



# Student Charter

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE





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This Charter will be updated biennially in consultation with staff and student representatives. If you have any comments on this Charter, please contact Grainne McGregor ([g.mcgregor@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:g.mcgregor@ulster.ac.uk)).



# INTRODUCTION

This Charter sets out the standards of service that the University aims to provide in relation to the Career Development Centre (CDC) and seeks to explain how you can make the most of the opportunities the Ulster student experience has to offer. The University is committed to aiming for the highest quality possible and this Charter is one way of outlining that commitment to you. This Charter should be read in conjunction with the main University Student Charter

<http://www.ulster.ac.uk/studentcharter/>

## What this Charter does

Most of the rights included in this Charter have been developed as a means of ensuring that we achieve and maintain the highest standards of provision. This is a statement of intent and is not a legal document. There may be occasions when the University or students are prevented or delayed from meeting the expectations outlined in this Charter through circumstances or delays beyond their control.

This Charter also sets out what we expect of you. The quality of the service that we believe you are entitled to expect is balanced with responsibilities placed on you as a student: both are intended to ensure that you gain maximum benefit from your time with us.

## Consultation

This Charter was developed in consultation with students and staff. This was achieved in a variety of ways including, faculty staff / student consultative process, student focus groups and individual consultation with staff and students.

## Measuring our Performance

We regularly measure the effectiveness of our provision using a variety of methods including student satisfaction surveys, focus groups, programme evaluations and discussion at university level committees. In drawing up this Charter we consulted with staff and students on key areas of our service which students indicated are important to them. As a result six key performance indicators were developed. Our performance will be continually measured against these indicators and we will report our results in the CDC Annual Report and on our website.

### **We aim to ensure:**

- 90% of students we survey are satisfied or very satisfied with the availability and timeliness of delivery of services
- 90% of students we survey are satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of services and the support provided
- 90% of students we survey, who participate in a career development learning or work experience programme, are either satisfied or very satisfied
- 90% of individuals we survey find the information we provide to be up-to-date, relevant and accurate
- 90% of students we survey are satisfied or very satisfied with their guidance intervention
- 80% of students, who participate in an event organised by CDC, are either satisfied or very satisfied.





## CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (CDC)

The Career Development Centre (CDC) aims to provide comprehensive, first-class resources and services that are complementary to and integrated with, the academic provision of the University, enabling our students and graduates to develop, evaluate, and implement career decisions and employment plans for the mutual benefit of themselves, employers and the University community.

The CDC has an office on each of the main campuses, Coleraine, Magee and Jordanstown. The Belfast Centre has an information area in the Learning Resource Centre. The CDC is managed by a team of professional Career Development Advisers and Information Staff who will offer advice and support on career-related issues throughout your time at Ulster and for a period after you graduate.

Where appropriate, CDC staff may refer you to other individuals, services or professional bodies inside and outside the university.

### Who can use the CDC?

- All Ulster students (part time, full time and distance learning) have free access to the CDC.
- You are welcome to use the service for up to three years after graduating.
- You may choose to access the service at any point during your time at university or may be referred to the service by a member of academic staff including course director, advisor of study, placement co-ordinator or student counsellor.

### You may expect that we will:

- Provide information and advice to help you decide what services would be appropriate to use
- Treat you fairly and, where appropriate, offer support to those students who may be disadvantaged in entering the work place
- Market students and graduates to all types of employers and other opportunity providers through events and presentations
- Monitor levels of satisfaction with the CDC and act upon them through consultation with students and staff
- Adhere to the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) Code of Conduct for “Best Practice in Graduate Recruitment”.

### We may expect that you will:

- Make use of the CDC early in your university experience
- Take responsibility for achieving your career aims and ask for help when you need it
- Notify us of any requirements or specialist needs relating to the provision, in alternative formats, of career development learning, information and guidance.
- Let us know your views on the Centre to help us improve.

## Measuring our Performance

### We aim to ensure:

- 90% of students we survey are satisfied or very satisfied with the availability and timeliness of delivery of services
- 90% of students we survey are satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of services and the support provided.

# EMPLOYABILITY AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The CDC is here to help you to make informed career decisions and assist you to make a successful transition from university through the provision of career guidance, career development learning programmes, career information, career events and work experience.

