is the policy of OSC LTD to ensure that no job applicant, contractor, learner receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religious belief, sex or sexual orientation. The organisation is committed not only to its legal obligations but also to the positive promotion of equality of opportunity in all aspects of academia and employment.

(b)   The organisation recognises that adhering to the Equal Opportunities Policy, combined with relevant employment policies and practices, maximises the effective use of individuals in both the organisation´s and employees´ best interests. OSC LTD recognises the great benefits in having a diverse workforce with different backgrounds, solely employed on ability.

(c)   The application of recruitment, training, and promotion policies to all individuals will be based on job requirements and the individual´s ability and merits.

(d)   The application of learner advice, enrolment and support policies to all individuals will be based on the individual ability and merit.

(e)   All employees, contractors and learners will be made aware of the provisions of this policy.

4. Recruitment and promotion

(a)   Advertisements for posts and contractors will give sufficiently clear and accurate information to enable potential applicants to assess their own suitability for the post/contact. Information about vacant posts/contract will be provided in such a manner that does not restrict its audience in terms of age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religious belief, sex or sexual orientation.

(b)   Recruitment literature will not imply a preference for one group of applicants unless there is a genuine occupational qualification which limits the post to this particular group, in which case this must be clearly stated.

(c)   All vacancies will be circulated internally and externally simultaneously unless there are desired skills required that do not exist within the current pool of employees, in this case vacancies will only be circulated externally.

(d)   All descriptions and specifications for posts/contracts will include only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the role.

(e)   All selection will be thorough, conducted against defined criteria and will deal only with the applicant´s suitability for the role/contract. Where it is necessary to ask questions relating to personal circumstances, these will be related purely to role/contract requirements and asked to all candidates/contractors.

5. Learner Enrolments

Potential learners from a wide range of occupational, social and ethnic backgrounds are welcomed, all potential learners will be assessed at initial point of contact for suitability for a course.

6. Employment

(a)   OSC LTD will not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religious belief, sex or sexual orientation in the allocation of duties between employees employed at any level with comparable job descriptions.

(b)   OSC LTD will put in place any reasonable measures and/or adjustments within the workplace for those employees who become disabled during employment or for disabled employees who are recruited.

(c)   All employees will be considered solely on their merits for career development and promotion with equal opportunities for all.

7. Training

(a)   Employees will be provided with appropriate training regardless of age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religious belief, sex or sexual orientation.

(b)   All employees will be encouraged to discuss their career prospects and training needs with their Line Manager or the HR Department.

8. Monitoring

(a)   It is the responsibility of the HR Department to ensure that all aspects of this policy are kept under review and are operated throughout the organisation.

(b)   Where it appears that applicants/employees are not being offered equal opportunities, circumstances will be investigated to identify any policies or criteria which exclude or discourage certain employees and, if so, whether these are justifiable.

9. Grievances and victimisation

(a)   OSC LTD emphasises that discrimination is unacceptable conduct which may lead to disciplinary action under the organisation´s Disciplinary Procedure.

(b)   Any complaints of discrimination will be pursued through the organisation´s Grievance Procedure.

Health and Safety Policy (POSC04) version 1

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 imposes certain obligations on an employer not only to take all such actions as are reasonable to safeguard the health and safety of their employees, but also to be able to show that they are doing so, by producing adequate written policies and procedures. OSC LTD fully accepts its responsibilities under the Act.

The Act refers to what is reasonable in given working situations. OSC LTD will:

Assess the risks in the workplace.

- Have written health and safety procedures.
- Ensure that the workplace satisfies health, safety and welfare requirements for ventilation, temperature, lighting and staff facilities.
- Ensure safe and clear access to and from the building, including fire exits.
- Regularly check the premises room by room for structural defects, worn fixture and fittings or electrical equipment, and take the necessary remedial action.
- Ensure that all equipment is suitable for its intended use and is properly maintained and used.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the fire procedure and regular fire drills are carried out.
- Ensure that all members of staff are aware of the procedure in case of accidents.
- Ensure that all members of staff are aware of and carry out their health and safety responsibilities as set out in their job descriptions.
- Prohibit smoking on the premises.
- Prohibit any contractor working on the premises without prior discussion with the officer in charge to negate any risks to the staff or users.

The Management considers this matter of such importance, that breach of health and safety procedures by staff constitutes misconduct and will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

Employees will also be made aware of their responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act and will:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others around them.
- Co-operate with the employer on matters of health and safety
- Use work equipment correctly
- Provide guidance to users OSC Offices and act responsibly to ensure their health and safety
- Users of the OSC Offices will also be made aware of their responsibilities and will:
- Agree to use the equipment in a safe manner regarding the health and safety of those around them or the management can ask them to desist.

It is not possible to detail here all the health and safety matters that come up on a day-today basis, so staff and management must constantly be mindful of their responsibilities individually and collectively for the safety of themselves and their colleagues.

Contract Tutors & Learners

Although OSC has no legal obligations towards self-employed workers and distance learners we are mindful of their health and safety, therefore we will provide relevant information and recommendations on their own Health & Safety.

- All tutors will be advised on current H&S legislation, safe working practice and VDU's, within their induction process.
- Learners will be advised on current H&S legislation, safe working practice and VDU's, within their Student Information Pack.

IT Disaster Policy (POSC05) version 1

Pro-active protection

The Disaster Recovery Manager must:

- Secure the immediate safety of individuals
- Protect the College's site, buildings and contents
- Arrange as soon as possible, temporary facilities
- Coordinate mid-term plans to re-establish operations

The Head of IT must ensure that:

The computer systems including applications and servers must be centrally backed up on a daily basis.

The backup must be off site.

- A daily log of all backups must be kept within the server room
- All applications and hardware must have appropriate hardware and software contracts in place
- There are UPS systems (Uninterruptable Power Supply) units within the server room for short term (1 hour) electricity supply in the event of a power failure.

Users of IT must ensure that:

- Data must be stored on the central server to ensure that daily backups are taken
- Where data is stored on a stand-alone PC or laptop, I.e. that is not connected to the OSC LTD network, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that data is securely backup up using the guidelines given in the security policy.

Should a disaster occur

The recovery will be handled by the College's IT support company; Abussi. They are responsible for sourcing and replacing all IT infrastructure and equipment and then

restoring all backup data. During this process, inbound calls will be intercepted by a recorded message explaining the problem and admin staff will be provided with College laptops in order to continue to deal with student enquiries and manage enrolments.

It is anticipated that in the event of a total loss disaster the college would re-locate to serviced office space within Birmingham Business Park, which provides immediate telephone and internet access. Key staff members would be provided with "off the shelf" laptops which can be purchased from a local retailer as required.

