Cheshire College
South & West

Higher Education @ccsw

Student Handbook
2021/22

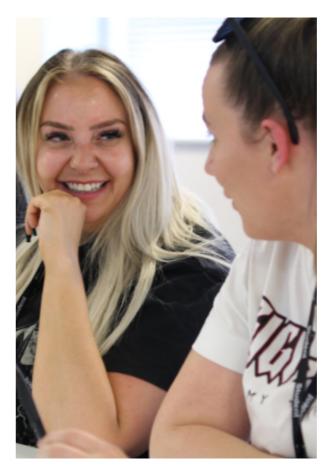**Please read this Handbook in conjunction with your Course/Subject Handbook.**

All course materials, including lecture notes and other additional materials related to your course and provided to you, whether electronically or in hard copy, as part of your study, are the property of CCSW and MUST not be distributed, sold, published, made available to others or copied other than for your personal study use unless you have gained written permission to do so from the subject lecturer / course team leader. This applies to the materials in their entirety and to any part of the materials.

CCSW – Our Purpose

Nurturing talent and empowering people to achieve their full potential; supporting businesses to succeed and communities to thrive.

CCSW – Our Values

Our values are very important to us - they guide the way we work with each other, our partners and within our communities.

We:

▪ **Act with honesty, integrity and trust**
▪ **Take time to listen, help and care**
▪ **Commit to opportunity and equality**
▪ **Value and celebrate diversity**
▪ **Empower individuals and nurture talent**
▪ **Strive for exceptional quality and success**
▪ **Instil a strong work ethic and drive to succeed**
▪ **Take responsibility**
▪ **Work together**
▪ **Make a positive contribution to society**

For further information visit our dedicated HE site at Higher Education – Cheshire College – South & West (ccsw.ac.uk)

Supporting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at CCSW

Cheshire College – South & West is committed to widening access and participation for all prospective students and seeks to encourage access to learning by reducing barriers that some students may face when considering Higher Education (HE) programmes. We are committed to ensuring all students reach their potential and leave us with the best possible outcome and career ready. The College's Higher Education provision has been developed in response to the needs of local commerce and business. The College takes an active and local lead to provide high-quality education.

Cheshire College South & West welcomes staff and learners from a wide range of diverse backgrounds and intentionally challenges discrimination in all forms. The college strives to be a tolerant community where everyone accepts differences and values the benefits that diversity and inclusion brings.

Please review CCSW's Access and Participation Statement at https://www.ccsw.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/14a-10005972-Cheshire-College-South-and-West-Access-and-Participation-Statement-201920.pdf and our Equality Strategy at Strategic Equality Plan 2018-2019 – Cheshire College – South & West (ccsw.ac.uk) for more information.

Should any course be deemed to be at risk, the College has in place a Student Protection Plan which explains our obligations to you, and how we will ensure you have every opportunity to complete your studies successfully. Click here to see the plan.

Contents

Welcome and Introduction to Cheshire College – South & West

Cheshire College – South & West (CCSW) welcomes you and hopes that you will enjoys studying at with us and that you will find your course both interesting and rewarding. This Handbook provides you with generic College level information and the Course Handbook provides specific information about your programme of study.

Communication

The College expects you to use your CCSW email address and check regularly for messages from staff. If you send us email messages from other addresses they risk being filtered out as potential spam and discarded as unread. It is possible to set up a forwarding rule from your CCSW email account to a personal email address of your choosing, please ask us for help in setting this up if needed.

External Examiner

The College works with a range of awarding bodies and partner universities1 to deliver its higher education programmes. Each awarding body / partner university has appointed an External Examiner to your course who helps to ensure that the standards of your course are comparable to those provided at other higher education institutions in the UK. External Examiner reports will be made available to you

electronically. The College will also make available or send a sample of student coursework to the external examiner(s) for external moderation purposes, once it has been marked and internally moderated by the course tutors. The sample will include work awarded the highest and lowest marks and awarded marks in the middle range. Details of the External Examiner associated with your course can be found in your Course Handbook. Published External Examiner reports will be available on the College's Higher Education pages of its website.

