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OIA publishes consultation on new guidance for disciplinary procedures

The OIA is publishing a consultation on a new section of the Good Practice Framework:
Disciplinary procedures.

All higher education providers should have in place fair and timely procedures that are easy to understand, and proper support for all students involved. This section of the Good Practice Framework is intended to be a useful resource for providers and all those who support students through disciplinary procedures.

The draft guidance is drawn from the OIA's broad experience of handling complaints. It has been put together in consultation with the Good Practice Framework Steering Group.

The Disciplinary procedures section covers:

- academic disciplinary procedures, for dealing with academic misconduct, for example plagiarism, contract cheating, cheating in examinations, or breaching ethics policies; and
- student disciplinary procedures, for dealing with non-academic misconduct, for example antisocial behaviour, sexual misconduct, or harassment.

It includes:

- Principles for good disciplinary procedures, including accessibility, fairness and timeliness;
- Some factors providers should consider when designing student disciplinary procedures;
- Guidance on the structure and content of procedures, and on supporting students through them;
- Case studies and examples; and
- Links to some useful resources.

Felicity Mitchell, Independent Adjudicator, said:

“Sharing good practice is a cornerstone of our work, and the value of our Good Practice Framework is widely recognised in the sector. We believe that its strength comes from combining learning from our experience of handling complaints with a consultative approach.

We are grateful to the Steering Group members for their helpful contribution to the development of the section, and we encourage anyone with an interest in this area to provide feedback through the consultation.”

The consultation runs from 20 June to 31 July 2018. We intend to publish the final version of the section in the autumn.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

For further information please contact Sarah Liddell, Head of Leadership Office, mediarelations@oiahe.org.uk, 0118 959 9813.

1. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) is the independent student complaints ombudsman for higher education in England and Wales. It is the designated operator of the student complaints' scheme under the Higher Education Act 2004.
2. The Good Practice Framework: Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals is a guide to handling complaints and academic appeals in higher education in England and Wales. It sets out overriding principles and operational guidance to support providers in areas including timeframes, progression between informal, formal and review stages, and record-keeping. There are two other sections of the Framework: Delivering learning opportunities with others; and Supporting disabled students. Further information can be found on our website at <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers-and-good-practice/good-practice-framework.aspx>.
3. The Good Practice Framework Steering Group is chaired by the Independent Adjudicator and comprises representatives from AHUA, ARC, Bromley Schools Collegiate, NUS, QAA and WCG.
4. The Good Practice Framework is one element of the OIA's good practice work. We also provide guidance through a range of webinars, podcasts, workshops and visits. Details of our upcoming outreach programme can be found at <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers-and-good-practice/workshops-and-events/upcoming-workshops-and-events.aspx>.