

University College Birmingham
Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy
February 1st 2010

Aim

To prepare students for the choices, changes and transition affecting their future education, training, employability and life as adult members of society, enabling them to contribute to the local, national and international economies. This policy is compiled with reference to the Equal Opportunities Policy outlined in the General Student Regulations, Learning and Teaching Strategy and Widening Participation Strategy (University College Birmingham).

Context

UCB occupies a unique position locally in that it is purely a specialist provider of vocational programmes. This creates its own conditions of need as relates to progression and student placement opportunities. It is essential for the development of student employability skills and indeed for successful qualifications, that close links are maintained with local employers and stronger links developed with national and international employers in our specialist industries. In terms of Careers Education, Information and Guidance, the Service must have up-to-date knowledge of all the sectors UCB serves whilst also offering impartial information for those students not wishing to work in their field of study.

Alongside this provision by UCB, students and graduates have a responsibility to enhance their employability by availing themselves of the opportunities and support provided by academic departments and the careers & employability service.

1.0 The process of careers guidance can be seen to comprise of 4 major components.

1.1 Careers Education

- Training and practice in the skills of decision-making, self-awareness and self-assessment.
- Awareness of industrial/vocational sectors and the world of work.
- The ability to evaluate information about occupations in relation to one's own abilities, aptitudes, needs and interests.
- Increase competence and confidence in the job search process, continual personal development and lifelong learning.

1.2 Careers Information

Access to a wide range of up- to-date careers information available in hard and electronic formats on:

- Career Choice
- Occupations
- Further study and funding
- Self employment
- Volunteering
- Employers in the public, private and voluntary sectors in the UK and abroad.
- Job search
- Labour market data
- Self-presentation via CV's, applications and interviews
- Selection procedures.

1.3 Careers Advice and Guidance

Informed, impartial careers guidance delivered in a confidential manner appropriate to the specific needs of the student:

- Individual careers interviews, of appropriate duration, by qualified careers advisers.
- Accurate and appropriate referrals to on-line guidance and other self help resources.

1.4 Resources

- Careers resources are located in the Career & Employability Centre within the Student Information Suite, the Summer Row Library and Richmond House Library. The resources are comprehensive, student focused and conform to curriculum developments within UCB. The service is resourced by suitably qualified careers and IAG staff and has accommodation suitable to offer confidential appointments.

1.5 All potential students, registered students and past students or graduates of UCB including further education, higher education and postgraduate, full-time and part-time students, are entitled to the services and assistance of the careers and employability service, using information and resources relevant to them.

2.0 Student Outcomes

- 2.1 Self-awareness – The student will be able to identify and articulate their motivation, skills and personality as they affect career plans.
- 2.2 Self-marketing- The student will be able to represent themselves to the best of their ability and identifying additional skills sought by employers beyond qualifications.
- 2.3 Decision-making – The student will be able to make informed choices about their continuing education, training, employability and career paths.
- 2.4 Transition learning - The student will have an understanding of and increased competence in, the job search process and lifelong learning.

3.0 Student Entitlements

- 3.1 The student will be given the opportunity to discuss their own situation with a Careers Adviser in confidence and be given impartial advice and guidance.
- 3.2 Students' individual requirements will be diagnosed and their needs identified.
- 3.3 Students will have access to up-to-date information covering the following areas:
 - Occupations and careers.
 - Self-employment.
 - Job Vacancies and training schemes
 - Local, national and international training and education.
 - Additional support and guidance services offered including childcare provision, financial assistance, personal counselling, health & well being.
 - Higher education courses through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and the application process.
 - Postgraduate courses and funding.
 - Career Planning and career Management Systems.
- 3.4 Students will have access to workshops and on-line resources for the development of employability skills.

4.0 Year Managers/Mentors/Tutors

Members of staff can expect the following support from the Career Development Centre: -

- 4.1 Access to the Careers Adviser and careers resources for student referrals.
- 4.2 Support for tutors to integrate and develop careers education into the curriculum.
- 4.3 Advice and information regarding career opportunities for students in the appropriate industry sectors.
- 4.4 Support for tutors hosting parent's evenings or progression events.
- 4.5 Access to resource materials to support the development of employability skills.

5.0 Parents

- 5.1 Students under 18 years of age can request their parents' presence at interviews.
- 5.2 Parents of students at the College can access information and discuss career opportunities as they relate to their children, with the Careers Adviser.
- 5.3 After the age of 18 no information will be given to parents without the written permission of the student.

6.0 Objectives

- 6.1 To offer further education students who are interested in progression the opportunity to attend presentations from external speakers.
- 6.2 To offer training to all academic and admissions staff regarding the UCAS application procedure.
- 6.3 To further strengthen links between the Industrial Placement office and the Careers & Employability Centre.
- 6.4 To work closely with the Birmingham Connexions Service to ensure the provision of appropriate careers services to our further education students.
- 6.5 To offer an employment service for students seeking full and part-time job opportunities.

- 6.6 To continue to work closely with the Guild of Students to provide information regarding job opportunities.
- 6.7 Gather usage figures as required.
- 6.8 Continue to address the particular requirements of students enrolled on Community and Business and part-time programmes.
- 6.9 Assist with cross-college initiatives to increase the number of students progressing from further education to higher education programmes.
- 6.10 To enhance the employer information held in the Careers & Employability Centre and increase the variety and scope of the employers' database.
- 6.11 Working closely with UCB academic and support staff to enhance the employability of students and to continue to equip them as lifelong learners capable of contributing effectively to their industry.
- 6.12 To further develop links with employers, provide more information about recruitment practice and continue to host graduate employer presentations.
- 6.13 To enhance information regarding employment and study abroad.
- 6.14 To enhance information regarding employment opportunities for international students within the EU and home countries.
- 6.15 Support cross-college embedded Employability activities as well as supporting students building Personal Development Portfolios.

8.0 External Support and Liaison

- 8.1 UCB recognises the importance of industrial links and to this end develops and maintains close links with employers through the following.
 - Industrial Placement Officers
 - Staff contacts and recent experience
 - The Industrial Liaison Boards.
 - Alumni
 - Skills Councils
- 8.2 Other contacts include:-
 - West Midlands Regional University Careers Consortium
 - AGCAS
 - NASES

Staff training & Development

9.1_Staff training and development is available on a range of careers and employability related activities including applying to Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, writing references, CV writing, job searching, and employability skills.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of the policy will be monitored and evaluated via the following means: -

- Sample survey (questionnaire) of student satisfaction in terms of overall career guidance, distributed via the Student Services Unit and Curriculum and Quality Development Unit.
- Sample assessments of action-plans to assess impartiality and outcomes (random interviews with students).
- The MATRIX quality standard.
- Connexions Birmingham Quality CEIAG award

Policy Review

The CEIAG policy will be reviewed annually by the Curriculum and Quality Development Unit..

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