

GUIDELINES FOR STAFF, STUDENTS AND PARENTS ON STAFF PARENT MEETINGS

Note: References in these guidelines to 'parents' shall be taken to mean parent, parents, guardian(s) or other close family member. 'Student' shall be taken to mean current or former student.

- 1) Members of staff should only meet with parents of students to discuss aspects of the student's academic progress in the presence of the student. Members of staff should not discuss a student's academic progress with parents by any other means which might exclude the student, for example by telephone, email or post. This is necessary in view of the requirements of the Data Protection Act. If, in exceptional circumstances, the student is unable to attend, their written consent to the meeting taking place will be required and the member of staff should ensure that the permission detailed in paragraph 4 has been obtained.
- 2) Students are not permitted to appeal against the academic judgement of examiners or to request a review of a mark, hence parents may not challenge marks awarded to a student.
- 3) When a member of staff is approached by parents and/or their son/daughter seeking a meeting, the member of staff should draw their attention to these guidelines to which all parties involved must adhere and the member of staff should provide a copy for parents so that the procedure is transparent from the outset. The member of staff should explain that the University is bound by the requirements of the Data Protection Act in regard to release of information about a student and that it is University policy that students must be consulted about and their written consent obtained to the release of any information, hence there must first be a private meeting with the student as explained in paragraphs 4 and 5.
- 4) The member of staff should first establish to what extent any information can be shared. This will require seeing the student alone to establish:
 - a) that the student has given permission for their academic progress to be discussed with their parents;
 - b) to establish if there is anything the student wishes to say in the absence of their parents, especially about any factor(s) which may have affected their academic progress, medical or otherwise;
 - c) to establish those matters that the student gives permission to be discussed at the meeting with his/her parents
- 5) A standard pro-forma should be completed as an agreement between the member of staff and student clearly indicating matters which **can** be discussed in the presence of parents. It is essential that this pro-forma is completed so that there are no misunderstandings later about the agreed parameters for the meeting with parents. This pro-forma will be signed by the member of staff and by the student and a copy will be given to the student which they should retain.
- 6) Although members of staff are not authorised to discuss the academic performance of a student with third parties in the absence of the student, they may when approached by a parent explain the generality of a situation by reference to the relevant regulations and procedures. For example, in the case of plagiarism, parents may be informed of the regulations and procedures which are available in handbooks and on the University web site.
- 7) Members of staff should write and retain a contemporaneous file note of any meeting in which they discuss the academic performance of a student with parents.

MEETING WITH PARENTS OF STUDENTS: Confidential Pro-Forma

1. This form is part of the Procedure agreed by the University on how meetings with academic members of staff and parents accompanied by their son/daughter should be approached, bearing in mind the University's obligations with regard to disclosure of information to third parties. These procedures are set out in a paper headed 'Meetings with Parents: Guidelines for Staff, Students and Parents'.
2. The University requires this form to be completed in a **private** pre-meeting between the member of academic staff and the student in order to establish the extent to which information can be shared with parents. This form should be signed as agreed by **both** the member of academic staff and the student. Space is given for both signatures below. The student will be given a copy of the signed form for retention.

Please indicate below any information about the student that can be shared in the meeting with parents present. If separate sheets are used please attach them to this pro-forma.

I understand the procedure to be followed as outlined in paragraph 2 above and in the paper 'Guidelines for Staff, Students and Parents on Staff/Parent Meetings' and agree that those matters relating to my academic progress listed above may be discussed in a meeting between myself, my parents and the member of staff named below:

Signature of Student: Date:

Name (CAPS):

Signature of Member of Staff: Date:

Name (CAPS):