Total "offline" time should be no more than 48 hours in the event of a total disaster and it is anticipated that the college should be operating at no less than 75% capacity within 1 week.

Plagiarism & Collusion Policy (POSC06) version 1.3

Introduction

As a college we are required by our awarding bodies to ensure that all of our assessment of student's work (grades etc...) are a fair representation of a student's knowledge and understanding of the studied subject. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating undermine the value of qualifications for all concerned because they undermine their credibility. If a student passes an assessment, or gets a qualification, by unfair means then this is unfair to those who have achieved the same qualification fairly. For these reasons the Open Study College will take all appropriate measures to ensure that student work is in fact their own and that plagiarism and other forms of cheating have not taken place. The College will also take appropriate action where plagiarism is detected.

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is a form of cheating, which can be either intentional or unintentional, and is presenting the work of others as your own. The seriousness of plagiarism depends on which form the plagiarism takes.

To plagiarism is to copy work and present it as your own for assessment. If this is done intentionally then it is classed as cheating and any form of cheating is taken seriously. Plagiarism can also come about unintentionally when a student does not fully understand how to source or reference information from their research.

Collusion

Collusion is an example of unfair means because, like plagiarism, it is an attempt to deceive the assessor by disguising the true authorship of an assignment, or part of an assignment. Its most common version is that student A copies, or imitates in close detail, student B's work with student B's consent. But it also includes cases in which two or more students divide the elements of an assignment among themselves, and copy, or imitate in close detail, one another's answers. It is an unfair means offence to copy, or imitate in close detail, another student s work, even with his or her consent (in which case it becomes an offence of collusion). It is also an offence of collusion to consent to having ones work copied or imitated in close detail.

Students are expected to take reasonable steps to safeguard their work from improper use by others. Where a student is found to have engaged in collusion, the same penalties as for plagiarism will apply.

Collusion should not be confused with the normal situation in which students learn from one another, sharing ideas, as they generate the knowledge and understanding necessary for each of them successfully and independently undertake an assignment. Nor should it be confused with group work on an assignment where this is specifically authorised in the assignment brief.

Exam and time constrained assessments

The College regards with particular severity, any use of unfair means in an attempt to enhance performance or to influence the standard of an award, being worked towards or obtained.

The following points are deemed to constitute cheating:

- Making use of notes or textbooks during a time constrained in class assessment, other than when such means are permitted.
- Copying from another candidate's script or work.
- Communicating during a time constrained in class assessment with another candidate.
- Having prior access to assessment questions unless permitted to do so by a member of academic staff.
- Submission of work under the student's name which is the work of another individual.
- Unfair use of technological devices during an assessment without permission (calculator, mobile phone etc.).
- Impersonation of someone who is not the person intended to undertake an assessment.
- Seeking to contact and influence the assessor prior to an assessment or in the case of a referral prior to the resubmission.
- Copying from published or unpublished works of another person except where brief and suitably attributed. The use of material from the internet is specifically included in this provision.

- Any deliberate attempt to deceive.

Tutor Responsibility

It is the tutor's responsibility to ensure that all submitted work by their learners is checked for plagiarism through internet search and their own tutoring experience. If the tutor detects any plagiarism that they believe is unintentional, then this should be stated in the tutor feedback to the student, along with appropriate required actions. The tutor should refer the student to the Internet Detective (http://www.vtstutorials.ac.uk/detective/) for further information.

Student Responsibility

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all submitted work for assessment is their own and that all research and work by other people is correctly referenced by using the Harvard style of referencing. Students would submit a signed cover sheet or assignment brief to validate that it is their own work.

Action on detection of plagiarism or cheating

Unintentional plagiarism will be dealt with by the tutor by providing guidance and support, but this form of plagiarism should not reoccur in future submissions. If a student continues to submit plagiarised work, the tutor will refer the student to the Academic team. If a tutor detects intentional plagiarised work, then this is referred directly to the academic team.

If plagiarism is detected in internal assessments, students may not be able to gain full certification from the awarding body. If plagiarism is detected within an external assessment or exam, it will be the awarding body who decides on the appropriate action.

If a tutor, assessor or exam invigilator detects any form of cheating they must report this as soon as possible to the Academic team. A member of the Academic team will then investigate the claim of cheating. If the learner is found to have cheated, the Academic team will report the learner to the relevant awarding organisation.

All reporting of plagiarism or cheating to an awarding organisation will follow the process of the awarding organisation.

Safeguarding Policy (POSC07) version 3

Open Study College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk and expects all staff, tutors and instructors to endorse this commitment. Open Study College wishes to ensure that it maintains the highest possible standards to meet its social, moral and legal responsibilities to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk with whom the college's work brings it into contact, whilst recognising that it cannot act "in loco parentis". Ultimate responsibility will continue to rest with parents and guardians.

Aims:

1. To safeguard all College learners and particularly children, young people and adults at risk.
2. To safeguard College staff, tutors and instructors in carrying out their duties in tutoring and instructing learners via distance learning and practical sessions.

Scope:

Applies to:

- All learners enrolled with Open Study College
- All staff (full & Part-time) working for Open Study College
- Freelance distance learning tutors (indirect contact; including communication with learners using remote technology i.e. One to one tutorial meetings specific to Access to HE courses)
- Freelance practical instructors (direct contact)

Definitions:

- Young people are defined as under the age of 18 years.
- Adults at risk are defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006
- OSC Staff is anyone directly employed by OSC either full time or part time, who has indirect contact with learners.

- Tutor (Indirect contact). A freelancer working under contract for OSC to support learners via distance learning with no direct contact with their learners.

- Instructor (direct contact). A freelancer working under contract for OSC to provide face to face practical instruction.

Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns

The first point of contact for a learner disclosing abuse will be the tutor or instructor. Therefore, it is important that tutors/instructors follow the correct procedure.

Procedure

- If a learner discloses abuse you must inform the designated Safeguarding Officer immediately, providing all correspondence relating to the disclosure.

- If staff are concerned with welfare issues that may be affecting learners, this is to be discussed with designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.

- If staff are concerned about any learner or adult at risk, studying with OSC out of office hours the following telephone number is a direct link to the OSC Safeguarding Officers **07493569226**

- The designated Safeguarding Officer will then review all reports and/or correspondence to consider next stage.

- The designated Safeguarding Officer will then make a referral to the local safeguarding partners - the local authority chief executive, the accountable officer of a clinical commissioning group and the Chief Officer of Police in the local area. All three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements.

