

02 February 2012

New Code of Practice on Placement Learning

Purpose of Paper

1. APRC is asked to **consider**, and if thought appropriate, **approve** a new Code of Practice on Placement Learning.

Proposal

2. That the Code of Practice attached at Annex 1 be approved for the academic session 2012/13. A version with the tracked changes accepted is attached at Annex 2.

Background and Consultation

3. At the start of the academic session, each School was requested to nominate a Placement Learning Co-ordinator, and on 12 October 2011 the nominated Placement Learning Co-ordinators attended a meeting chaired by Professor Jeff Bale, in which an initial draft of the guidance was discussed. A number of comments arose from this meeting (and subsequently). These comments were incorporated into a feedback document, with a response provided to each comment and changes were made to the Placement Learning Guidance as appropriate.
4. A revised draft of the guidance was sent to College Directors of Education and School Heads of Education, with a request for further comments and guidance. Following this, the Code of Practice was subsequently revised, where appropriate.
5. An earlier draft of this document was sent to APRC in November for information and initial comments. The comments received on specific sections (as noted in the minutes paper APRC.12.02.01) have been revised in the document. There was a general comment that the Code of Practice was too long, and that the possibility of reducing the text in the Code of Practice and creating a separate guidance note be considered. In discussions with the Assistant Director of Registry (Policy), it was decided that it would not be appropriate to have a separate guidance note, as it is the Regulations which should provide overarching principles, and the Codes of Practice which should provide more detailed information on implementation of procedure in specific circumstances.
6. A significant number of comments received on the drafts related to the guidance on Intellectual Property within the document. In response to these comments, and in consultation with Legal Services, section 3.4.8 – 9 has been amended to allow Schools greater flexibility when discussing this matter with placement providers. It should be noted that the draft letter to go to a company at Appendix 2 in the document is still to be finalised to reflect the revised paragraphs in the Code of Practice.
7. Discussions have been had as to whether a separate Code of Practice should be developed for placements of less than a year. The conclusion is that it would be appropriate to apply the principles contained within the document to placements of less than a year, rather than developing separate guidance, as

there is no reason to believe that placements of less than a year pose markedly less risk than those of a year. The proposal instead, is that the same principles should apply, but the extent to which these provisions should be applied to placements of less than a year will be scalable, depending on the length and type of placement activity. Consultation is ongoing as to whether any of the principles expressed in the document would pose any major difficulties if applied to placements of less than a year. It is anticipated that minor amendments to the Code of Practice may be required as a result of these discussions.

Argument to Support Proposal

8. The QAA have indicated that placements are likely to be under particular scrutiny, therefore there is a need to bring consistency into the way in which we evidence information about the placements that are provided as part of UoB's programmes of study. The guidance highlights the minimum requirements for placement learning.
9. Substantial consultation has been undertaken on this document, and while it is accepted that there will be variance in the way individual Schools and Colleges manage their placement provision, there are certain principles which must be adhered to. These are outlined in the Code of Practice.

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Registry