Expected hours of study

The usual amount of work involved in achieving a successful outcome to your studies is to study for 10 hours per each credit you need to achieve – this includes attendance at CCSW and time spent in private study. Please note however that this may vary depending on your particular course and programme of study. You should therefore check your Course Handbook or contact your course team leader.

Attendance Requirements

Student attendance at timetabled learning activities of courses and modules is required. Notification of illness or exceptional requests for leave of absence must be made as detailed in the Course Handbook, Awarding Body/ University partner requirements and College expectations. Individual modules and/or courses may incorporate

a specific attendance requirement as part of the assessment criteria for successful completion of a module. Students with continuous unauthorised absence for a period of three weeks may be deemed to have withdrawn from the course, please refer to our Student Participation Regulation for more information. The date of withdrawal will be recorded as the last day of attendance. You may request a review of this decision if you have grounds in line with the Academic Appeals Regulation. Tuition fees will be charged in accordance with our Tuition Fee Policy https://www.ccsw.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Tuition-Fee-Policy.pdf and our HE refund and Compensation Policy https://www.ccsw.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/HE-Learner-Refund-and-Compensation-Policy.pdf.

Data Protection

All of the personal information obtained from you and other sources in connection with your studies at the College will be held securely and will be used by the College both during your course and after you leave the College for a variety of purposes. These purposes are all explained during the enrolment process at the commencement of your studies. If you would like a more detailed explanation of the College's policy on the use and disclosure of personal information, please see the College's Data Protection Policy Data Protection Policy (ccsw.ac.uk) and Privacy Notice or contact the Data Protection Officer at the Crewe

Campus of the College.

Learning Resources

Learning Resource Centres (LRCs)

Resources are available to support your studies provided by the LRCs and Network Services staff. Each of our three campuses has its own dedicated LRC with resources specific to the courses running on each campus. The LRCs can also assist with study skills advice and guidance such as academic referencing support.

Electronic Resources

The LRCs provide access to a range of electronic resources – e-journals and databases, e-books, images, texts and audio-visual resources such as films and documentaries.

Preparing for your career

Your future is important to us, so to make sure that you achieve your full potential whilst at college and beyond, your course has employability learning integrated into it. This is not extra to your academic qualification, but an important part of it.

You will be encouraged to record your learning journey so that you can demonstrate all the work-related skills you have developed, both before and during your time at the College. This will help you to show future employers just how valuable your qualification is and the employability skills you have acquired.

• You will be given the opportunity to explore your identity, your strengths and areas for development, your values and what you want to get out of life.

• You will be able to investigate a range of options, including jobs and work experience, postgraduate study and self-employment.

• We will support you to enable you to successfully tackle the recruitment process and to develop your enterprise skills.

Our Careers team offer a range of support for you including:

• Careers advice and guidance appointments, plus applications checks and practice interviews

• Support to find opportunities including work placements, internships, voluntary positions and part-time employment

Please contact the Careers Team in the Student Hub at one of our three campuses for an appointment.

Student support, guidance and conduct

Student Advice and Wellbeing

Student Advice is your first point of call for all enquiries, help and advice. We provide guidance to all CCSW students whatever the query may be. We offer advice on:

• Bank and Confirmation of Study Letters
• Council Tax Exemption Certificates
• Financial support and advice

We are based in the Student Hubs on each of our campuses. Our friendly and approachable team will do their best to ensure your query is answered. Come and have a chat with us if you have a query on any aspect of student life and study.

If you are finding the course challenging or cannot complete independent study and assessments on time you should consult your Course Team Leader and / or the Learning Support team available in the LRCs.

We also offer support to students who may be struggling personally or with mental health concerns. The College has qualified counsellors available at each of its campuses and students may refer themselves to Wellbeing or ask their course team to make the referral for them. All referrals are confidential.