Important advice for tutors, instructors and OSC staff

DO:

- Stay calm and reassuring
- Take what the person says seriously
- Explain to the person that she/he is right to tell someone
- Explain that you will need to involve other people and why
- Be supportive and give realistic encouragement

- Keep and back up all emails
- Let the person know that she/he is not to blame

DO NOT:

- Promise confidentiality
- Make promises or reassurances you cannot keep
- Press for details or ask leading questions which may invalidate court proceedings
- React emotionally
- Underestimate your role as a trusted adult

If staff or tutors need to inform OSC of any safeguarding issues, please contact the following designated safeguarding officers, who are responsible for that awarding organisation.

Designated Safeguarding Officers

CACHE: Zoe Walters zoe.walters@openstudycollege.com

All other awarding organisations: Carole Smout carole.smout@openstudycollege.com

Malpractice and maladministration policy (POSC08) version 1

As part of Ofqual's general conditions of recognition and in particular condition A8 – Malpractices and maladministration, centres must put in place arrangements to prevent and investigate malpractice and maladministration.

Definition of Malpractice

Malpractice is essentially any activity or practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the assessment process and/or the validity of certificates.

For the purpose of this policy this term also covers misconduct.

The categories listed below are examples of centre and learner malpractice. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are guidance on our definition of malpractice:

- Contravention of centre and qualification approval conditions
- Failure to satisfactorily implement conditions of approval within stated timescales
- Centre postponement of visits by External Verifiers and awarding body staff for more than 6 months
- Denial of access to resources (premises, records, information, learners and staff) by any authorised awarding body representative and/or the regulatory authorities
- Actions required by External Verifiers not being met within agreed timescales
- Failure to carry out delivery, internal assessment, internal moderation or internal verification in accordance with Awarding Body requirements
- Failure to adhere to learner registration and certification procedures
- Failure to continually adhere to course and centre approval criteria
- Failure to maintain auditable records, e.g. certification claims
- Fraudulent claim for certificates
- Intentional withholding of information from the awarding body which is critical to maintaining the rigour of quality assurance
- Deliberate misuse of awarding body logos and trademarks
- Forgery of evidence
- Plagiarism of any nature by learners
- Contravention by our centre and our learners of the assessment arrangements specified for the qualifications

- Insecure storage of assessment materials and exam papers
- Unauthorised amendment, copying or distributing of exam papers
- Submission of false information to gain a qualification or unit
- Failure to adhere to the requirements of our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

Definition of Maladministration

Maladministration is essentially any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements.

We will investigate all cases of maladministration in liaison with the parties concerned. If an investigation results in evidence of maladministration, then the appropriate sanctions will be imposed and the necessary steps will be taken to ensure that the learners' interests are protected as far as is reasonably possible. This may include making arrangements for re-assessment or certification, as appropriate.

Examples of maladministration

The categories listed below are examples of centre and learner maladministration. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are only intended as guidance on our definition of malpractice:

- Persistent failure to adhere to learner registration and certification procedures
- Persistent failure to adhere to centre recognition and/or qualification requirements and/or associated actions assigned to the centre
- Late learner registrations (both infrequent and persistent)
- Unreasonable delays in responding to requests and/or communications from awarding bodies
- Inaccurate claim for certificates
- Failure to maintain appropriate auditable records, e.g. certification claims and/or forgery of evidence.
- Withholding of information, by deliberate act or omission, from awarding bodies which is required to assure the awarding bodies of the centre's ability to deliver qualifications appropriately.

- Misuse of awarding body logos and trademarks or misrepresentation of a centre's relationship with awarding bodies and/or its recognition and approval status with said awarding bodies.
- Failure to adhere to, or to circumnavigate, the requirements of Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy.

Our responsibility for preventing malpractice and/or maladministration

We have a responsibility to prevent instances of malpractice and maladministration, to establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, up-to-date written procedures for the investigation of suspected or alleged malpractice or maladministration

We will ensure that:

- All staff are aware of our policies and procedures and receive appropriate training and briefings on these
- Staff have clear roles and responsibilities
- There is a documented internal quality assurance procedure and methodology that is clearly in place and is subject to regular internal reviews
- There are documented internal standardisation arrangements in place and evidence that these take place at least once a year (if not more)
- Learners are informed of their roles and responsibilities in terms of not doing anything that may be deemed malpractice and jeopardise their potential achievements
- All assessment and internal verification activities are accurately recorded and carried out in accordance with their internal quality assurance arrangements and in line with our expectations as outlined in the qualification guides.
- All registration and certification records are subject to appropriate internal review before submission to the awarding body.

Malpractice and maladministration process

Stage 1: Briefing and record-keeping

Anyone involved in the conduct of an investigation should have a clear brief and understanding of their role.

All investigators must maintain an auditable record of every action during an investigation to demonstrate that they have acted appropriately.

The officer assigning the investigating officer(s) will stipulate and/or provide secure storage arrangements for all material associated with an investigation in case of subsequent legal challenge.

There may be occasions when a joint investigation occurs with the awarding body, with the roles of the two teams being clarified by the awarding body. It is our (the centre) responsibility to ensure our investigators are fully aware of the agreed roles and processes to follow in the investigation.

Stage 2: Establishing the facts

Investigators should review the evidence and associated documentation, including relevant awarding body guidance on the delivery of the qualifications and related quality assurance arrangements.

Issues to be determined:

- What occurred (nature of malpractice/substance of the allegations)
- Why the incident occurred
- Who was involved in the incident
- When it occurred
- Where it occurred – there may be more than one location
- What action, if any, the centre has taken

Stage 3: Interviews

Interviews should be thoroughly prepared, conducted appropriately and underpinned by clear records of the interviews. For example:

- Interviews should include prepared questions; responses should be recorded.
- Interviewers may find it helpful to use the 'PEACE' technique:

- Plan and prepare

- Engage and explain

- Account

- Closure

- Evaluation.

Face-to-face interviews will normally be conducted by two people with one person primarily acting as interviewer and the other as note-taker.

Those being interviewed should be informed that they may have another individual of their choosing present and that they do not have to answer questions. These arrangements aim to protect the rights of all individuals.

Stage 4: Other contacts

In some cases, learners or employers may need to be contacted for facts and information. This may be done via face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, by post or by email.

Whichever method is used, the investigator will have a set of prepared questions. The responses will be recorded in writing as part of confirmation of the evidence. Investigators should log the number of attempts made to contact an individual.

Stage 5: Documentary evidence

Wherever possible documentary evidence should be authenticated by reference to the author; this may include asking learners and others to confirm handwriting, dates and signatures.

