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WEST SUFFOLK COLLEGE C H A R T E R

2009-2010



INTRODUCTION

A warm welcome to West Suffolk College and to our Charter.

The primary purpose of West Suffolk College is to provide excellent education and training, developing skills that contribute to the success of the individual and the economy. This Charter is designed to help ensure that we achieve that. The Charter reflects the partnership between the College, students, parents and employers and it is an important yardstick by which we set our standards of service.



We would be delighted to hear from you if you are satisfied with our service. We would also want you to tell us if there are things that we could improve. The Charter explains the procedures within the College that enable you to do this.

Dr Ann Williams *Principal*

WEST SUFFOLK COLLEGE GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT

Principal _____ Dr Ann Williams

Deputy Principal _____ David Howells

Vice Principal Business and Student Services _____ Martyn Wagner

Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality _____ Phil Thirkettle

Vice Principal Human Resources and Clerk to Governors _____ Michael Fell

GOVERNORS

Jan Bloomfield

Stephen Cook

Johanna Finn (*Vice Chairman*)

Ken Golding

David Hills

Cathy Manning

Robert Millea (*Vice Chairman*)

John Simmonds

Ryan Windsor (*Student Member*)

Richard Carter

Paul Dickie

Scott Gerber (*Staff Member*)

Alan Gordon-Stables

Sarah Leggo (*Student Member*)

Betty Milburn (*Chairman*)

John Roberts

Barry Smith

Ann Williams

WEST SUFFOLK COLLEGE CHARTER

The College Charter aims to

- set attainable standards for the services we provide
- explain what can be expected of us
- explain what is expected of students
- encourage feedback from students and employers, so that any deficiencies in our provision can be addressed.

The current Charter is for all our students including those on partner provision. It is recognised, however, that some parts of the Charter are applicable only to students on vocational programmes.

If you have any comments or observations to make about this Charter, please do not hesitate to contact Barbara Beaton, Head of Quality on 01284 701301.

The College is committed to providing

- information about our learning programmes and learner support facilities which is clear and easy to understand
- information about how well the College is performing
- impartial guidance to enquirers, a fair and efficient admissions system to applicants, and a thorough introduction to the College for new students
- information before and at enrolment about costs which the student will have to pay during their programme of study
- high quality teaching and learning opportunities using a variety of methods which help individuals to fulfil their potential
- academic and personal guidance and counselling facilities to students at all stages of College life
- elimination of unlawful discrimination and the promotion of equality of opportunity by fostering an atmosphere of mutual trust, harmony and respect amongst all its potential and existing students regardless of their gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality or ethnic origin, learning difficulty and/or disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age

- quality education and training which is cost effective and which meets the needs of employers in a welcoming and supportive environment
- a healthy and safe environment for all
- a courteous and efficient response to complaints.

GENERAL INFORMATION SOURCES

College Charter Commitment

To provide information about our learning programmes and student support facilities, which is clear and easy to understand.

This commitment will be fulfilled by

- a range of prospectuses which list programmes of study, general information about the College, its facilities and services including the library, information technology and additional learning support
- providing online information about full-time and part-time vocational courses which details entry requirements, course aims, content and structure, arrangements for work placements, where these are relevant, and any opportunity to accumulate credits and progression
- information about our tailored courses for employers via a detailed brochure and a telephone enquiries service on 01284 716333
- providing a comprehensive range of prospective student information on the College website.

PERFORMANCE

College Charter Commitment

To provide information about how well the College is performing.

This commitment will be fulfilled by

- making available
 - copies of Inspection reports
 - the College Annual Report
 - details of the destinations of full-time College leavers.

APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS

College Charter Commitment

To provide impartial guidance to enquirers, a fair and efficient admission system to applicants, and a thorough introduction to the College for new students.