## 1 CAREER DEVELOPMENT LEARNING

The aim of **Career Development Learning** is to enable you to:

- develop an awareness of your abilities, skills and potential
- investigate careers, work experience and graduate opportunities
- manage your career development and personal development planning.

As part of your overall university experience, the programme of Career Development Learning should help you to:

- be realistic about your personal capabilities and aspirations
- develop the skills necessary to market yourself effectively to employers
- make informed decisions about future career directions.

### You may expect:

- A structured programme of career development learning, appropriate to your degree programme and developed in consultation with your course director
- A series of open workshops and seminars on topics that will support your career planning at appropriate stages of the academic year
- Access to high quality interactive career development resources – <http://gradnav.ulster.ac.uk>

### We may expect that you will:

- Take responsibility for managing your own career development by using the range of resources available from the CDC
- Attend career development learning programmes and open career workshops appropriate to you
- Take opportunities to enhance the skills necessary to make informed decisions about your future career choices.

### Measuring our Performance

#### We aim to ensure:

- 90% of students we survey, who participate in a career development learning or work experience programme, are either satisfied or very satisfied.



# 2 CAREER GUIDANCE

The aim of **Career Guidance** is to help you make informed choices by enabling you to become aware of your options and to make decisions. The principles underpinning our guidance practice include user-centeredness, confidentiality, impartiality, equality of opportunity and accessibility.

Career Guidance is delivered through a variety of means, namely

- one-to-one “Quick Query Advice” sessions
- one-to-one individual guidance interviews
- email queries at <http://careers.ulster.ac.uk/guidance>
- telephone queries
- Prospects Planner, an e-guidance and information system.



## Access to Career Guidance

You can contact a Career Development Adviser via email on <http://careers.ulster.ac.uk/guidance> or “drop in” to the Career Development Centre for a 10 - 15-minute “Quick Query Advice” session. You have the option to book a longer individual appointment after an initial interview if necessary.

### You may expect that:

- Guidance will be delivered by professional, experienced staff
- The service is confidential and impartial with access to private interviewing facilities
- You have access to the most up-to-date computer aided career guidance system, Prospects Planner, for graduates and students in HE
- Practice aptitude tests are available from “mycareer” tab in the PDS system <http://pds.ulster.ac.uk>
- We will adhere to the published “AGCAS Code of Practice on Guidance”.

### We may expect that you will:

- Take responsibility for making decisions and managing your career development by using the range of resources available from the CDC
- Let us know as soon as possible if you cannot keep an appointment or attend an interview booked via the Centre.

## Measuring our Performance

### We aim to ensure:

- 90% of students we survey find the guidance intervention helpful.

# 3 CAREER INFORMATION

The CDC aims to provide you with current, accurate, relevant and easily accessible **Career Information**, in a variety of media including reference and web based material.

On each campus the CDC maintains a range of information on:

- Specific occupations
- Employers and vacancies
- Opportunities for placement
- The recruitment process
- Self-employment
- Labour market information, both local and national
- Postgraduate and training opportunities (UK, Ireland and overseas)
- Vacation and voluntary work



Much of this information is free to you and available to take away from each of the Centres or accessible from our website (<http://careers.ulster.ac.uk/students>). CDC staff produce a large number of publications written specifically for you that reflect local, national and international opportunities.

## You may expect that:

- Information is easily accessible in a variety of formats. If you have a disability we will endeavour to obtain the information required in a format that meets your needs
- Members of staff are available to assist you and to refer you to other appropriate services
- Information is reviewed annually and kept as up to date as possible
- You can take away self help leaflets and other career literature, notably in the AGCAS & Gradireland series, and borrow certain other items
- You have access to vacancies for permanent employment, placement, vacation and part-time work with local, national and international employers
- Any information collected from you will be treated in a professional and confidential manner and in accordance with data protection legislation

## We may expect that you will:

- Respect the rights of others by not removing materials that are for all students
- Take part in the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) Survey after you graduate and provide us with accurate information.

## Measuring our Performance

### We aim to ensure:

- 90% of individuals we survey find the information to be up-to-date, relevant and accurate.

