Section **2**

Nottingham Trent University

Quality Handbook

Part A: Governance and approach

Section 2: Enabling student development and achievement

Section 2

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Section 2

1. Definition and scope

This section of the Quality Handbook (QH) sets out the governance and institutional policies, practices and services which enables the University to create opportunities for students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

1.1 The University's students primarily develop their academic, personal and professional potential through their course of study; the University also creates opportunities that supplement the immediate course experience, and which involve a range of staff from across the University (including Nottingham Trent Students' Union (NTSU). This QH section encompasses all the opportunities, services, activities and facilities that enable students to develop, engage with their learning and fulfil their all-round potential.

1.2 This QH section is limited to activities that directly relate to the learning experience of students. While areas such as advice on finance management and accommodation contribute to the overall learning experience, they are outside the remit of this section.

2. Governance and organisation

The University has in place governance and organisational arrangements that monitor and evaluate the ways in which students are able to develop their academic, personal and professional potential; these arrangements are subject to strategic and operational planning, and quality management and enhancement.

2.1 Academic Board and the University Executive Team (UET) has an established strategic, governance, organisational and resource framework; *inter alia* this framework enables academic Schools and Professional Services to implement arrangements for enabling students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

2.2 The University's approach to enabling student development and achievement is integrated, evidence-based, framed around principles of equity and supported by qualified and knowledgeable staff.

2.3 In order to facilitate an informed and integrated approach, representatives of Schools and Professional Services serve on key committees such as Academic Board, the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC) and School Standards and Quality Committees (SASQCs); the University Leadership Team (ULT) – with representatives from Schools and Professional Services – acts as a consultative body. NTSU representatives, or student representatives more generally, also serve on governance committees.

2.4 The University's operational support for enabling student development and achievement is delivered through the collective endeavour of academic Schools and Professional Services (in association with NTSU). All these agents act together to maintain and enhance the University's environment in which students can develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

2.5 The University monitors the effectiveness of the implementation of its arrangements through:

   a. UET and its contributing sub-structure;

   b. Professional Service reviews;

   c. Periodic Review (PR);

   d. student feedback and surveys;

   e. analysis of Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE)/Graduate Outcomes survey data;

   f. analysis of progression and achievement data;

   g. reflections on the outcomes of the National Student Survey;

   h. External Examiners and their reports;

   i. the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group.

These internal and external reference points ensure that the University's overall arrangements are monitored, evaluated and subject to enhancements.

2.6 Course-level provision for enabling student development and achievement is subject to annual reporting, Periodic Course Review (PCR) and the University's course design and approval process.

Explanatory note

■ Details of the University's governance structure can be found in QH Section 1.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The University defines, monitors and evaluates the roles and responsibilities of all those staff involved in enabling student development and achievement (both internally and in cooperation with other organisations).

3.1 The University's policies, practices and services make it clear where the responsibilities for enabling student development and achievement lie and how the different roles are defined. These arrangements are communicated to students, and to staff (so they are able to direct students to the appropriate University service).

3.2 Students' development is primarily promoted and facilitated through their course of study. The roles of course team members in fulfilling their responsibilities for

student development and achievement are clearly articulated at University level by role descriptors and at local level within course handbooks.

3.3 Appropriate University staff, in conjunction with NTSU, takes steps to make students aware of their responsibilities to engage with opportunities for enabling student development and achievement. Students are referred to the NTU Student Charter, which sets out the University expectations of students and staff in this respect.

3.4 The roles and responsibilities of appropriate staff are monitored and evaluated according to the processes set out in paras. 2.1 – 2.6 above. In addition the expertise of such staff are drawn upon in setting policy, whether through governance committees or through working groups set up to explore specific issues.

3.5 The University is able to offer the majority of student opportunities through its internal services. On occasion, external partners are engaged for specific expertise, and to provide placement or other work based learning opportunities for NTU students. In such cases, clear roles and responsibilities govern the activities of external partners.