Students with disabilities

You are strongly encouraged to declare your disability on your application form when you apply to study at CCSW. If you have declared this Learner Support will be in contact with you to advise you about reasonable adjustments which may be appropriate in the circumstances. You can also tell any member of staff at the College, who will ask your permission to make a referral to the Learner Support team. Learner Support will then get in touch with you to discuss your available options.

Assessment arrangements for students with a disability

Arrangements are made for students who have a disability/specific learning difficulty for which valid supporting evidence can be made available. Contact your course team leader or Learner Support for more information and assistance.

Health and Safety

As a student of the college you share responsibility for the safety of yourself and for that of others around you. You must

understand and follow all the regulations and safety codes necessary for a safe campus environment. Please help to keep it safe by reporting any incidents, accidents or potentially unsafe situations to a member of staff as soon as possible.

Conduct

You will be expected to abide by the College's Code of Conduct in the College. CCSW expects you to behave in a respectful manner towards all members of the College at all times demonstrated by using appropriate language in class, switching mobile phones / other devices off prior to attending classes, and also in your use of any social networking sites. If your behaviour is considered to be unacceptable, any member of staff is able to issue an informal oral warning and the College will support staff by invoking formal procedures where necessary. You can read more about College's expectations in the Student Contract https://www.ccsw.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/CCSW-HE-Student-Contract-Sept-2021-Entry.pdf

Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

The Office for Students have published a statement of expectations for preventing and addressing harassment and sexual misconduct affecting students in higher education. The statement outlines a set of consistent recommendations to support higher education providers in England develop and implement effective systems, policies and processes to prevent and respond to incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct. Underpinning this framework is the principle that all higher education students registered at a provider, however and wherever they may be studying should be protected from harassment and sexual misconduct from other students, staff and visitors. The College has conducted a thorough review to ensure policies and procedures meet and exceed the expectations set by the Office for Students. Further information can be found at https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/d4ef58c0-db7c-4fc2-9fae-fcb94b38a7f3/ofs-statement-of-expectations-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct.pdf

Fitness to Practice

An academic awards may result in a professionally recognised qualification and academic success alone may not meet all of the professional requirements which might include for example, physical health, mental health, moral or behaviour matters. In confirming appropriate academic qualifications or admission to a professional body and/or statutory registration Cheshire College - South & West, and/or partner Universities, must be satisfied that the student will be a safe and suitable entrant to the given profession. For relevant courses and qualifications the Fitness to Practice Policy applies. This can be found at https://www.ccsw.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Fitness-to-Practice-Policy-2.pdf

Student Voice

You can play an important part in the process of improving the quality of your course through the feedback you give. In addition to the ongoing discussion with the course team throughout the year, there are a range of mechanisms for you to feed back about your experience of teaching and learning which are outlined below. Where appropriate, we aim to respond to your feedback and let you know of our plans for improvement.

Course Representatives and the HE Student Governor

A course representative is a student who represents their fellow students' views and opinions to the course team, curriculum area and the College. Course representatives work proactively and diplomatically to improve the academic and overall experiences of students.

The role of a course representative is extremely beneficial to both students on your course and the College. It enables students to have ownership of their student experience, to voice their opinions and to share positive practice with the course team, primarily at the termly Course Continuous Improvement Plan meetings (CIP).

Course representatives will be elected every year in September. Alongside receiving recognition, support, and respect, being a course representative is a great opportunity to enhance your employability skills. If you are interested in becoming a course representative and wish to find out more about the role please contact the Dean of HE for more information.
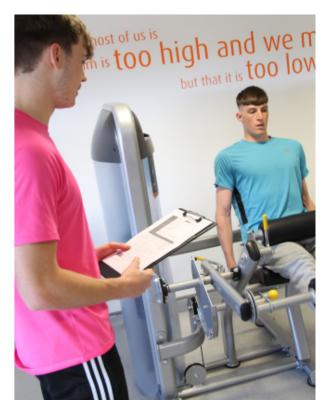
The HE Student Governor is an elected representative who represents the voice of students at the Corporate Board level. They communicate and engage with HE students in to gain feedback and work in partnership with senior and executive management to create positive change. They are also trained to support and signpost course representatives where needed.

