



Leeds City College

# Leeds City College **Higher Education Student Charter**

**Owner:** HEDO

**Last Review:** July 2015

**Next Review:** July 2016

**Endorsed by:** Academic Board/HE Committee

## Introduction

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Leeds City College has established a distinctive place in the new unified FE/HE system with its commitment to open access, flexible learning systems, and lifelong learning, delivered through its institution-wide credit accumulation schemes.

## College mission statement

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**“To be recognised as an exceptional College providing life changing skills and experiences for individuals, businesses and communities.”**

## Our values

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**As a College community, we have identified a set of values, which inform all our activities. Within this framework we value:**

- **Excellence**

*Relentless pursuit of excellence in everything we do.*

- **Respect**

*Behaving with integrity, fairness and honesty at all times*

- **Ambition**

*Forward looking, supporting innovation and creativity, and seeking opportunities to enhance all aspects of the College business*

- **Welcoming**

*Providing an environment that is safe, healthy and inclusive*

- **Teamwork**

*Working as one College, whilst recognizing the different, important contributions we all make*

- **Accountability**

*Taking personal responsibility for finding solutions*

**Our corporate aim is to provide programmes of high quality that challenge you all to achieve to the maximum of your ability and stimulate you to attain excellence. We seek continuous improvement in everything we do and we try to make your needs our first consideration.**

**We are therefore committed to:**

- setting attainable standards of service;
- encouraging you to participate in the continuous development of the College by giving us your comments and opinions on the services we provide or through more active involvement in the improvement of these services;
- taking prompt action to deal with complaints about the quality and delivery of our services.

**We believe that the effective development of a College community involves the cooperation and collective effort of all its members and a mutual acknowledgement of responsibility.**

**Our Student Charter is designed to set out what you can expect from us and what we will expect from you in return. It provides a framework within which we may progressively realise our commitment to provide quality academic programmes and related support services, and secure their continuous improvement.**

**We make the following commitments to you to:**

- ensure that your application for a course is handled fairly and efficiently;
- provide clear and accurate information about our facilities, services, regulations and procedures;
- provide a supportive learning environment to assist your efforts to realise your full academic potential;
- provide a network of student support services;
- involve you in our decision-making processes;
- operate fair and efficient complaints and appeals procedures;
- strive for excellence in everything we undertake.

## Your commitment

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**In return we expect you, as a responsible student member of the College community, to make the following commitments to the College:**

- understand and comply with the College Regulations, Awarding Body Regulations and Codes of Conduct as they relate to students;
- conduct yourself at all times in a responsible and orderly manner and avoid any behaviour which disrupts the normal working of the College;
- study conscientiously, attend punctually all classes on which you are enrolled, complete all assignments, class work and laboratory work as required, maintain regular contact with your tutors, notifying them if you are experiencing any difficulties, and obtain the necessary advice to help you succeed in your chosen programme of study;
- respond to reasonable requests from staff without undue delay;
- make use of the extra-curricular opportunities and support services provided for you;
- contribute, to the best of your ability, to the development of the College as a learning community and to the enhancement of its reputation by advising us where improvements can be made, and by participating in our monitoring and decision-making processes.

For each of our aims and commitments to you, we set out in more detail below what you can expect from us and what in turn we expect from you.

## Student involvement in decision-making processes

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**The College is committed to your participation in the continuous academic development of the College. To this end, we encourage student representation on key policy-forming bodies of the College.**

**You can expect:**

- positive encouragement for student representation on programme committees, student fora, Academic Board and other key committees;
- opportunities to influence policy formation through your representatives on College boards and committees and by making your views known about the services which support you;
- a HE Officer as a member of the Student Union Executive

### You are expected to:

- make yourself aware of the opportunities for, and responsibilities of, representation on committees and boards of the College;
- make yourself available for training if you are, or intend to become, a representative on such committees and boards.

## Application and admission

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### There are many application routes for prospective students to apply to Leeds City College.

It should be recognised that, for many courses, demand is significantly higher than the number of places available. Inevitably therefore some students may not be successful in their application. The way in which your application proceeds will vary from course to course.

### When you apply to the College you can expect:

- confidentiality – your personal details will not be disclosed to anyone outside the College Admissions team;
- clear and accurate information about our courses, costs and qualifications so that you can make informed choices;
- our prospectuses to contain accurate information about our portfolio and services;
- your request for prospectus and/or programme information to be handled quickly and efficiently;
- an opportunity to visit the College for a general look around (for practical reasons such visits are not normally run on an individual appointment basis, except for those programmes which require interview);
- either an acknowledgement of receipt of application is sent to you or an invitation to attend a visit day or interview. An invitation to attend a visit day or interview will contain clear instructions and details;
- your application for a course to be handled fairly and efficiently;
- appropriate guidance and support in choosing your course;
- information about how to obtain credit for any higher educational qualifications or learning from experience that you already have;
- your application to be given full consideration and a decision made promptly;
- referral to an alternative course if this seems more appropriate for you.