This commitment will be fulfilled by

- open evenings/days where prospective students are encouraged to look round the College and its facilities
- providing further opportunities to look round the College and its facilities by special request and as part of the interview
- offering opportunities to meet with College tutors, which will enable any prospective student to discuss individual requirements before having to make a decision
- all applications being acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt
- arranging interviews for all full-time applicants
- informing full-time applicants of the position in relation to an interview date within 15 working days of the date of receipt of the completed application form
- informing Apprenticeship applicants of a College interview date and providing the interview within 15 working days of receipt of the completed application form
- offering applicants a place on a course of their choice providing that they meet the entry requirements and there are places available. Offers of a place are at the discretion of the Principal.

FEES AND FINANCIAL HELP

College Charter Commitment

To provide information before and at enrolment about costs which the student will have to pay during their programme of study.

This commitment will be fulfilled by

- publishing clear information relating to tuition fees, remitted fees, registration fees and examination entries in the Adult Education brochure and Employment and Skills Development brochure plus individual course information sheets on the College website
- informing students of any additional expenses which could be incurred in relation to the purchase of books, equipment or visits at the interview and, where possible, in the course information sheets
- providing information about sources of financial help, both within and outside the College
- publishing the dates of the monthly Learner Support Committee meetings on StudentNet. An applicant will receive a written decision within 10 working days of the meeting
- responding promptly to applications for Learning Support funding.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

College Charter Commitment

To provide high quality teaching and learning opportunities using a variety of methods which will enable each student to achieve their best.

This commitment will be fulfilled by

- well qualified staff who are kept up-to-date through a range of professional development activities
- well planned learning activities and clear assessment procedures in line with the College Assessment Policy
- the provision of challenging and relevant programmes of study which cater to a wide range of learning styles and the individual needs of the College's students
- where appropriate, providing the opportunity to take part in a learning programme from home or a place of work

- ensuring that qualifications offered by the College are validated by an appropriate external awarding body wherever possible. Programmes of study will meet the criteria laid down by the awarding body and this will be assured by the College's quality processes
- where a learning programme is modularised, tutors will provide individual guidance and support to ensure that it produces a sound and logical course of study and offers the opportunity for credit accumulation and transfer
- where appropriate, having work experience as part of a student's programme of study. The work experience will be integrated with the programme of study and the students will be well prepared and debriefed
- enriching the student's experience by providing, where appropriate, visiting speakers, trips and residentials
- programmes which are regularly reviewed and updated
- action planning and implementation of improvements identified in self assessment reviews
- providing course handbooks which give information on the aims of the learning programme, the syllabus content, methods of assessment and access to appeals procedures against assessment decisions
- providing students with access to and support in using industry standard information technology
- responding to learners by taking account of their views and acting upon them.
- providing information on accommodation by signposting to the relevant agency
- an online Student Handbook which details the College's expectations of students, and its commitment to them and listing the College's policy on rules, disciplinary procedures, security and health and safety
- designated staff who will be able to give advice on personal difficulties including finance and transport
- tutors and Connexions Suffolk advisers working in the College, providing careers advice and guidance, including support in making applications to higher education
- providing information on the range of College facilities and services available to students via the Student Handbook, notice boards, personal counselling and interviews
- all students being given a named member of staff who will regularly review the student's progress and offer advice and guidance on academic issues.

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

College Charter Commitment

To provide academic and personal guidance, counselling and support facilities to students at all stages of College life.

This commitment will be fulfilled by

- applicants receiving advice and guidance on the most suitable programme of study available to meet their requirements, while taking account of their existing knowledge, skills and experience
- referral to external guidance agencies such as Connexions Suffolk or other colleges/training providers if this is deemed appropriate

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

College Charter Commitment

To eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity by fostering an atmosphere of mutual trust, harmony and respect amongst all its potential and existing students regardless of their gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality or ethnic origin, learning difficulty and/or disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age.