Receipts should be given for any documentation removed from a centre.

Independent expert opinion may be obtained from subject specialists about a learner's evidence or from a specialist organisation such as a forensic examiner, who may comment on the validity of documents.

Stage 6: Conclusions

Once the investigators have gathered and reviewed all relevant evidence, a decision is made on the outcome

Stage 7: Reporting

A draft report is prepared, and factual accuracy agreement obtained. The final report is submitted to the Internal Verifier for review and sign-off and shared with the awarding body and relevant parties within our organisation.

Stage 8: Actions

Any resultant action plan is implemented and monitored appropriately, and the awarding body must then be notified.

Appendix 1 – Ofqual guidance

Ofqual recently published 'a guide for teachers on authenticity' and to assist centres in preventing plagiarism and cheating. Some of the extracts that may be relevant for some of our qualifications and assessment arrangements are included below.

*Please note although the terminology is school or exam based the guidance equally applies to competence-based qualifications, where students would be referred to as 'learners' and teachers referred to as 'assessors'.

"Because teachers often ask students to work collaboratively this area can be confusing, and teachers should give students guidance about what is or is not acceptable in such circumstances".

For example:

- Students' coursework should be in their own words unless they are quoting from a referenced source. If asked to explain what they mean by a certain phrase or paragraph they should be able to do so.

- Students should always acknowledge, by referencing, any words, ideas or concepts that were originally produced by another person and that they have incorporated into their work.

- Students should not let other people see their coursework. It is often considered good practice to share information. However in coursework this is not acceptable. It can lead to students being accused of collusion, which in turn could mean that students lose marks or have to undertake an additional piece of coursework. Even

lending coursework to a friend, not knowing it may be copied, may also attract a penalty.

- Explain that there is nothing wrong with quoting from or paraphrasing other work but that they must credit such citation in an appropriate manner.

The following list is known examples of cheating:

- Buying a paper from an internet site (also known as an essay bank or a paper mill)
- Getting someone else to do the work for them
- Giving false information about a source used in coursework.

However, students may not be aware that the following activities are also unacceptable and could be penalised:

- Copying sections of work from a friend
- Having a friend or family member dictate something to them (often this will occur because students know what they want to say but can't find the words themselves)
- Copying and pasting from the internet without citing the source; copying directly from a textbook without citing the source
- Omitting quotation marks from quotations
- Paraphrasing without including reference to the source of the paraphrase.

Suggested ways to reduce plagiarism include:

- Asking students to provide an annotated bibliography. (Writing a sentence or two on how useful the source was can act as an aide memoire for students to cite where the information came from
- Making sure that the students know exactly what is required in their coursework. Teachers are able to provide general guidance on the drafting and development of coursework to students; however 'detailed advice' on possible improvements is not permitted.
- Where teachers have the ability to set a coursework task they change the topics and questions from year to year. This means that there is less likelihood that students will be able to 'borrow' an essay from someone who has already written on the same subject in previous years

- Students submit a signed declaration with any piece of assessed work proving that this work is their own.
- Internal verification where a teacher is also expected to verify that the student has produced authentic work. If a teacher is not confident that a piece of work is authentic they cannot sign the declaration of authenticity and the student will be awarded zero for the assessment.

While teachers may sign the authenticity statement in good faith, awarding organisations may take action against an assessment centre if there is consistent evidence that work carried out by students is inauthentic.

Therefore it is essential that the teacher develops confidence in the authenticity of the student's work prior to hand-in of the finished piece as it may be much more difficult to achieve this at the point of hand-in.

- Using the advanced search in a search engine and enclosing suspected phrases in quotation marks will ensure that the search engine returns pages with this particular sequence of words. Try to identify short phrases from the student's work that you suspect may not be their own.

Areas to watch out for which may signal cheating:

- Where the writing style of a single piece of work varies this may indicate a student is using text from several different authors, each with their own unique writing style, without acknowledgement.
- Where a document exhibits a variety of different physical characteristics (such as changes in font styles and sizes, indentation and line spacing) this may also indicate that the work is not the student's own and has been carelessly cut and pasted from a range of different sources without attribution.
- It may look as if an introductory or concluding paragraph directly answers the question while the main body of the essay is made up of vague and unrelated waffle. If you are in any doubt, in any case, ask the student about what they have written. If the work is their own then they should find it easy to justify their arguments, use of sources and their approach.

Data Protection Policy (POSC09) version 1.1

GENERAL

Your privacy is important to us. This privacy policy is intended to give you confidence in the privacy and security of the personal information we obtain from you whether you upload information to our Website, download it, or are merely visiting our Website. However, please note that we are not responsible for any use of your personal information you provide to third party websites that may be accessed via this website. You will therefore need to review the privacy policy of any third-party websites that you use.

COLLECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

When you use our website you may be asked for personally identifiable information such as your name, address, date of birth, email address, telephone number. By giving us such information you will need to consent to our using it in the manner described in this policy. You may withdraw your consent at any time by emailing us at info@openstudycollege.com. We will return or destroy your personal information within 5 days of receipt of your withdrawal of consent. Cookie information, pages you have requested and your IP address may also be recorded by us and/or third parties from your browser as set out in this policy.

INTERMEDIARIES

If you are acting as an intermediary by submitting someone else's personal information, you must ensure that you have obtained their express consent to upload such personal information onto this website for the purposes set out in this Privacy Policy.

USE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

We may use your information to process your service requests, provide access to privileged areas of the Website, to administer contests and competitions, personalise your visit to our site and to enable us to review, develop and improve the products, services, and special offers we provide online. We may occasionally carry out market research and send you details of services and offers that we think will be of interest to you. If you do not wish to receive such information, please ensure you e-mail info@openstudycollege.com or

alternatively when we send you an e-mail, it will contain a provision to allow you to opt out of receiving any further information from us.

DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

We may provide information about you to our employees and agents in order to administer any accounts, products and services provided to you by OSC.

We will not disclose your personal information to any third party unless you have consented to such disclosure or where we are required to do so by law. Should you breach our terms and conditions or terms of use or if we are under a duty to disclose or share your personal data in order to comply with any legal obligation, we may disclose your information to a relevant authority. This may include exchanging information with other companies and organisations for the purposes of fraud protection and credit risk reduction. Any disclosure of personal information will be strictly controlled and made fully in accordance with current legislation applicable to the UK, in particular the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU 2016/679) (GDPR). For the purpose of GDPR, the data controller is OSC Ltd Registered Number: Z134852X.

