

# IAU Code of Practice



**The Independent Advice Unit provides advice, information and representation to all students<sup>1</sup> and staff at Keele University.**

## **What can you expect from the IAU?**

### **Access to the Unit**

Appointments during the hours of 10.00 – 12 noon

Drop-in times, from 12 -12.30 and 1-4pm.

Advice face-to-face, via email, letter or telephone.

**A reception area stocked with a range of useful, up to date leaflets and booklets, relevant to the student population.**

**A useful, informative and easy to navigate website.**

**Free, confidential, impartial, non-judgemental, accurate and up to date advice.**

**Staff in the Unit to work within the confines of agreed policies and national codes of practice** such as; a Confidentiality Policy, Complaints Procedure, Quality Mark, Withdrawal of Service, Seamless Service / Referral Policy.

**Initial advice or referral<sup>2</sup> at the first advice session.** Advice will be as complete as possible at this stage, there may be follow up work that the advisor suggests the students should carry out or the advisor undertakes work on the student's behalf. If the inquiry needs research to be undertaken, you will be informed and given an indication of how long this will take. The advisor will agree with you how the outcome is to be communicated.

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<sup>1</sup>The term 'student' means prospective and current students. If you have recently left the University, the IAU would normally seek to refer you to appropriate agencies. However, 'recently' does allow the IAU some flexibility, as it *may* be appropriate for the IAU to continue to offer some assistance; please see our 'Withdrawal of Service' policy.

<sup>2</sup> See also Seamless Service Policy.

January 2010 Review Date: January 2011

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**To be given information about options available to you based on the information you supply.**

**To be treated in the same way as the previous client and the next client.** You can expect to be offered the same service regardless of ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, religious beliefs, political affiliations, age or marital status.

**To be allowed access to the Unit and its services.** See also Withdrawal of Service Policy.

**To be informed of a conflict of interests.** See Confidentiality Handbook.

**To be made aware when confidentiality will be breached.** See Breaching Confidentiality statement.

**To keep accurate, up to date records of client contact and casework undertaken.** You can expect to receive timely updates about the progress of your case<sup>3</sup>. Your file will remain the property of the IAU; you are welcome to read to at any time and to request a copy for your records should you need it<sup>4</sup>.

**To respect a request to remain anonymous.** We will treat information given in confidence (subject to the current Confidentiality Policy). If you wish to remain anonymous, we will do what we can to accommodate this. This will obviously constrain any advice, representation or negotiation work we will be able to undertake on your behalf.

**To brief the sabbatical officers.** To provide (anonymous) evidence sheets documenting issues or trends adversely affecting the student population, to be used to lobby the University or other external organisations.

**Not to identify you as a service user.** This means that we will **not** speak to you out of the office, unless **you** acknowledge us first.

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<sup>3</sup> This will either be by telephone, in person, via email or where the IAU is taking (legal) proceedings on your behalf we will confirm what we are doing for you in writing.

<sup>4</sup> A small administration charge (max £10) may be applicable.

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**The IAU will not advise clients to use fraudulent or unscrupulous means to achieve their aims.** See also our Confidentiality Policy. The IAU aims to achieve the best outcome for our client, though this may differ with each client.

**The IAU will not advise student landlords on housing/tenancy related issues,** whether they are renting to students or to the private sector, unless it is in the *tenants'* interests to do so.

## **What we expect from you:**

**To keep appointments and arrive on time.** If you arrive more than 15 minutes after your appointment time, you will be asked to make another appointment or return during drop in times.

**To give us accurate information and keep us informed of any developments. Be honest with us.** See Confidentiality Policy.

**To carry out any action agreed with the Advisor.**

**Not to expect Advisors to advise you out of hours.** Please don't knock the door outside opening hours, please see '*What are we doing when we are closed?*'.

**Not to expect the Advisor to discuss the particulars of a case other than your own.**

**The IAU offers its services to staff, however the IAU retains the right to refuse to do so,** or, to cease advising a member of staff if it is to the detriment of a student, or it may prevent a student using the service due to *potential* conflict of interest. Members of university staff are therefore requested to source advice relating to employment / university matters elsewhere (e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau, Union representatives, solicitors, the IAU Legal Surgery etc.). KUSU (permanent) staff are requested to seek employment advice from alternative sources (e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau, Union representatives, solicitors, the IAU Legal Surgery etc.). Where alternative sources of assistance are necessary or recommended, the IAU will assist in finding appropriate agencies.

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## What we would like you to do:

**Let us know, if you can, the outcome of your inquiry.**

**Offer any suggestions of ways we can improve our service. Please use the comments box in the Reception area of the IAU.**

**Complete the return slip at the bottom of the referral form.** This will allow us to monitor the appropriateness and usefulness of the service we refer you to.

**Let us know if you are pleased with the service.** See our Gift Policy.

**To use the Complaints Procedure if you are dissatisfied with the service you received.**

**Complete client surveys, carried out from time to time.**

*Thank you for using the Independent Advice Unit.*

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