# 4 CAREER EVENTS

The CDC organises a series of career events throughout the academic year. Employers and course providers are encouraged to visit the campus to participate in career fairs. These events provide an informal setting for recruiters to meet students interested in work experience, placement, graduate positions and postgraduate study.

## Northern Ireland Graduate Recruitment Fair

This major recruitment fair is organised jointly by the University of Ulster and Queen's University Belfast and hosted on alternate years in Jordanstown and Queen's.

June 2009          Whitla Hall, QUB  
June 2010          Assembly Hall, Jordanstown



## Employer Presentations

Employers who wish to raise their profile among students come on campus to take a stand or make a presentation. You will be notified of the time and location. Presentations usually last about one hour and include time for discussion and a question and answer session.

### You may expect that:

- A programme of employer events / presentations to promote opportunities and advertise vacancies is made available
- You will be kept informed of forthcoming events via the CDC website  
***[http://careers.ulster.ac.uk /events](http://careers.ulster.ac.uk/events)***
- A range of recruiters from the public and private sectors will participate in events
- Representatives of relevant postgraduate study and research will discuss their opportunities
- Information is available on major recruitment events throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland.

### We may expect that you will:

- Attend all fairs and presentations appropriate to you.
- Register in advance, as appropriate, for careers events and let us know as soon as possible if you cannot attend.
- Keep up-to-date with regular publications and web sites and to check your email for career-related notices.

## Measuring our Performance

### We aim to ensure:

- 80% of students, who participate in an event organised by CDC, are either satisfied or very satisfied.

# 5 WORK EXPERIENCE

The Work Experience Development Unit (WEDU), located within the CDC, provides you with access to vacancies for placement, part-time, short-term, voluntary and vacation work. We will help you get the most from your work experience and provide you with opportunity to build and enhance your CV.

## You may expect:

- A series of open workshops and seminars on work experience opportunities locally, nationally and internationally.
- An opportunity to undertake a module to gain recognition for your work experience 'Employability Through Work Experience'
- Opportunities to connect with local organisations and secure international exchange and employment
- Support in applying for and during the Business Education Initiative in the USA.

## We may expect that you:

- Make use of the WEDU resources and services as a support and enhancement to your university experience
- Attend work experience events and seminars offered throughout the year including those during the annual Work Experience Week in February
- Take responsibility for building up your work experience and ask for help when you need it.

## Measuring our Performance

We aim to ensure that the WEDU contribution made to Career Development Learning and Career Information and Events is monitored and reported using a variety of methods, including those outlined in this Charter.



## WHAT IF THINGS GO WRONG?

We hope you will find little reason to complain about our services, but if you do bring concerns to our attention you can be sure that they will be treated seriously and that every effort will be made to resolve them.

### Complaints procedure

The CDC has its own complaints procedure. Details of this are available on our website or by calling into the CDC on any of the campuses.

In addition to this, the University also has a student complaints procedure for dealing with complaints about any aspect of the academic or other services provided by the University. Details are available at <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/quality/qmau/complaints.html>.

### Comments

We welcome your comments on this Charter or on any aspect of our service. You can send your comments electronically using the online feedback form found at <http://careers.ulster.ac.uk/studentfeedback>



## Contacts

## Career Development Centre

Website: <http://careers.ulster.ac.uk>

### Phone numbers:

Jordanstown	+44 (0)28 9036 6247
Coleraine	+44 (0)28 7032 4381
Magee	+44 (0)28 7137 5600
Belfast	+44 (0)28 9036 6247

### JORDANSTOWN

Room 2F01

#### Daily Opening Times

Monday – Thursday:	10am – 4pm
Friday:	10am – 1 pm

### COLERAINE

Room H214

#### Daily Opening Times

Monday – Thursday:	10am - 1pm, 2pm – 4pm
Friday:	10am – 1pm

### MAGEE

Room MF226E

#### Daily Opening Times

Monday – Thursday:	10am – 1pm, 2pm – 4pm
Friday:	10am – 1pm

### BELFAST

LRC (Level 2) and Room 82 C01

#### Daily Opening Times

	Information Centre in LRC (Level 2) available during LRC opening hours.
	Quick Query Guidance: Room 82 C01
Monday:	1pm – 3pm
Thursday:	9am – 12pm





