University of Kent
Careers and Employability Service
Code of Practice

Careers Education Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and Employability

General Principles

The principal purpose of the Careers and Employability Service (CES) is to provide career-related education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) services to students at, and recent graduates of, the University of Kent - at Canterbury, Medway and the Associate Colleges. The CES works in partnership with internal and external stakeholders to deliver these services in a professional and effective manner.

Specific Principles

Entitlement to Service

CES resources are open to all current students of the University of Kent and designated students at the Associate Colleges. In addition, the University of Kent OFFA Agreement emphasises targeted support for widening participation students http://www.offa.org.uk/agreements/University%20of%20Kent.pdf

Graduates shall be entitled to use the CES, in person or by phone/email, for up to three years after their graduation (longer at the discretion of CES staff). Graduates of other UK universities (with the exception of graduates of the other universities based in Canterbury and Medway, who are expected to use their own institutions) shall normally be allowed to use the advice and information resources of the CES for up to three years after graduation, in person only and normally during the vacation only.

Commitment to Quality

CEIAG/Employability provision is subject to the University’s quality assurance procedures and is considered in QAA HE Reviews.

As a condition of membership of the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) the CES at the University of Kent adheres to the AGCAS Quality Code of Practice.

The CES complies with relevant professional standards, in particular:

- the AGCAS Code of Practice on Guidance www.agcas.org.uk/pages/20
- the Code of Practice on “Best Practice in Graduate Recruitment” agreed by the National Union of Students, AGCAS and the Association of Graduate Recruiters http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Best_practice_in_graduate_recruitment/pl1f1f

The work of the CES also complies with statutory requirements and relevant UK legislation.
Expertise
Information, advice and guidance at all levels of provision is staffed and delivered within the CES by qualified, competent and committed practitioners. All staff are expected to attend relevant courses, both internal and external, in order to maintain and/or enhance their skills, knowledge and expertise both generally and to assist them in supporting particular subject or client groups.

Impartiality
We aim to provide all our clients with a service which is free from unlawful and unfair discrimination and welcomes diversity. The University’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity policy underpins all aspects of our provision of services to undergraduates and graduates. This seeks to ensure that people are not privileged or subject to less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, political or religious beliefs or any other irrelevant distinction. See http://www.kent.ac.uk/hr-equalityanddiversity/documents/equality-and-diversity/edipolicy.pdf

In support of the above, targeted information for the following groups has been established on the CES web pages http://www.kent.ac.uk/ces/student/targetedinformation.html:

- BME students
- International students;
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) students and staff;
- Students with disabilities;
- Mature students;
- Women.

The CES supports all Academic Schools and Faculties equally insofar as its resources and service level agreements permit in the provision of CEIAG and employability-related activities. The CES shall advertise vacancies from, and facilitate visits by, all legally-recognised employers who request it.

Confidentiality
No communications between CES staff and students or other clients, whether face-to-face or by phone or email, or information gathered from such communications, shall be passed on to any third party, inside or outside the University, without the client’s express permission. Private facilities are available for all guidance interviews. Quick-query interviews are normally carried out in an open setting, but private interview rooms are available to all clients requiring a higher degree of confidentiality upon request. The CES shall ensure that all personal data gathered from clients is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 as required by the University http://www.kent.ac.uk/data-protection/

Accessibility
The CES attempts to ensure that all its resources and facilities are accessible by students with disabilities, wherever possible anticipating the needs of these users so that they are able to access these resources without the need for any individual request. Should a special request nonetheless be necessary the CES will ensure that this is carried out as soon as is reasonably possible.

Careers advice and guidance is available by phone or email to recent graduates and part-time students and other students unable to visit the CES during office hours.

Effective Communication
The CES shall ensure that students are fully informed about its activities, services and events throughout their time of study at the University through printed guides, email, newsletters, bulletins, social media, posters and liaison with Academic Schools, Kent Union, GK Unions and other sections of the University.
The CES website provides pages of information and resources for University students, alumni, staff and for employers.

**Cooperation**
The CES works with in partnership with Academic Schools, Professional Services and Kent Union by referring students to the most appropriate source of guidance, support and information.

The CES and individual Careers and Employability Advisers also cooperate with:

- Other HE careers services through membership of the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services and its specialist and regional groups;
- Employers providing graduate and undergraduate opportunities;
- University of Kent alumni;
- Other professional bodies and networks.

**Transparency**
Details of CES services are available on the website, together with the names and contact details of all members of staff and an outline of their areas of responsibility. See [http://www.kent.ac.uk/ces/contact/staff.html](http://www.kent.ac.uk/ces/contact/staff.html)

Information on the destinations of graduates is available to all departments for quality compliance purposes (both internal and external) and shall be placed on the CES website.

The CES shall present an Annual Report to the University Senate Committee.

**Monitoring, feedback, evaluation and improvement**
Services offered to students and other stakeholders are monitored on a regular basis, in particular through online surveys and through the provision of a feedback page on the CES website [http://www.kent.ac.uk/ces/contact/feedback.html](http://www.kent.ac.uk/ces/contact/feedback.html)

The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey, carried out by the CES, provides data to HESA and is used to provide Academic Schools and central departments, as well as careers and employability advisers, with specific details of the activities of Kent graduates six months after leaving the University.

The service level agreement process between the CES and all Academic Schools, using an annual audit process and KPIs to benchmark provision, results in a focus upon areas for development after monitoring has taken place.

**Complaints Procedure**
Any complaints about the services offered by the CES, or the delivery of these services, should, if appropriate, be raised with the member of staff responsible, in person, by phone or in writing/via email.

If the complainant feels unable to approach the member of staff directly, or is dissatisfied with their response, they should address their complaint to the Head of the Careers and Employability Service.

If a reply is not received within two weeks, or does not resolve the issue to the user's satisfaction, then the complainant may raise the matter with the Student Conduct and Complaints Office. See [http://www.kent.ac.uk/regulations/Regulations%20Booklet/complaints_procedure_students_august2013v5.pdf](http://www.kent.ac.uk/regulations/Regulations%20Booklet/complaints_procedure_students_august2013v5.pdf)

*This Code of Practice is reviewed annually and was last reviewed in October 2014.*