RIGHT TO ACCESS YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

You can obtain access to your personal information held by us by writing to us at: Information Officer, Open Study College, 1760 Solihull Parkway, Birmingham Business Park, Birmingham, B37 7YD

COOKIES

We may create and access cookies (a piece of information which is stored on your computer and allows us to identify if you have visited the site before) on your PC. Third party advertisers may also create and access cookies, which will be subject to their privacy policies - we accept no responsibility or liability for the use of such third parties' cookies. If you do not wish cookies to be placed on your PC, then they can be disabled in your web browser. The option to do so is normally found in your browser's "security settings" section. However, please note, permanently disabling cookies in your browser may hinder your use of our website as well as other websites and interactive services.

A more detailed description of how we use cookies can be found in our cookie policy below.

SECURITY

All account information is password protected. Where appropriate we use industry standard SSL encryption to protect data transmission. All security on our websites is treated seriously and reviewed by our security & abuse team on a regular basis.

We also undertake security steps, including extensive use of SSL technology, on our back end systems that store customer account information.

At OSC we take security very seriously and make purchasing our services online as safe as shopping at any other store. Your browser will go into secure mode before you enter any personal or payment details. You can check that you are shopping in a secure environment by looking for either a locked padlock or a key icon in the grey bar at the bottom of your screen or for the when the address bar goes green. Being in 'secure mode' means that all of your details are encrypted to help keep them secure. Encryption creates billions of code combinations to protect each transaction made on our site, so your card details cannot be viewed by anyone else using the Internet. If you are using one of the more recent browser versions, our site supports 256 bit encryption and therefore keeps your details as safe as possible at all times.

We only accept payments which are placed using Secure Socket Layer (SSL). This technology prevents you from inadvertently revealing personal information using an insecure connection. No credit or debit card details are stored on our servers once your initial payment has been processed. They are stored securely with Symantec. Once on their systems, all sensitive data is secured using the same internationally recognised 256bit encryption standards. The encryption keys are held on state of-the-art, Symantec's Global Root certificate tamper proof systems, making them all but impossible to extract. The data they hold is extremely secure and they are regularly audited by the banks and banking authorities to ensure it remains so.

If you have any further concerns about security, please email our Customer Service team at info@openstudycollege.com

POLICY CHANGES

Changes in this policy will be posted on our Website. You are advised to check our website regularly to view our most recent privacy policy.

Appeals (POSC10) version 1.1

This policy is designed to provide a fair and consistent method of appealing against any alleged failures to comply with certain standards within the provision of assessment and tutor support. This includes appeals wished to be made against the decision(s) of any tutor or internal verifier on behalf of Open Study College.

Should you wish to appeal against any assessment decision made on behalf of Open Study College, the following procedure should be adhered to,

You should notify the College in writing as early as possible. The letter should state your intention to appeal, providing full details of the circumstances of the appeal.

The appeal should be sent to:

Appeals & Complaints,

Open Study College,

1760 Solihull Parkway

Birmingham Business Park,

Birmingham

B37 7YD

Once the appeal has been received, the matter will be assessed by the Academic Manager and you will be notified within two weeks of the outcome. The decision made by Open Study College will be final. If at the end of the appeal, you are not satisfied with the outcome you can contact your awarding organisation.

Complaints (POSC11) version 2

We take any complaints very seriously and hope that we will have done everything possible to avoid the need for a formal complaint. Please contact us before your problem escalates to this stage and we'll do everything we can to help you. If you still feel that your preferred route to a solution would be to make a formal complaint then it must be sent in writing to:

Appeals & Complaints, Open

Study College,

1760 Solihull Parkway,

Birmingham Business Park,

Birmingham

B37 7YD

Please provide adequate details of the complaint so that it can be fully investigated. A senior manager will assess the complaint. Depending on the nature of the problem and the level to which it needs to be investigated, we advise that you should expect a reply within two weeks of the complaint being received.

THE COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS STEP BY STEP PROCESS IS AS FOLLOWS;

Academic

A learner can complain either by phone, email or posted letter.

1. The complaint will be directed towards the Academic Manager.
2. The Academic Manager will acknowledge the complaint via email stating that the complaint will be reviewed within 14 working days.
3. If it is an appeal against an assessment grade or decision, then this will be sent to the internal verifier to complete an IV report.
4. On completion of the review the Academic Manager will inform the learner in writing of the outcome of the review.

5. If the Academic Manager, upholds the complaint then action will be taken to satisfy the complaint.

6. If the complaint is rejected, then the reason(s) will be explained in writing to the learner.

7. The Academic Manager and/or internal verifier has the final decision in the complaints process.

8. At the end of the OSC complaints and appeal process the learner can take their complaint to the awarding body.

Non-academic

A learner can complain either by phone, email or posted letter.

1. The complaint will be directed towards the College Services Manager.

2. The College Services Manager will acknowledge the complaint via email stating that the complaint will be reviewed within 14 working days.

3. On completion of the review the College Services Manager will inform the learner in writing of the outcome of the review.

4. If the College Services Manager, upholds the complaint then action will be taken to satisfy the complaint

5. If the complaint is rejected, then the reason/s will be explained in writing to the learner.

6. The College Services Manager, has the final decision in the complaints process.

Conflict of Interest (POSC12) version 1

This policy applies to all full-time staff and contractors

Introduction

Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of Open Study College.

Such conflicts may create problems; they can:

- Inhibit free discussion
- Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of Open Study College
    - Risk the impression that Open Study College has acted improperly

The aim of this policy is to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

The declaration of interests

Any member of staff and contractors must declare an interest to a member of the senior management team, for any of the following:

- A contractor working for OSC who also has a contract with a direct competitor
- A member of staff or contractor who is related to another member of staff and contractor
- As well as working for OSC they are also working for an organisation that may bring unfair disadvantage to OSC

If staff and contractors are not sure what if they have a conflict of interest then they should, contact a member of the senior management team for confidential guidance **Data Protection**

The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 2018. Data will be processed only to ensure that all

staff act in the best interests of Open Study College. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

Internal and external assessments

If you have a conflict of interest, you must not be involved in managing or moderating any assessments in which you have an interest. Where this cannot be avoided Open Study College will make arrangements for the relevant part of the assessment to be subject to scrutiny by another person without any personal interest.

Withdrawal of qualification policy (POSC13) version 1

Introduction

In the event that Open Study College have to withdraw from a nationally recognised qualification/s Open Study College will protect the interests of our learners and provide a transparent process for both the learner and the awarding organisation.

Communication with awarding organisation

OSC will inform our centre contact in writing that we intend to withdraw from a qualification/s. This will be done as soon as possible by the OSC academic team. When OSC has notified the awarding body of our intent to withdraw from a qualification/s we will comply with the awarding organisation's withdrawal process.

