

## WELFARE REPRESENTATION AND FEEDBACK POLICY

### 1. STUDENT REPRESENTATION

Learning and teaching and welfare are central to the work of Athena Global Education (AGE) This Policy provides a framework for the management of student representation in order to support a learning-teaching partnership between staff and students.

As the programme is delivered on-line there is no effective group of learners that would elect a representative. All learners participate as individuals. This does not detract from the ability of learners to represent themselves, and also to express the views of others. The learners are often in touch with each other via formal and informal on-line groups.

Individual learners can express concerns and/or provide positive feedback by contacting their Personal Tutor. The Tutor can provide advice and guidance, collect feedback and solicit actions on the part of senior managers.

### 2. PASTORAL SUPPORT

Athena Global Education (AGE) recognizes the need for pastoral (non-academic) support for all its students. This Policy has been developed in accordance with the College mission statement and with the UK Quality Code.

Many students may be returning to study after a gap from studies and for some it may be the first time studying at this Level. In such scenarios, students will be guided fully to complete their course of study and to acquire functional and transferrable skills.

Academic support is provided at different points of the cycle and includes opportunities for formative assessment and feedback prior to the formal submission. Students are given extensive and helpful on-line feedback on their assessed work.

During the assessment process plagiarism is checked through Turnitin software which is widely used in the industry to monitor the authenticity of students' summative assessment work which ultimately contributes towards students' progression and attainment.

Student participation is monitored. The College has extensive support resources available on-line through which all learners are encouraged to engage in the wider community, e.g. on-line chat, instant messaging, blogs and forums.

In addition to individual contact, the College uses student questionnaires to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the learning environment and wider non-academic pastoral support.

### **3. PASTORAL CARE**

Athena Global Education (AGE) provides pastoral care through the Manager – Student Welfare/ or Counsellors signposting a wide range of student support services, that include academic support through Faculties and Personal Tutors, and student welfare services through Manager Welfare and Counsellors.

**Student transitions:** Students are provided with study skills material which equips them with the required skills to search for learning material, and build transferrable skills, which are effective and valuable throughout their lives. Student support staff (academic and pastoral) provide guidance and respond to students' feedback, which makes the student learning experience both memorable and of lasting value.

### **4. FACILITATING DEVELOPMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT**

The College continues to develop a programme of enrichment enhance the learning experience. The activities will vary from term to term. Activities may include:

- Motivational speakers;
- Dedicated sessions for progression opportunities.

## **5. WELFARE INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE**

The College prides itself on providing students with academic and non-academic support before, during and after their studies. The College offers educational guidance and welfare support to ensure students are 'comfortable' and able to fully focus on their academic studies during their time at Athena Global Education (AGE).

Welfare provision is embedded throughout the Curriculum and across the College. Advice and guidance are available and the welfare team can be contacted via the on-line platform.

## **6. PERSONAL SUPPORT**

All learners are allocated a personal tutor. The personal tutor can provide academic and non-academic advice on a wide range of issues. This might include health issues that affect the learner's ability to meet deadlines, or any other matter that inhibits learning.

The personal tutor is allocated to the learner for the duration of their programme.

## **7. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES**

We offer a learning framework which promotes equal opportunities for those who have special needs arising from race, gender, religion, disability or learning disability. Therefore, in adhering to this philosophy, we intend to make the following provisions through course delivery:

- Learners will be made aware of the precise requirements for the qualification on entry and again during the induction programme. Registration of students does not occur until after induction, therefore Learners will not be penalised if they decide to opt out of the course.
- Learning by a range of methods, including plans for open- and blended-learning will be made available to suit a wide range of individual needs.
- No upper or lower age limits will be specified for assessment and award of a qualification, other than restrictions imposed by the awarding body.
- Any learner with special needs will be strongly encouraged to pursue Modules of competence in which they have a reasonable chance of attaining the required standard. The assessment staff will support those who require assistance in obtaining appropriate learning opportunities and assistance.
- Any discriminatory or unfair behaviour displayed by learners towards other learners or staff will not be tolerated. Such behaviour may result in the learner being asked to leave the course and, if relevant, their employer being informed.
- Curriculum delivery and learning materials will not discriminate against any person or group.

## **8. LEARNERS SUPPORT**

Information advice and guidance is embedded throughout the learner journey, ensuring support for the individual, from entry into learning through to completion and progression into employment or further learning.

Learners receive a range of support through a combination of services and support activities:

- Comprehensive Induction programme prior to course delivery.
- 24/7 access to the College website to submit email enquiries.
- On-line appointments with specialist staff, arranged outside the Curriculum timetable, wherever possible.
- Remote access to Athena Global Education (AGE) Student learning portal.

- Sign-posting to other Institutions where needs cannot be met at Athena Global Education (AGE).
- Published on-line procedures and policies for special considerations and right of appeal.

## 9. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

We view disability as a sensitive issue and appreciate the many barriers which hinder the progress of disabled people. The College makes every possible effort to remove these barriers.

