

Code of Ethics

1. Those advising international students have a general responsibility to:

- a) maintain high standards of professional conduct by actively upholding this code at all times
- b) act in the best interests of the student, while respecting institutional policies, statutory and legal requirements and the legitimate interests of any financial sponsors
- c) recognise the power of influence that comes with their role as adviser and ensure that it is not used inappropriately
- d) be alert to ethical dilemmas and potential conflicts of interest and seek guidance when they arise
- e) share professional knowledge and skills and contribute to the professional development of colleagues

2. In discharging their professional functions, those advising international students shall:

- a) accurately represent their areas of competence, education, training and experience
- b) recognise the boundaries of their qualifications and competence, making appropriate referrals when situations fall outside them
- c) actively seek to promote their professional development and keep themselves informed of current developments in their fields
- d) in particular, keep themselves informed, as may be relevant to their areas of advice, of developments in statutory and case law, regulations, immigration rules and procedures, institutional policies and other codes
- e) work to ensure that there are arrangements in place that will secure objective advice for students from another source where conflicts of interest may arise [see also 4e) below]

3. In their dealings with students and colleagues, those advising international students shall:

- a) act in good faith and with fairness, consideration and objectivity
- b) recognise their own cultural and value orientations and be aware of how those orientations affect their interactions with people from other cultures
- c) be aware of, and show appropriate sensitivity to and respect for, other cultures and value systems
- d) not discriminate, or tolerate discrimination on the part of others, on the basis of ethnic or national origins, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability or age
- e) refrain from unjustified or unseemly criticism of other advisers or other institutions and seek to resolve any conflict of advice directly with the other adviser concerned in a professional manner

- f) maintain the confidentiality and integrity of information about students and of communications with students, complying with data protection law, the institution's responsibilities as a Tier 4 sponsor and any policy of the adviser's employing organisation on confidentiality and record keeping. Ensure that information about any circumstances in which information may be disclosed to UKBA or the police without prior authorisation is available to students
- g) do nothing to support or encourage illegal actions

4. In their dealings with students, those advising international students shall:

- a) be clear to all parties about their role and boundaries as an adviser and limit advice to matters consistent with that role and its boundaries
- b) provide students with information they need to make informed choices or decisions and not withhold relevant information
- c) be aware of the difference between information, advice and counselling and be able to recommend qualified counselling assistance to students who may benefit from it
- d) consider when it is appropriate and reasonable to advise a student. If it is not, for example where there is any conflict of interest, refer to 2e), above
- e) be aware of circumstances in which the adviser as an individual may not be able to be certain of giving objective advice or of being thought to be objective and be prepared to secure such advice for the student by appropriate referrals
- f) refrain from becoming involved in personal relations with individual students when such relationships might result in undue influence on the adviser, or a likely perception of undue influence
- g) accept only gifts (including hospitality) of nominal value and only where they do not seem intended to influence the manner in which professional responsibilities are exercised, while remaining sensitive to the varying significance of gifts in different cultures. Comply with any institutional policy on the acceptance or recording of gifts. Seek guidance from a more senior manager in any circumstance where it may seem appropriate to accept a gift of more than nominal value
- h) ensure that students are fully advised of the procedures for them to follow to pursue complaints or to seek redress, or to defend themselves, and secure appropriate referrals where the adviser's role precludes support/representation for the student in any formal procedures.

For further information, including a commentary on the code, see

www.ukcisa.org.uk/code-of-ethics