Student Voice Surveys

We ask our students to complete a student survey in November and March. This is an online student survey available through the student MyDay portal. The survey seeks views on teaching, learning, assessment, support and resources on your course and the results are anonymous but are scrutinised by the course teams to make improvements to the course.

Complaints

The College recognises that there may be occasions when you have cause for complaint about the service you have received. When this happens, the College's Complaints Procedure is intended to provide an accessible, fair and straightforward system which ensures an effective, prompt and appropriate response. Please contact the Dean of HE for more information on the HE Complaints Procedure https://www.ccsw.ac.uk/higher-education-he-complaints-policy/ or access the Procedure from the College's website.

Rationale, aims and learning outcomes of the course

You will find information specific to your chosen course of study in your Course Handbook and in the form of a 'programme specification'. As defined by the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency) – the regulatory body responsible for overseeing quality compliance in the Higher Education Sector – a programme specification is a concise description of the intended learning outcomes of an HE programme. It is the means by which the outcomes are achieved and demonstrated. In general, modules or other units of study have stated outcomes, often set out in handbooks provided by institutions to inform student choice. These intended learning outcomes relate directly to the curriculum, study and assessment methods and criteria used to assess performance. Programme specifications can show how modules can be combined into whole qualifications. However, a programme specification is not simply an aggregation of module outcomes; it relates to the learning and attributes developed by the programme as a whole and which, in general, are typically in HE more than the sum of the parts.

Sometimes certain aspects of courses may be subject to change. Applicants are encouraged to check information on our relevant course pages from time to time, particularly before submitting any application for their academic year of study. Material changes about a course will be notified to you in material produced after the change is made and at the time you are made any offer of a place of study for that course. For details about changes to course information after you have accepted any offer, please see our Student Protection Plan.

Assessment

Please note that all modules will be assessed. You are expected to attempt all required assessments for each module for which you are registered, and to do so at the times scheduled unless authorised extensions, special arrangements for disability, or extenuating circumstances have been expressly agreed by the College to allow you to defer your assessment.

Dealing with difficulties in meeting assessment deadlines

Assignments must be submitted no later than the time and date on your assignment instructions / brief. If you anticipate that you will have difficulty in meeting assessment deadlines or you have missed or are likely to miss in-semester tests you must report this at the earliest possible opportunity. An academic staff member, such as your Module or Course Team Leader, will be able to provide advice to you on how to do this.

Exceptional and Extenuating Circumstances are defined as unforeseen, unpreventable circumstances that significantly disrupt student performance in assessment.

Extensions

Authorisation of the late submission of work requires written permission. For Pearson programmes (HNC/HNDs) your academic staff are authorised to give permission for one extension period of up to seven working days where appropriate evidence of good reason has been accepted and where submission within this timescale would be reasonable taking into account your circumstances. Requests for extensions should be made prior to the submission date as extensions cannot be given retrospectively.

Extensions for longer than seven days require an application to the Dean of Higher Education using the Exceptional and Extenuating Circumstances form available from the College's Higher Education website pages. Further information is available in the Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances regulation.
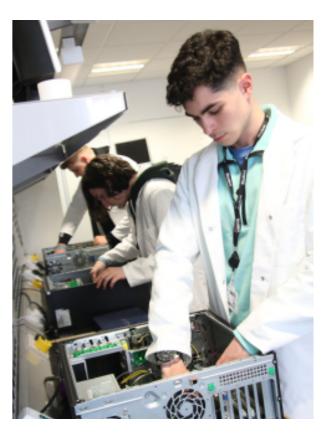
If your course is offered with a partner university then please be advised that you may be expected to follow the relevant university's academic regulations in relation to extensions and exceptional extenuating circumstances. This will be made clear to you at induction and in your course handbook.

Feedback Following Assessments

CCSW is committed to giving you clear, legible and informative feedback for all your assessments. You are expected to review and reflect on your feedback and learn from each experience to improve your performance as you progress though the course.