3.6 All NTU courses have a course handbook, which is available via NOW – these set out the roles and responsibilities of key course / academic School staff, and those of supporting services.

4. Equity

A commitment to equity underpins the University's approach to enabling student development and achievement.

4.1 The needs of individual students are central to the University's arrangements for enabling student development and achievement; these arrangements take into account the diversity of the student body. The University's approach is inclusive, and guided by principles of fairness and accessibility. The University's partnership with NTSU (at executive level and through course / School representation) contributes to an understanding of students' needs.

4.2 All policies and procedures included in sections of the University Quality Handbook are subject to Equality Analysis.

4.3 The needs of all students (and impartiality) characterise the University's services and are embedded in NTU's methods of working and in-service literature. Principles of consistency, timeliness and confidentiality also apply – privacy is respected and data is used with due regard to confidentially and consent.

4.4 The University addresses differences in attainment across all student groups and is committed to removing any obstacles to equal access to the opportunities it provides.

4.5 As noted in paras. 2.5 and 2.6, feedback from students is gathered and evaluated during PCR, PR and Professional Service reviews to help ensure that the enabling opportunities are available to all, and subject to enhancement.

5. Informing students

The University informs students before and during their studies about the opportunities that the University provides to enable them to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

5.1 The University's processes ensure that communications with students are clear, timely, accessible and appropriate; opportunities for enabling student development and achievement are effectively targeted and communicated.

5.2 Individuals considering application to NTU are able to inspect course descriptions though *course finder*. On-course opportunities are explained through course handbooks, induction and NOW provision; opportunities particularly suited to individual students are further signposted through tutorial consultations and feedback on student work.

5.3 The University's academic Schools and Professional Services take appropriate steps to enable students to understand that they are responsible as independent learners for using effectively the information, resources and facilities provided for them while at NTU. The University provides the timely provision of accessible and comprehensive information about the commitment required of students, including timetabled activity and scheduled course requirements.

5.4 The University has clear, effective and appropriate mechanisms for staff to liaise with, and refer students to, expert and professional sources of information and guidance within NTU. As noted in paras. 2.1 – 2.6, the University's Professional Services, academic Schools and NTSU work together in order to seek to achieve a seamless approach to enabling student development and achievement from the student perspective.

5.5 The University's polices, practices and services are accessible to all staff with responsibilities for informing students about the opportunities for enabling them to develop and achieve.

6. Facilitating student transition and progression

To enable students to develop and achieve, the University has in place policies, practices and systems that facilitate their successful transition and progression.

6.1 The University has arrangements in place that prepare students to make the transition to Higher Education; these arrangements are available before students begin their studies. Such preparations include arranging in advance for students who will require specific adjustments to their course of study. Induction is designed to meet the needs of all enrolling students taking into account the diversity of the University's student body.

6.2 Induction is regarded as an ongoing process, continuing at points of transition during the course. The University ensures that academic staff – and professional support staff working with students – are able to devote sufficient time to this activity.

6.3 The University provides opportunities for students to discuss any specific issues about their learning objectives and academic progression with appropriate staff, and to make informed choices based upon that advice.

6.4 Students are supported when undertaking placements, other forms of work-based learning or study abroad; polices and guidance cover such opportunities.

6.5 Student engagement is reviewed regularly during a course to identify and support 'at risk' students, and to encourage highly engaged students.

6.6 The University has arrangements by which students may take a break in study and /or vary their rate of study.

6.7 Students (and staff) are aware of the student advisory and referral services that are available should concerns arise during their time at the University.

Explanatory note

■ See QH section 10D - Placements for the roles and responsibilities of internal and external staff involved in such provision.

7. Creating opportunities

The University creates wide-ranging opportunities for students to acquire the knowledge and skills that will enable them to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

7.1 The University has practical strategies in place to promote students' employability potential and their ability to articulate their knowledge, skills, attitudes and values; students can experience the world of work through meaningful placements and have opportunities to enhance their global outlook and environmental / sustainable awareness. Such strategies are adequately resourced, managed and monitored; stakeholders are actively engaged.

