

APPENDIX XVII: LEARNER CHARTER

INTRODUCTION

NCGE is committed to ensuring that its business is conducted in a fair and equitable manner conducive of a friendly, efficient and professional environment. The Learner Charter has been developed in this spirit and applies to all learners who are enrolled on NCGE programmes. The Charter sets out the rights and obligations of learners to ensure that NCGE provides a safe learning environment to both learners and staff.

The Charter includes the:

- Rights of Learners.
- Code of Learner Behaviour.

LEARNERS' RIGHTS

Learners have the following rights.

The right to:

- Expect tuition of a high quality and professional standard.
- Educational support and other support facilities within the resources of NCGE.
- Be treated equally irrespective of gender, race and ability.
- Fair and just procedures including all matters involving breaches of the code of learner behaviour.
- Be treated as responsible adult learners who are responsible for their own learning, personal and professional development.

NCGE will comply with its obligations under existing Freedom of Information legislation and the Data Protection Act.

CODE OF LEARNER BEHAVIOUR

a) Purpose

The NCGE has published its Code of Learner Behaviour to assist the Centre in providing a safe learning environment to learners and staff members and to support learners in achieving their learning and personal goals.

This Code of Learner Behaviour supports the NCGE ethical values of:

- Honesty
- Reliability
- Confidentiality
- Autonomy
- Tolerance
- Courtesy
- Accountability
- Cooperation
- Excellence
- Fairness
- Supportive

and is issued to all staff and learners through a Learner Handbook and the VLE (if appropriate).

b) Learner Responsibilities

When a learner agrees to participate in a programme provided by the NCGE (s)he undertakes to:

- Attend all workshops in full and be punctual in his/her attendance.
- Notify the Module/Course Coordinator if (s)he is unable to attend a workshop/use the VLE/submit assignments.
- Follow the programme of study.
- Undertake course work and assignments.
- Complete course work within the agreed timescale.

- Observe the NCGE Code of Learner Behaviour.
- Familiarise him/herself with assessment regulations and procedures.
- Treat staff and fellow learners with respect and courtesy.

NCGE employs a number of staff to assist it in programme delivery. Staff have a responsibility to ensure that a safe, quality learning environment is provided to learners. They also have a responsibility to challenge behaviour that is unacceptable and is likely to disrupt the learning experience of other learners. In the case of ongoing unacceptable behaviour, the learner will be asked to withdraw from a Programme.

c) Procedures employed by the NCGE to Prevent and Discourage Unacceptable Behaviour

NCGE is aware that as professionals, learners and staff will, as a matter of course, behave with respect for themselves and others. If circumstances arise where, for whatever reason, such professional expectations are not met NCGE has identified a number of actions which may be applied where a learner continually behaves in an unacceptable way.

- A staff member will ask a learner to meet him/her to discuss his/her behaviour. At this meeting the staff member will advise the learner of how his/her behaviour is in breach of the class agreement (see below). The learner will be asked to discontinue the behaviour.
- If a learner continues to engage in the behaviour the Coordinator of the Programme will be informed and he/she will request a meeting of the learner, Director and the staff member who has made the complaint.
- The learner will be requested in writing to meet the Coordinator of the Programme, Director with the staff member who has made the complaint to discuss the behaviour.
- The learner will be invited to bring a friend/colleague to the meeting with him/her.
- The learner will be advised of the date, time and location of the meeting by letter.

- The meeting will provide the learner with the opportunity to discuss his/her behaviour and the reasons for it.
- The learner will be advised of the decision in writing reached within 5 working days of the meeting.

The decision to ask a learner to withdraw from a programme is decided using the criteria below:

Academic Criteria

1. A learner's non participation in programme activities/assignments that disrupts the learning of others.
2. Plagiarism.

Behavioural Criteria

1. Behaviour detrimental to the learning environment – defined as behaviour that contravenes the class agreement (see below)*.
2. Verbally/physically harassing learners/staff members.
3. Abusive or offensive language/remarks.

*At the commencement of a programme, learners will be asked to identify behaviours that they consider essential to a quality learning environment for staff and learners. Learners will then be expected to behave according to this agreement.

d) Class Agreement

Why is a class agreement necessary?

It:

- Allows learners to take ownership of the standard of behaviour expected from the group.
- Establishes agreed guidelines for learner behaviour on a programme.
- Allows learners to demand behaviours conducive to a positive learning environment.

How long should they be?

- 5-10 statements.

Language to be used:

- Should, must, have to, always, never.

What should be included?

- Learner expectations of learners.
- Learner expectations of staff.
- Staff expectations of learners.

The class will agree and sign up to the agreement. Learners will be advised of the procedures employed by NCGE to address unacceptable behaviour identified in the agreement through the Learner Handbook.