This commitment will be fulfilled by

- providing a written College Equal Opportunities Policy available on request
- monitoring and reviewing of the Equal Opportunities Policy and procedures by named coordinators on a regular basis
- offering a Learning Support service which includes
- allowing applicants and students to identify the need for additional support as early as possible via the application and enrolment forms and the interview process and throughout the course

- screening all full-time and part-time students (over 120 annual hours of study) for literacy and numeracy to assess and provide the level of learning support required for those learners who may need help
- providing information about Learning Support in the College prospectuses
- providing hard copy or online information detailing specific provision for students with learning difficulties and disabilities
- the Disability Manager or other staff liaising with applicants, students, parents, tutors and other professionals, and coordinating and providing an appropriate support programme wherever possible
- enabling students with learning difficulties or disabilities to participate in the life and work of the College as fully as possible according to their individual abilities
- providing a clearly signed campus which identifies existing facilities for the disabled. The College is committed to making all reasonable adjustments to its provision to ensure that disabled students and other disabled people are not substantially disadvantaged. The College recognises that not all of the campus is accessible to disabled students and is working towards improving this
- promoting diversity generally and in particular by providing a range of programmes designed to encourage access by underrepresented groups
- working with voluntary agencies and other professionals to ensure our provision meets the perceived needs of all relevant groups within the community we serve
- implementing procedures contained in the Equal Opportunities Policy which will actively discourage discrimination of all kinds.

HEALTH & SAFETY

College Charter Commitment

To provide a healthy and safe environment for all.

This commitment will be fulfilled by

- fully complying with all health & safety legislation
- delivering the 'Every Child Matters' entitlement and extending this to all learners where possible.

COMPLAINTS

College Charter Commitment

To provide a courteous and efficient response to complaints.

This commitment will be fulfilled by

- having a copy of the College Complaints Procedure available on request and within the online Student Handbook
- ensuring that complaints are acknowledged within 5 working days
- providing a written response within 10 working days of the acknowledgement
- all complaints receiving a full explanation and in the event of a complaint being deemed unsubstantiated by the College, the reasons for its rejection will be given
- the effectiveness of the Complaints Procedure being monitored as part of the College quality assurance system
- welcoming positive comments and constructive suggestions.

WEST SUFFOLK COLLEGE EMPLOYERS' CHARTER

Our promise to you

Pre Course we will

- Keep you informed of our products and services
- Respond to new enquiries within two working days
- Wherever possible suggest an appropriate alternative contact, if we cannot provide the required product or service
- Where programmes are advertised, upon request comprehensive course information will be provided within five working days
- Agree a level of service with you prior to commencing any delivery
- Provide clear information relating to all fees for our services
- Provide essential course information such as dates, times, course content, assessment, success criteria, commitment required and how we will report absence and learner success

On Course we will provide

- Well qualified staff
- Planned learning activities using appropriate learning materials
- Regular absence reports
- Regular reports on progress

Post Course we will

- Monitor and measure the impact of the training on your business

Cancellations

- If, due to unforeseen circumstances or low recruitment, we are unable to deliver our service we will give five working days notice of cancellation and wherever possible an alternative will be offered.
- Where a programme or service is cancelled due to circumstances outside the control of the College an alternative will be offered.

Complaints

- Should you be unhappy with any aspect of our service we will ensure that complaints are acknowledged within five working days and a written response is sent within ten days.
- Formal complaints should be addressed to the Principal.

The implementation of the Charter will be monitored regularly.

CONTACT NUMBERS

Clerk to the Governors Michael Fell	01284 701301
Services to Business Elizabeth Bray	01284 716246
Information Centre	01284 716333
Student Welfare Sarah-Louise Neesam	01284 716319
Disability Manager Andy Carmichael	01284 716257
Equal Opportunities Coordinator Ian Mathers	01284 716262

West Suffolk College Learning Centres

Bury St Edmunds	01284 716348
Haverhill Learning Centre	01440 712177
Mildenhall Learning Centre	01638 715001
Stowmarket Learning Centre	01449 613903
Sudbury Learning Centre	01787 880619
IP City	01473 690842

Or write to

West Suffolk College
Out Risbygate
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP33 3RL

Telephone 01284 701301
Facsimile 01284 750561

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