You will be provided with an opportunity for generic feedback for in-module formative and summative elements of assessment which contribute to a module within 21 working days of the scheduled submission or examination date. Generic feedback on end of module assessment and dissertations will be made available within 21 days of publication of results. Generic feedback may be oral, written, posted on a website or other.

Academic Offences

The College has a public duty to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the conduct of assessment. Thus, the legitimate interests of the students and the College's reputation are safeguarded. Alleged academic offences which would compromise these standards will be investigated thoroughly. If confirmed, an offence will lead to the imposition of severe consequences, including the possibility of termination of registration and enrolment, i.e. expulsion.

An "academic offence" has been committed when a student tries to gain improper advantage for her/himself by breaking, or not following, Academic Regulations concerning any part of the assessment process.

All students are advised to read the HE@ CCSW Programme Regulations which are available on the Higher Education section of the College's website. In relation to academic offences, students are advised to read Part I of the regulations.

Categories of Academic Offence Plagiarism

An offence occurs when a student submits as her/his own, work of which s/he is not the author.

Plagiarism has occurred when the student:

Does not acknowledge the work of another person or persons, or

Has not identified the source or cited quotations in any work presented for assessment, or

Has used images, music, video, patents or other creative materials without acknowledgement of their provenance, or

Has copied another student's work without their knowledge, or

Has submitted the same piece of their own work for assessment and award of credit in two (or more) modules.

If a student's work is found to contain verbatim (or near verbatim) quotation from the work of others without acknowledgement, then plagiarism has been committed.

Collusion:

Where there is a requirement for the submitted work to be solely that of an individual student, collaboration is not permitted. Students who improperly work together in these circumstances and/or who permit the copying of their work by others are guilty of collusion.

Where students are permitted or instructed to work together to achieve common outcomes, such group activity is regarded as approved collaboration. There may be a requirement for each student to identify her/his own contribution

Impersonation

A student who is substituted by another person in an examination, or who submits by substitution the work of another person as her or his own, is guilty of deception by impersonation. The offence of impersonation can be applied both to the student and the impersonator.

Improper conduct in formal examinations

An offence is committed when a student possesses unauthorised paper, material or electronic devices such as mobile phones, programmable calculator or electronic dictionaries, or communicates with another student during an examination.

If on entry to the examination room students find themselves inadvertently in possession of any such material or device they must declare and surrender it immediately prior to the start of the examination.

An offence is also committed if there is evidence of the use of unauthorised material in a student's response(s) to examination questions.

Students will be deemed to be aware of all regulations governing the conduct of examinations (Part G). Breaches of any of these regulations will constitute an academic offence.

Invention of data (fabrication)

Invention of data occurs where a student effectively misrepresents data to make it appear that the data has been derived by appropriate measurement in the field, in the laboratory or other setting.

Thus the reader is deceived with regard to the true information and the researcher may use the invented data to substantiate a favoured hypothesis.

This is regarded as deception and is a very serious academic offence

Any other form of deception:

Any action through which students seek to gain an unfair advantage in assessment constitutes an academic offence.

Please refer to the College's Academic Regulations for the full Academic Offences regulation which also includes details pf the process and procedure following a report of an alleged or suspected academic offence and the right to appeal.

Appeals against assessment board decisions

If you consider that you have a reason to appeal against an assessment board decision, please bear in mind that your reasons must fall within the grounds specified in the College's Academic Appeals (Part J). You cannot appeal simply because you disagree with the mark given. Students can only appeal against an assessment result (including an RPL decision – see Part C) or a decision of an Assessment Board for one or more of the following reasons:

That the student's performance in an assessment suffered through illness or other compelling circumstances which could not have been reasonably reported at the time of the assessment; students who base an appeal on this ground will be expected to show why the circumstances could not have been reported earlier;

That the assessment was not carried out in accordance with the programme and/or module regulations and procedures;

That the administrative procedures were not correctly followed or that a significant mistake was made in the administrative process

A full set of academic regulations can be found at https://www.ccsw.ac.uk/academic-regulations-and-forms/

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