Throughout the withdrawal process OSC will update the awarding organisation on our progress.

Reason for withdrawal

OSC will provide the awarding organisation with the reason for withdrawal, for example this could be due to low recruitment numbers.

Proposed withdrawal date

As soon as possible OSC will provide a proposed withdrawal date of at least 2 months to the awarding organisation.

Support plan for existing learners

At the earliest opportunity OSC will inform our existing learners that the qualification is being withdrawn. We will also provide a support plan for our learners.

If the learner is near to completion of their course, we will agree with the learner a support plan to ensure completion of their courses before the withdrawal date.

If the learners are unable to complete their qualification before the withdrawal date OSC will ensure the learners are transferred to another training provider or certificated for any units they have completed to date in accordance with the qualification specification.

Withdrawal of learner policy

If a learner wants to withdraw from a qualification the learner must inform OSC in writing as soon as possible.

In the event that a learner wishes to withdraw from a qualification, OSC will ensure the following

- Any outstanding work is assessed/marked and recorded on our student records and recorded with the awarding organisation.

- The awarding organisation will be informed of the withdrawal through the awarding organisation process and ensure that all completed units are certified by the awarding organisation

- The learner is informed in writing by OSC of their withdrawal from a course and provide the learner with their current unit completion and grades.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy (POSC14)

version 1.1

Scope of policy

This policy is provided for customers, including learners and staff members who are using or delivering qualifications by Open Study College

Location of the policy

This policy is available for all staff members, third parties and learners to access.

Communication of the policy

It is important that staff involved in the management, delivery, assessment and quality assurance of qualifications and learners undertaking these qualifications, are fully aware of the contents of the policy.

Review of the policy

The Academic team will review the policy annually and revise it as and when required in response to customer and stakeholder feedback, changes in practices, actions required by our awarding organisations or changes in legislation. Our review will ensure that our procedures continue to be consistent with the regulatory criteria and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

Policy Statement

This policy is provided for centre staff and learners to ensure they deal with all reasonable adjustment and special consideration requests in a consistent manner.

Statement of Principles

Open Study College is committed to complying with all current and relevant legislation in relation to the development and delivery of qualifications We are committed to ensuring that all learners have fair and equal access to assessment where possible and practical.

A reasonable adjustment may be required where a learner has a permanent disability or specific learning needs.

A special consideration may be required where a learner has a temporary disability, medical condition or learning needs or is indisposed at the time of the assessment.

Definition of Reasonable Adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage during an assessment. Reasonable adjustments may involve:

- *changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity*
- *adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in Braille*
- *providing assistance during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader*
- *re-organising the assessment room, such as removing visual stimuli for an autistic learner*
- *providing and allowing different coloured transparencies.*

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place by the awarding organisation before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the learner access to the assessment.

Requesting Reasonable Adjustments

Learners must make Open Study College aware of any reasonable adjustments they require. The Academic team are responsible for applying to the awarding organisation for reasonable adjustment request (when appropriate). All requests must be made following the awarding organisation procedure, which includes at least 7 days in advance of an assessment being undertaken.

Definition of Special Considerations

Special consideration can be applied after an assessment, if there was a reason the learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment. Any requests to an awarding

organisation for Special Considerations must be made by a relevant Academic team member within 5 days of the assessment taking place.

For example, special consideration could apply to a learner who had temporarily experienced:-

- an illness or injury
- some other event outside of their control

Special consideration, if successful, may result in a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the learner. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the difficulty faced by the learner.

All documents relating to reasonable adjustments and special considerations must be saved and stored securely in the centre. All awarding organisations must be given access to any information or documents regarding any appeals, when requested.

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Policy (POSC15) version 1.1

Scope of the policy

This policy is provided for staff members who are delivering, assessing and internally quality assuring qualifications for Open Study College

Location of the policy

This policy is available for all staff members and awarding organisations to access.

Communication of the policy

It is important that staff involved in the management, delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance of OSC qualifications, are fully aware of the contents of the policy.

Review of the policy

The Academic team will review the policy bi-annually and revise it as and when required in response to changes in practices, actions required by awarding organisations or changes in legislation. Our review will ensure that procedures continue to be consistent with the regulatory criteria and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

Policy Statement

Internal quality assurance is a key part of OSC internal systems. Internal quality assurance at OSC is concerned with being accurate, consistent and ensuring all learners have access to quality assessments that are fair and are of a high quality, which results in achievements.

Statement of Principles

We will ensure all assessment and internal quality assurance activities conform to the qualification specification and awarding organisation standards. We will ensure that all evidence is valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient.

The Academic team will produce a sampling plan detailing our internal quality assurance activities   and monitor this on a regular basis. We will ensure that tutors/assessors and internal verifiers meet throughout the year to share good practice and identify areas for improvements. These meetings will be documented and actions monitored.

We will hold regular standardisation with assessors, tutors and IQA's. As a minimum these will be held twice a year. The findings of these will be used to inform annual appraisals, and training and development needs. They will also be used to update centre staff on any qualification or AO information.

Example Standardisation Meeting Agenda:

- Actions from previous standardisation meetings
- Resources, H&S, E&D issues
- Progression and achievement of learners
- Examples of learners work to standardise
- Good practice from assessors
- Areas for improvements
- Internal quality assurance reports
- External quality assurance reports
- AO and qualification updates

The Academic team will monitor the quality of the qualifications and courses on offer. We will consider the quality of delivery, assessment decisions and judgements made and highlight issues, emerging trends and the development needs for assessors.

All assessment and sampling strategies will be agreed with the awarding organisation and we will ensure that internal quality assurance drives the assessment process. We will keep reliable, up to date and auditable records of all internal quality assurance activities. These will be made available to awarding organisations on request.

As part of our internal quality procedures, if assessors or tutors conduct classroom-based assessments they will be observed as a minimum of twice per year. All observations will be documented and actions agreed and monitored.

We will ensure that all assessors, tutors and internal verifiers who deliver and assess on the qualifications we offer are suitably qualified and experienced. All centre staff members will receive access to regular, continuous professional development (CPD).

Anti-Radicalisation Policy (POSC16) version 1

Open Study College is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its learners. As a college we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability. At Open Study College all staff are expected to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Links to other policies

The Open Study College Anti-Radicalisation policy statement links to the following policies:

- Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy (POSC01)
- Safeguarding Policy (POSC07)

Aims and Principles

The main aims of this policy statement are to ensure that staff are fully engaged in being vigilant about radicalisation; that they overcome professional disbelief that such issues will not happen here and ensure that we work alongside other professional bodies and agencies to ensure that our learners are safe from harm.