### When you apply to the College you are expected to:

- keep the appointment if invited to attend either a visit day or interview, or contact the College as soon as possible prior to the appointment date to arrange an alternative mutually convenient date to attend;
- respond to an offer of a place within the specified time period, otherwise the offer may be withdrawn;
- discuss the impact of any additional requirements you might have so that we are able to make appropriate adjustments for you.

### When your place at the College has been confirmed you can expect:

- to receive, prior to the start of your course, a standard College letter containing enrolment details for your course and explaining when and where you should attend.

### When your place at the College has been confirmed you are expected to:

- attend the full induction programme;
- complete formal enrolment at the designated time;
- pay College fees within the required timescales.

## Educational Guidance

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### Educational guidance is available to address your needs prior to and at the point of entry to the College or as part of your programme of study. Pre-entry and entry guidance is provided by identified admissions staff and College Careers Advisers, including a dedicated Higher Education Careers Adviser.

Our Higher Education Careers Adviser is available on a flexible basis across different campuses offering support with all aspects of careers and employability, and advice on finance and funding. For example, workshops are offered covering CVs, application forms, interview skills, postgraduate study, topping up your degree, job search and career options. Employer led sessions are delivered for current students, providing links for potential work placements and internships. Careers Advice is available to former students for a period of up to 3 years. Contact [hecareers@leedscitycollege.ac.uk](mailto:hecareers@leedscitycollege.ac.uk) to find out more. On-course guidance is available through course tutors

### You can expect:

- up-to-date information about the educational guidance services available;
- the opportunity for a pre-entry guidance session;
- guidance on programmes of study suited to your individual circumstances and goals;
- accurate information concerning the programmes of study.

### You are expected to:

- keep yourself informed of, and where appropriate make use of, the educational guidance services available to you.

## Disability

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### The College welcomes applications from students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties and employs support managers and specialist tutors who will offer help with individual requirements when appropriate.

### You can expect:

- confidentiality;
- to receive advice, including pre-admission advice, on support and facilities available;
- to be informed of the facilities that exist which are relevant to your specific needs, and consideration of any special arrangements necessary for assessment or examinations;
- to receive advice on external agencies' allowances for which you may be eligible to apply.

### You are expected to:

- satisfy yourself that the support and facilities available meet your requirements;
- disclose your disability or learning difficulty on application so the College can discuss your needs with you;

- supply documented evidence of your disability if requested and supply evidence in relation to your DSA;
- make yourself known to support managers and specialist tutors;
- manage your own support needs in partnership with the support team;
- attend support reviews as appropriate;
- advise relevant staff if you are unable to keep an appointment.

## Equality and Diversity

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**At Leeds City College, we are proud of our diverse community. We strive to be an inclusive organisation where individual differences are accepted and valued and where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential. We are committed to creating a safe learning and working environment that fosters a culture of respect and openness and actively challenges discrimination in all its forms.**

### You can expect:

- be treated fairly and with respect
- feel welcome and valued
- learn in an environment that is free from discrimination, bullying or harassment
- receive the support necessary to reach your full potential

### You are expected to:

- comply with the College values
- adhere to College policies and procedures
- treat people with respect and not take part in behaviour that could be construed as discriminatory or offensive
- respect people's differences

## Teaching and learning

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**We will provide a supportive learning environment to assist your efforts to realise your full academic potential. The College is committed, as a prime objective, to maintaining and improving the quality of our teaching and your learning. An important aspect of this commitment is the development of a learning environment which enables you to maximise both your personal development and your contribution to society. Your involvement in decision-making about your programme, and your feedback in the evaluation of this programme, supports the continuous improvement of the College's educational provision.**

### You can expect:

- teaching strategies and methods which are relevant, well-planned and supported by appropriate materials;
- accommodation and facilities appropriate to your programme of study;
- staff with relevant expertise who will offer academic support for your studies, assess your work fairly and objectively with internal and external moderation and provide clear, accurate information about your programme of study and the academic regulations;

- careers information and guidance to help you make informed decisions about your personal educational and career goals;
- a safety policy that ensures, as far as is practical, the health and safety of staff and students while undertaking College activities;
- to respond, on your written authorisation, to queries from your sponsor or employer about a work place based activity.

### You are expected to:

- attend timetabled classes, submit work on time and notify your tutors if you are experiencing difficulties with your work;
- make use of the educational facilities available to you.

## Patterns of study

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**The College offers a wide variety of subjects, programmes and qualifications, which can be studied on a full- or part-time basis in ways that are designed to be flexible, relevant and worthwhile to you. Depending on your particular interests, qualifications and experience you may choose, with academic approval, to select a programme which is highly specialised or vocationally specific. These are subject to availability and overriding timetable considerations.**

The majority of subjects and programmes available to you are divided into units of study or modules, which provide building blocks towards the achievement of a particular qualification. For each module successfully completed, you will receive credit towards the completion of your award. Each award is assigned a level in relation to other awards. The credits you accumulate through your studies are recognised by many other Universities and Colleges not only in the UK but also throughout Europe.