7.2 The University's course design and approval process ensures that course teams address issues of theoretical rigour, practical relevance, and personal development in the design of new courses and major changes to existing courses. All course provision is subject to regular monitoring and PCR to ensure continued appropriateness and effectiveness. These processes take account of diversity and level of study.

7.3 The University's courses are encouraged to incorporate content and practice that will enable a student to gain professional attributes and transferable skills beyond their subject studies. Early in the course, students are engaged in learning core employability skills and career planning. Further opportunities enable students to

personalise their learning, reflect on their experiences and instil a desire for lifelong learning.

7.4   Appropriate University staff are well informed about graduate labour markets and the University has strong and current links with employers and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). Such stakeholders (and alumni) are routinely engaged in the design of University courses.

7.5   The University provides wide-ranging opportunities for students to engage in activities that supplement their course experience, such as course / School representation, language competence, civic contributions through volunteering opportunities, employability / employer-led projects, placements and international exchanges.

7.6   University services and departments ensure that students are advised of all such opportunities in an impartial, student-centred and confidential manner.

Explanatory notes

- QH Section 5 and QH Section 12 contain the course design and approval process and course design requirements in respect of enabling academic, personal and professional development.
- The University's policies and practices for learning and teaching, and assessment set out approaches and practices designed to facilitate all-round student development – see QH Sections 15.

8. Effective staff

The University ensures that staff who directly support students in developing their academic, personal and professional potential are appropriately qualified, competent and up to date.

8.1   University staff are encouraged to recognise and understand their particular involvement with all aspects of student development and achievement, and its boundaries. Such staff are made aware of how they contribute to the University's equality, diversity and inclusive environment.

8.2   The University's recruitment and appraisal processes ensure that academic and professional staff are trained, competent and up to date in those aspects of enabling student development and achievement that they are involved in.

8.3   The University's Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) is provided for all staff new to teaching and nurtures the concept of the wider academic practitioner who is able to facilitate student development and achievement. The PGCAP leads to Higher Education Academic (HEA) recognition and is completed by staff as part of the Academic Professional Standard apprenticeship or as a stand-alone award.

8.4 The effectiveness of Professional Service staff roles is considered as part of regular Professional Service reviews; feedback from service users informs the ongoing monitoring of each service.

8.5 Opportunities exist for NTU staff to develop their expertise. Appropriate staff are enabled to obtain and enhance their expertise (through qualifications, Continuing Professional Development (CPD), professional membership, induction programmes, courses and networking).

9. Learning resources

The University provides the necessary learning resources to enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential, and provides appropriate opportunities for them to develop the practical skills to use such resources.

9.1 The University is committed to providing high quality facilities and resources for all of its students. Access to these learning resources takes account of the range of study modes, curricula and educational practices available across the University.

9.2 The University's governance and organisational arrangements (as set out in paras. 2.1 – 2.6 above) make sure that formal links exist between UET, CMTs, academic Schools and Professional Services; such links ensure that learning resources are fit for purpose, keep pace with new course and learning enhancements, and that practice is shared.

9.3 At course level, the adequacy of learning resources (and their match to the curriculum) is considered during the Business Evaluation, academic approval and PCR processes; quinquennial PRs consider the adequacy / match of learning resources from a wider and more strategic standpoint.

9.4 Induction activities and guidance resources ensure that students are able to acquire the skills necessary for the effective use of the University's learning resources and facilities (see also paras. 5.1 – 5.5 above).

9.5 The University's learning facilities, resources and services are designed to be accessible and inclusive.

Explanatory note

■ Learning resources are taken to include computing and IT facilities, NOW, library provision (at City, Clifton, Brackenhurst and online), physical and digital information resources, a range of specialist facilities such as laboratories, studios, workshops, practice rooms, sports facilities, social learning spaces and Estates.

Policy owner
CADQ

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