The principle objectives are that:

- All academic staff and tutors will have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism are, and why we need to be vigilant.
- All academic staff and tutors will know what the college policy is on antiradicalisation and extremism and will follow the policy when issues arise.
- All learners will know that the college has policies in place to keep learners safe from harm and that the college regularly reviews its systems to ensure they are appropriate and effective.

Definition

Radicalisation is defined as the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of the mind.

Extremism is defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views.

Procedures for referrals

Although serious incidents involving radicalisation have not occurred at Open Study College to date, it is important for us to be constantly vigilant and remain fully informed about radicalisation issues. Academic staff and tutors are reminded to suspend any professional disbelief that instances of radicalisation 'could not happen here' and to refer any concerns through the appropriate channels (via Designated Safeguarding Officer).

Staff training

Through online training opportunities, we will ensure that our staff and tutors are fully aware of the threats, risks and vulnerabilities that are linked to radicalisation; are aware of the process of radicalisation and how this might be identified early on.

Policy review

The Anti-Radicalisation policy statement will be reviewed annually as part of the overall policy review.

Refunds Policy (POSC17) version 2

We offer a refund on all paper-based courses and course materials provided they are returned to us within fourteen days after you received them. Courses and course materials are to be returned via Royal Mail Special or Recorded Delivery in the same condition you received them and, in our sole opinion, in a re-saleable condition and not marked in any way. No refunds are available for CD-ROM or online based courses. If you have broken a security seal on any item, then we will not be able to provide a refund.

When you return the Courses and Course Materials to us:

(a) because you have cancelled the contract between us within the Cooling Off Period, we will process the refund due, to you as soon as reasonably possible and, in any case, within 30 days of the day you have given notice of your cancellation. In this case, we will refund the price of the Course concerned in full, not including the cost of delivering the item to you and may offer you the opportunity to purchase tutor support for an additional 3 months any additional add on services purchased. You will be responsible for the cost of returning the item to us.

Any items not returned in a re-saleable condition will be charged at the following rates:

OSC pink box £3.00

Plastic OSC Wallet £3.00

Notebook £2.00

Folder £4.00

Pen £2.00

Highlighter £3.00

Make-up/Beauty/Nail Kit £30.00

Training Hand £50.00

Course Booklets - £15.00 (per booklet)

Full Course pack (inclusive of planner, notebook etc) £25.00

AAT Books £25.00 (per book)

Sage Accounts Software £75.00

Sage Payroll Software £55.00

Lash lift kit £85.00

Lash tinting kit £50.00

Henna Brow kit £130.00

Spray Tanning kit £300.00

Gel extensions kit £215.00

Gel polish kit £100.00

Acrylic Nail kit £115.00

(b) for any other reason, if for example you claim that the Course or Course Materials are defective, we will examine the returned Course or Course Materials for defects and will notify you of your entitlement to any refund via email within a reasonable period of time. Courses or Course Materials returned by you because of a valid defect will be refunded in full, including a refund of the delivery charges for sending the items to you and the cost incurred by you in returning the item to us.

In most circumstances we will refund any money received from you using the same method originally used to pay for your purchase.

In exceptional circumstances where the college has incurred a cost for a student's registration with an awarding body then a refund will be provided, less the cost of the registration fee.

Recognition of prior learning Policy (POSC18) version 1

Scope of policy

This policy is provided for customers, including learners and staff members who are using or delivering qualifications by Open Study College

Location of the policy

This policy is available for all staff members, third parties and learners to access.

Communication of the policy

It is important that staff involved in the management, delivery, assessment and quality assurance of QCF/RQF qualifications and learners undertaking these qualifications, are fully aware of the contents of the policy.

Review of the policy

The Academic team will review the policy annually and revise it as and when required in response to customer and stakeholder feedback, changes in practices, actions required by our awarding organisations or changes in legislation. Our review will ensure that our procedures continue to be consistent with the regulatory criteria and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

Policy Statement

This policy is provided for centre staff and learners to ensure they deal with recognition of prior learning (credit transfer) requests in a consistent manner.

There may be instances where a learner has completed identical units for their course with another provider, within another qualification.

A certificate and unit breakdown for a previous course (as long as the unit numbers are identical to those being claimed) can be credited to the new qualification, as long as the unit has been completed within the last 2 years.

The academic team will decide whether supplementary information needs to be provided (this could be in cases where a unit has been awarded previously but legislation has been updated since). In cases like this, the learner may need to demonstrate current knowledge and competence by way of written knowledge or a professional discussion to update the unit.

Any credit transfers must be discussed with the lead IQA, and information regarding the credited unit must be updated in the relevant sheet on the ILP.

The original unit certificate and unit breakdown sheet must be uploaded to the unit being claimed in the OSC intranet student record.

All documents relating to credit transfer must be saved and stored securely in the centre. All awarding organisations must be given access to any information or documents regarding credit transfer when requested.

Registration and Certification Policy (POSC19) version 1.1

In accordance with awarding body requirements, all students enrolled with Open Study College on qualification courses will be registered with the awarding body in a timely manner (4-6 weeks after enrolment).

The registration process is carried out by the education administration team who run monthly reports from our intranet system to identify the students for registration. These reports are often downloaded as a .csv file and uploaded directly to the awarding organisation's registration portal.

Once registration has taken place, learner and batch numbers (where appropriate) are added to our intranet system to complete our learner administration process.

Certification process

The certificate claiming process for CACHE qualifications is as follows:

- The assessor notifies their IQA when a learner has completed their CACHE qualification
- The IQA completes any necessary checks and then notifies the LIQA (Zoe Walters) that the learner is complete, and the certificate can be claimed
- The LIQA enters grades for graded qualifications onto the NCFE portal and then notifies the education administration team that the certificate can be claimed (this is usually a batch which is emailed weekly or bi-weekly)
- For non-graded qualifications, the process is the same as steps 1 and 2, minus the portal step above

The certificate claiming process for Active IQ qualifications is as follows:

- Once the student completes their course, they are added to the weekly completion report which is downloaded by the education administration team.
- The education administration team then check the students work to ensure all assignments have been uploaded and been checked by the IQA.
- The education administration team then log into QuartzWeb to claim the certificate.

- Where we have direct claims status, the certificate is issued by Active IQ.
- Where we do not have direct claims status, the work is moderated by the EQA who then provides approval for the certificate to be issued.

