



UK COLLEGE
OF BUSINESS AND COMPUTING

UKCBC Duties under the Consumer Rights Act: A Statement

Reviewed by	ND
Reviewed on	Nov 2019
Approved by	ASQC
Next reviewed by	Nov 2020
Version	V2.3

Introduction

UKCBC is fully committed to ensuring that the material and messages provided to prospective and current students is as accurate and relevant as possible. UKCBC recognises that personal situations and corporate environments may change over the course of a student's course, and the college will endeavour to engage with student communication in a timely and realistic manner.

The 2015 Consumer Rights Act can be used to focus attention on the college communication and public information activity to ensure it is clear and accurate leading to informed choices by prospective students.

Links to QAA Quality Code and other external references

This document is designed to underpin the delivery of the prime function of this college that is to enable student to make an informed choice about studying at UKCBC. In doing so it takes reference from the Quality Code Expectation **Part C**

Higher education providers produce information for their intended audiences about the learning opportunities they offer that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

Additionally, this statement resonates with the following consumer legislation and Competition and Markets Authority advice:

- The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPRs);
- The Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 (CCRs);
- Unfair terms legislation (Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999 (UTCCRs) for contracts concluded prior to 1 October 2015, and Parts 1 and 2 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015 (CRA)
- UK higher education providers – advice on consumer protection law (CMA 2015)
- Undergraduate students: your rights under consumer law
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415732/Undergraduate_students_-_your_rights_under_consumer_law.pdf

Links to other policies

The remainder of this statement will relate to student communication. As such it will also relate to the following policies

- Public Information Policy
- Admissions and recruitment policies,
- Complaints policy, and
- Appeals policy

Scope and definition of consumer rights

For the purposes of UK Legislation, UKCBCs students are considered as consumers who are in contract for the receipt of educational services. As such they, the services of the college and the central relationship between the student and college organisation are within the scope of the relevant legislation and advice.

The key operational areas that are within the scope of the legislation and this statement are:

- Information provided to students (prospective and current)
- Terms and conditions of the educational offer
- Complaint handling process.

UKCBC is committed to sustaining an honest and transparent environment by ensuring that all communication is **accurate, comprehensive, clear** and **timely**. Additionally, communication will be personal and durable in that it can be accessed by a named individual in paper or email medium and unable to be modified.

Pre-contract information

This is to consider all material provided about the college and its educational services to enable a fair and informed decision to be made relating to studying at the college. This information includes the following:

- Course Information
 - Course title
 - Entry requirements including English language proficiency
 - Mandatory units and those that the students may choose from
 - Delivery information: length of course, class hours, work placements, amount of self-study time, general experience of staff
 - Methods and rules of assessment
 - Final qualification gained on successful achievement of assignments
 - Possible locations of study
 - Dates of course duration and college closure
 - Details of any accreditation or affiliation to a professional body
 - Details of course designation
- Total Course Costs
 - Tuition fees
 - Awarding body registration and examination fees
 - Other fees including software license and equipment hire fees
 - Expected schedule of payment of fees
- Physical Environment
 - Accessibility of the location for people with disabilities
 - The arrangement of the premises
 - Opening hours of services including the library

Information about the programme is expected to be highly visible and easily accessed. Any documents hosted on the website will be clearly catalogued in a logical order to enable concise

navigation to the required information. Equally, documents and information will not portray misleading suggestions relating to location of programmes or affiliation with specific bodies.

The college undertakes that no changes will be made to the Pre-contract information so that no student is disadvantaged by any amendments. The college will not reserve the right to make any changes to pre-contract information without notification. Any anticipated changes to the college operation and details of the pre-contract information will be communicated and published as soon as possible, and subject to the test of fairness.

Additionally, as UKCBC makes an offer of studies in response to the student application, this offer is considered a **distance contract** when the prospective student accepts the offer. Details of the distance contract must include:

- Details of the education available and qualification to be achieved
- Conditions of the offer
- Duration of the contract – the standard length of the programme
- Total costs
- Information about UKCBC's complaint and appeals processes and links to the relevant policies and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education
- Information about the right to **cancel the contract within 14 days** of the date of the contract – details of how the cancellation can be made

UKCBC will also provide the student with paper based or email confirmation of the contract/agreement and the pre-contract information that is specific to the student and their chosen programme of study.

Terms and Conditions

These are covered by a number of separate documents at UKCBC and include the rights and obligations expected of UKCBC to the student population and also those expected of individual students. In every way they are to be **fair, accessible and transparent**. These may be covered in

- The student charter
- The student handbook
- Various policies and processes

UKCBC will draw the attention of the student to any important terms or those whose significance may be missed, particularly before a student accepts an offer to study with UKCBC. In reality this must be prior to meeting any conditional requirements of an offer or enrolment.

Where terms and conditions are publically available, UKCBC endeavours to write them in plain English and ensure they are easily accessed on the college website. Additionally, the college is committed that all terms are fair and balance the need of the student and the college.

The college will endeavour not to make changes to programme details, however where changes are required, UKCBC will ensure they are fair by informing students of the circumstances when, and reasons why a change is required.

UKCBC will not withhold certification if students owe non-tuition fees to the college.

Complaint Handling Process

UKCBC takes the receipt of **complaints and appeals** very seriously and uses such incidents to inform improvement to its operations. As such the policies and processes that relate to complaints and appeals will ensure fairness to the student body and its individuals whilst the process is undertaken in a clear and logical manner. These policies will be made available in paper form, email or on the public facing website, to all students including prospective students prior to acceptance of an offer to study.

As a member of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education redress scheme, UKCBC is clear of its responsibilities to students relating to complaints and appeals as follows the Good Practice Framework and remit of the OIA, including escalation of complaints and appeals to the OIA if all internal processes have been exhausted.

Where a student may have a concern relating to UKCBC's obligations under Consumer law, the college welcomes direct dialogue with the student. They may in the first instance raise the concern through the complaints process. Equally they may wish to discuss their concern with a Student Class Representative or Lead Campus Representative. An external route could be with the Citizens Advice Bureau.

If appropriate, a student may to raise a consumer law concern with any of the following bodies:

- Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)
- Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), or
- QAA.

Each of the above bodies have particular remits and criteria within which to investigate concerns that have been brought to them. UKCBC would work collaboratively with each in any investigation, nevertheless would strive to enter into any concerns directly with students in the first place.