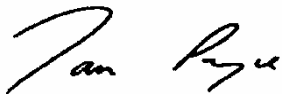


Our Commitment

At Bedford College we are committed to continuously improving the standards of service we offer to all our students and customers. This Charter is a public expression of that commitment and sets out the standards of service you can expect from us.

We hope you will find it helpful, clear and straightforward. However, if you need any further help or clarification, or if you wish to make any comments or suggestions, please contact the Director of Student Services on 01234 291908.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Pryce'.

Ian Pryce
Principal & Chief Executive

PART 1 – STUDENTS AND TRAINEES

Before You Start Your Course

Information, Advice and Guidance

We will:

- provide accurate, up-to-date information about the college, courses and study programmes available
- respond to requests for information within 5 working days
- offer information, advice and guidance to help you choose the most appropriate course
- provide, on request, course information sheets detailing:
 - course title and aim
 - entry requirements to the programme
 - how the course will be organised
 - how and when the course will be assessed
 - qualifications which will be obtained
 - possible next steps/progression after the course
 - how to apply
 - additional requirements e.g. books, equipment, uniform where necessary
 - date when course information was last updated.

We will:

- before you enrol, advise you of course fees and costs, fee remission arrangements and financial assistance available
- before your course starts, advise you of dates, times and hours of study.

Meeting College Staff and Viewing Facilities

We will:

- arrange open days/evenings and publicise the dates in our brochures and local press
- arrange a variety of events with local schools for school leavers, so that you can see the facilities we have to offer
- if you wish, arrange for you to speak to an appropriate member of staff.

Applications and Admissions

We will:

- respond to all applications within 10 working days of receipt
- offer interviews for all applicants for full-time further education courses.

On your course

Induction

You will receive:

- a Student Handbook setting out the services available to you and what you can expect from the College
- a general introduction to the College
- information about Student Services and the support provided
- details about fire regulations and information about relevant health and safety matters
- the names of all the qualifications for which you will be entered
- the name of your personal tutor (for students on courses of 6 hours or more per week).

Course Organisation

We will ensure that your course has:

- a planned timetable
- classes that are well planned and start and finish on time
- opportunities for you to express your views through an elected course representative.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

You can expect teaching which will:

- challenge and inspire you
- help you acquire new knowledge and skills and develop ideas
- give you confidence and increase your understanding
- be delivered at a pace and level appropriate to your needs.

Tutorial Support

If you are studying on a course of 6 hours or more per week you can expect:

- to be assigned a personal tutor
- a minimum of 4 individual tutorials per academic year (or 7 over 2 years if you are on a two-year course)
- a planned programme of group tutorials where appropriate.

Additional Support

We will:

- respond individually to all students who indicate they may have a need for additional support
- provide all students studying 6 hours or more per week with a diagnostic assessment on entry to identify their learning requirements
- aim to provide appropriate additional support to all students who have had a learning need identified at assessment, if required
- provide up to date information and advice on access to buildings for people with physical disabilities
- provide reserved car parking spaces for people with physical disabilities, by prior arrangement.

College Staff

You can expect:

- your course to be effectively managed
- staff to have appropriate and up-to-date subject knowledge and technical competence.

Work Experience (where this is part of your programme)

You can expect:

- support to find the appropriate work placement for a specified length of time
- preparation in the College to ensure that you get the most from your placement
- to have your performance during work experience assessed as part of your course.

Assessment

You can expect:

- to have your progress regularly monitored and recorded
- assignments which help you to achieve your learning goals
- assignment completion deadlines which are clear and enforced
- assignments which are marked and returned according to deadlines given in your course handbook
- assessment which is fair, accurate and regularly carried out

Examinations

You can expect:

- at least one month's notice of external test or examination dates
- examinations and external tests to be held in a suitable environment
- to receive your results within two weeks of receipt by us from the awarding body
- to receive qualification certificates at your contact address within two weeks of receipt by us from the awarding body

Progression

You can expect:

- to have access to clear, impartial careers advice and guidance
- to be entitled to an interview with a Student Services Adviser to discuss your options if you wish to leave before the end of your course
- your higher education application form to be handled efficiently and within the specified deadlines
- an interview with your tutor at the end of your course.

Equality and Diversity

We will:

- publish our Equality And Diversity, Race Equality and Disability Policies
- not discriminate on any grounds, including age, disability, race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief or trade union membership
- seek to ensure that our courses are socially inclusive, ensuring equality of access and opportunity to all learners
- not tolerate harassment, bullying, victimisation or discrimination during your time in the College and provide procedures and personal support for any such reported incidents
- monitor the profile of our students according to gender, race, age and disability
- seek to actively promote equality and diversity
- use materials and teaching methods that promote equality of opportunity and do not stereotype or discriminate.

PART 2 – EMPLOYERS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

We will:

- make available to the local community the names of Corporation members
- provide employers offering work placements for College students with a named contact and clear statement of roles, responsibilities and expected activities of placement
- provide employers with information on attendance and progress of sponsored employees.

PART 3 – WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG

Whether you are a student, trainee, employer or a member of the local community, the College is anxious to ensure that you receive the best service that it can provide, but sometimes things can go wrong. If you are not satisfied with the services you receive you will have an opportunity to make your complaint through our Complaints Procedure.

If you are a student or trainee you should:

- contact your tutor or an appropriate member of staff or
- speak privately to a Student Services Adviser or
- use the 'Have Your Say' section of the student intranet
- contact the Quality Unit.

If you are an employer or member of the local community you should:

- put your complaint in writing to the Director of Curriculum Quality.

If you complain we will:

- acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days of receipt and keep you informed
- seek to resolve your complaint within 21 working days.