The certificate claiming process for Customised Awards is as follows:

- Once the student completes their course, they are added to the weekly completion report which is downloaded by the education administration team.
- The education administration team then check the students work to ensure all assignments have been uploaded and been checked by the IQA.
- There is a final summative check carried out by IQA of the course, who then advises the education administration team that a certificate can go out to the student.

Appendix A

Version control and review document

Version Control and Review

Ref No	Policy	Review date	Reviewer	Amendments	Version number	Next review date
POSC01 Anti-bullying and Harassment		Nov 14	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 15
		Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
		Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 17
		Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
		Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
		Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 20
		Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 21
		Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 22
POSC02	Disability	Nov 14	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 15
		Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
		Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Policy are fit for purpose and reflect current legislation	1	Nov 17
		Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
		Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
		Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with amendment made now we have moved premises and no longer have a lift.	2	Dec 20
		Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	2	Dec 21

Ref No	Policy	Review date	Reviewer	Amendments	Version number	Next review date
POSC03 Equality and Diversity		Nov 14	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 15
		Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
		Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Policy are fit for purpose and reflect current legislation	1	Nov 17
		Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
		Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
		Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed and amended to expand on additional areas of potential discrimination	2	Dec 19

	Feb 20	C Smout	Reviewed and updated title of policy and included a list of protected characteristics	2	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	2	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	2	Dec 22
POSC04 Health & Safety	Nov 14	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 15
	Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Policy are fit for purpose and reflect current legislation	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 22
POSC05 IT disaster	Nov 14	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 15
	Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 22

POSC06 Plagiarism, Collusion & Cheating	Nov 14	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 15
	Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Policy amended with new title and collusion and cheating sections added.	1.1	Nov 18
	Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with minor typographical amendments	1.2	Dec 20

	July 20	C Smout	Reviewed with additional student responsibility added	1.3	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.3	Dec 22
POSC07 Safeguarding	Nov 14	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 15
	Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Policy is fit for purpose and reflect current legislation	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with change made to safeguarding contacts	2	Dec 20
	March 20	C Smout	Reviewed with change made to safeguarding contact and in line with new legislation, Keeping Children Safe in Education -Statutory guidance for schools and colleges sept 2019.	3	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	3	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	3	Dec 22
POSC08 Malpractice and maladministration	Nov 14	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 15
	Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 22

POSC09 Data Protection	Nov 14	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 15
	Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Policy is fit for purpose and reflect current legislation	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	May 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed and updated to comply with GDPR	1.1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.1	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.1	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.1	Dec 22
POSC10 Appeals	Nov 14	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 15
	Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	May 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed and small changes made for clarity	1.1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.1	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.1	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.1	Dec 22

POSC11 Complaints	Nov 14	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 15
	Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	May 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed and small changes made for clarity	1.1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with step by step process added	2	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	2	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	2	Dec 22
POSC12 Conflict of Interest	Aug 15	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Aug 16
	Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 22
POSC13 Withdrawal of Qualification Policy	Aug 15	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Aug 16
	Nov 15	T Cavanagh	No amendments required	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 22

POSC14 Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy	Aug 16	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Small changes relation to policy wording, not materially changing the policy itself	1.1	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.1	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.1	Dec 22
POSC15 Internal Quality Assurance Policy	Aug 16	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 16
	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed and small changes made for clarity	1.1	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.1	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1.1	Dec 22
POSC16 Anti-radicalisation Policy	Nov 16	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 17
	Nov 17	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 18
	Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 22
POSC17 Refunds Policy	Jan 17	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 18
	May 18	T Cavanagh	Update to policy. New wording and cancellation charge removed.	1.1	Nov 19
	Dec 19	R Bryant	Changed in line with changes to OSC T&C's	2	Dec 20
	Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	2	Dec 21
	Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	2	Dec 22

POSC18 Recognition of Prior Learning Policy		Nov 18	T Cavanagh	Original document	1	Nov 19
		Dec 19	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 20
		Dec 20	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 21
		Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 22
POSC19	Registration and Certification Policy	Dec 19	R Bryant	Original document	1	Dec 20
		July 20	C Smout	Additional quality check added prior to certificate been issued	1.1	Dec 21
		Dec 21	R Bryant	Reviewed with no amendments required	1	Dec 22

Appendix B

Legislation within OSC Academic Polices

Legislation within OSC Academic Polices

Equality Act, 2010

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006

Data Protection Act, 2018

Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013

The Consumer Rights Act 2015

All legislation is checked on the .Gov web site at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/

Access to Fair Assessment Statement

Open Study College will aim to provide a variety of qualifications which provide all students with the opportunity to achieve their full potential by the most appropriate and direct route. Our policies are based on the concepts of equality, diversity, clarity, consistency and openness. We will endeavour to ensure that the assessment processes are implemented in a way which is fair and non-discriminatory.

- Students are made aware of the existence of our policies and have open access to all of them. These policies can be found within the Solution section of the Helpdesk.
- All tutors are made aware of the contents and purpose of our policies, which they will have to have read and sign an acknowledgement declaration.
- Our policies are reviewed annually and may be revised in response to feedback from students, tutors and external organisations.

What students can expect from us

- We aim to ensure that all assessment of work is carried out fairly and in keeping with the awarding body's requirements.
- All portfolio-based work will be assessed fairly against the qualification standards and tutors involved will be fully trained.
- Internal assessments will be carried out fairly and according to awarding body instructions.
- Externally marked tests and exams will be according to the requirements of the awarding body.
- To be fully inducted onto a new course and given information that can be shared with parents and carers.

- Learning outcomes, performance criteria and other significant elements of learning and assessment to be made clear at the outset of the course and when assignments are set.

- To be given appropriate assessment opportunities during the course with feedback provided on the quality of the work.

- All work to be marked within 10 working days of submission by the student.

- Where equivalents and exemptions can be applied, we will ensure this is pursued with the relevant awarding body.

Cheating and Plagiarism

A fair assessment of student's work can only be made if that work is entirely the student's own.

Therefore students can expect an awarding body to be informed if:

- They are found guilty of copying, giving or sharing information or answers, unless part of a joint project
- They use an unauthorised aid during a test or examination • They copy another student's answers during a test or examination
- They talk during a test or examination.

All allegations of cheating and plagiarism will lead to a full investigation which will follow the guidance of the relevant awarding body.

If a student feels he/she has been wrongly accused of cheating or plagiarism, they should be referred to the Complaints Policy.

This statement should be read in conjunction with OSC policy document and the following policies:

- Disability Policy (POSC02)
- Equal Opportunities Policy (POSC03)
- Plagiarism & Collusion Policy (POSC06)
- Complaints (POSC11)
- Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy (POSC14)