**Visual and Audible Impairment:** The College aims to make all reasonable adjustments to the on-line environment. In some cases, an application can be made to the awarding body, proposing alternative assessment methods.

**Learning Difficulties:** The most common type of learning difficulty that we encounter is dyslexia. The College will give impartial advice about external agencies and organisations, who can offer additional support to help learners be successful.

## 10. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS POLICY

This policy is for the staff of AGE to ensure they deal with all reasonable adjustment and special consideration requests in a consistent manner.

It is important that centre staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of AGE Institute qualifications are fully aware of the contents of the policy and are able to advise learners appropriately. AGE Institute will review the policy as part of its annual self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer and learner feedback, changes in our practices, requirements from the qualifications regulators or changes in legislation.

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. It is made to an assessment for a qualification to enable a disabled learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding of the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the integrity of what needs to be assessed, but may involve:

- Changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity;
- Adapting assessment materials, such as using oral methods rather than written;
- Providing assistance during assessment, such as a reader;
- Using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software;

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the learner access to the assessment. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a learner's work.

AGE is only required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access to assessment. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence standards and health and safety, will also be taken into consideration. The reasonable adjustments that can be given will vary widely from qualification to qualification.

If the application for special consideration is successful, the learner's performance will be reviewed in the light of available evidence. Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage; neither should its use cause the user of the certificate to be misled regarding a learner's achievements. The learner's result must reflect his / her achievement in the assessment and not necessarily his / her potential ability.

## 11. SAFEGUARDING POLICY & DISCIPLINE

- AGE has a number of staff and students as major stakeholders in the organization. It will ensure that for young students, the working professional students and the AGE staff, the organization will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to the students' and staff are minimized.
- Any physical abuse rendered to any student or staff member will be dealt with speed, confidentiality maintained and swift action taken against the defaulters as per the disciplinary procedures laid down by AGE.
- Any injury sustained by a student or staff member at the premises will be evacuated immediately to the nearest hospital/ clinic.
- Any sexual abuse or sexual harassment case will be dealt in a sensitive manner, ensuring confidentiality and taking swift action against defaulters, after a sustained investigation in the matter.
- Financial abuse in the form of extortion of money or money laundering matter will be investigated and appropriate action taken within the laws of the land and AGE disciplinary policy.
- Any discriminatory act or adverse remark by an individual will be addressed quickly by the constituted Disciplinary Committee of AGE by taking appropriate action against the defaulter.
- Parents of young learners will be informed immediately if the interest of their child is being compromised at any time by external or internal personnel/agencies.
- Any allegations against a staff member will be investigated in detail and action taken appropriately against defaulters.
- The Disciplinary Committee for students' affairs will be headed by Academic Head, Sr. Faculty, one Course Leader, one Course Administrator and one Student.

- The Disciplinary Committee for employees will be headed by the College Head and four other staff members.
- Safeguarding policy modus operandi will follow the basic principles of “Prevention, Protection & Support” of any affected individual(s).
- The Disciplinary Committee will carry out a thorough investigation into the charges filed against a student or an employee. Disciplinary proceedings will be noted, along with all investigation details, including giving a hearing to the student or employee accused with an indiscipline charge.

## **12. THE ACTIVE STUDENT**

**Strategies the College will operate to achieve its objectives are:**

### **Induction**

- The Induction process covers health, safety, equal opportunities, and expectations of on-line behaviour, discipline and consequences of inappropriate behaviour.
- Students and staff will have access to key policies and receive a clear message about the College culture and expectations.
- Induction materials are suitably adapted to guide and support teaching sessions.

### **Expectations of Behaviour**

- We ensure that students fully understand that inappropriate on-line behaviour will be challenged with clearly laid out consequences.
- Through confidential on-line meetings with the Welfare Manager, we ensure students can express and report concerns about inappropriate behaviour.
- We encourage students to express their views and contribute to ways of improving how the College manages its expectations of behaviour.

### **Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy**



- We ensure that clear messages are sent to all students, that any form of harassment, bullying and discrimination will not be accepted, and if proven will lead to disciplinary action.
- We ensure staff are aware of the policies relating to harassment, and that the management provide support for staff to deal effectively with these issues.

### **13. STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING: STUDENT FEEDBACK**

Student feedback is collected through quantitative and qualitative questionnaires for students to complete, as well as individual tutorials with their tutors. The feedback tools invite students to reflect on the positive aspects of their learning experience, as well as proposing recommendations for change and improvements.

Feedback on the current programmes is collected through the following methods:

- Induction programme feedback and evaluation;
- End of unit feedback and evaluation;
- End of course feedback and evaluation;
- Learner tutorial and review session;
- Student voice;
- Student interviews – course related and those carried out by the welfare department.

### **14. ANALYSIS OF FEEDBACK**

Student feedback on all programmes is collated and analysed providing a focus for discussion during the year, and used when planning for the new academic year. It is also used to monitor the quality of delivery at the end of each term.

### **15. COMMUNCIATING FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS**

Feedback responses are fed back to Students through the Online platform and LMS.