### You can expect:

- to receive advice on your choice of course(s) and of study mode;
- to receive accurate information and advice concerning your programme of study at the start of your course(s) and throughout the period of your registration, and negotiation of the learner agreement/programme of study;
- to receive, at the start of your programme of study and of each constituent module, information concerning the learning outcomes to be achieved, the methods of learning to be used, the evidence of achievement that will be sought through assessment, the mode of assessment and the schedule of assessment to be adopted;
- to be awarded academic credit where appropriate in respect of relevant prior certificated learning or prior experiential learning which is verifiable;
- to be awarded credit for work-based learning where appropriate

### You are expected to:

- make yourself familiar with your programme of study and related information provided individually and through communication channels used throughout the College;
- participate conscientiously in all elements of the programme for which you are enrolled;
- seek advice from your tutor(s) whenever you require help and participate in the tutorial system as required.

## Assessment

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**Assessment forms an important part of your study programme enabling your tutors and you to make an informed judgment concerning your progress through the programme and the extent to which you have achieved the learning outcomes required by the programme.**

### You can expect:

- an impartial and objective assessment of your work in accordance with generally recognised standards;
- to receive a copy of the regulations and procedure under which you will be assessed;
- to receive a clear specification of the assessment requirements of every programme component which you undertake;
- a clear notification of times, dates, and places of formal examinations and the submission of course work;
- to receive constructive feedback on the quality of your performance in each element of coursework assessment which you submit in accordance with the assessment schedule.

### You are expected to:

- familiarise yourself with the regulations and procedures governing the assessment of the programme for which you are enrolled;
- read public notices identifying the times, dates, and places for formal examinations or the submission of course work and to act in accordance with them;
- observe the assessment requirements of the course for which you have enrolled;
- familiarise yourself with complaints and appeals procedures.

## Evaluation and feedback

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**You will be invited to provide feedback on teaching and learning experiences in order to inform the evaluation and improvement of your programmes.**

### You can expect:

- to be given opportunities to express your opinions on the teaching and learning experiences offered on your programme, using a variety of formal and informal channels including direct contact with course tutors, participation in annual course monitoring processes, questionnaires and surveys, and through your student representatives on programme committees;
- to receive a response to the opinions you express on teaching and learning either directly through course tutors or indirectly through access to the annual programme monitoring report or programme committee minutes.

### You are expected to:

- participate actively and constructively in the learning processes and provide feedback as requested by the College and your student representatives.

## Complaints and appeals procedures

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**The College has in place a Complaints Procedure and Awarding Body Academic Appeals Regulations. For further information you should refer to those published procedures.**

### You can expect:

- published and accessible procedures;
- advice and assistance in using these procedures;
- to be kept informed of the progress of any complaint or academic appeal you make in accordance with the procedures;
- that your complaint or academic appeal will be handled confidentially and without fear of recrimination.

### You are expected to:

- familiarise yourself with the complaints and academic appeals procedures and where appropriate use the pro forma available to record the details in writing in accordance with the procedures.

## Student support and guidance

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### Library Services

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**Leeds City College is moving towards a more student centred approach enhanced by resource based learning. These strategies are designed to focus on the student as an active learner and thereby improve the quality of the student experience. In the furtherance of this objective, the College is seeking to secure a closer integration of its learning support services.**

Access to these services is primarily through Libraries, some of which, in addition to the anytime opening hours, also remain open during evenings in term time.

### You can expect:

- access to libraries following completion of enrolment/ registration;
- a range of appropriate facilities as set out in publicity material available from the services;
- advice and information on locating and using information services and resources in all libraries areas;
- accommodation to comply with the Health and Safety requirements.

### You are expected to:

- observe the library's regulations and any related code of conduct;
- maintain a quiet and appropriate study environment in all centres;
- take care of any items on loan to you and return these promptly.

## Counselling

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**Counselling sessions can be accessed by any student or member of staff. Sessions are booked appointments beginning with a formal assessment and then up to six 50 minute sessions (with up to a further six sessions if required and agreed by the counsellor and supervisor). Counselling is not a crisis solution and there may be a waiting list at some Campuses at certain times of the year.**

The Counselling Service is offered equally to individuals who already have a diagnosis through to those with no previous mental health intervention. It works with 'whatever the client brings' in terms of presenting issues. Some clients might be referred on to other services at assessment point, on completion of their counselling sessions or at an appropriate point during counselling.

## Well-Being Drop-in Sessions

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Well-Being Drop-in Sessions are offered at all main Campuses but the days, times and frequency vary. Timetables of the sessions are advertised widely and given out during Induction Weeks.

The sessions allow students and staff to receive support, information and guidance on aspects of emotional, physical and sexual health. Appointments are not needed but individuals might be booked into a Well-Being drop-in session if they cannot be suitably accommodated elsewhere for a counselling assessment. Staff can also use these sessions to consult with the Counselling and Well-Being Team about issues relating to their students.

These sessions try to be responsive to issues happening in and affecting staff and students at college, such as sudden deaths and traumatic incidents. However, if an individual is in crisis and there is a risk to theirs or someone else's safety this should be referred to Safeguarding and not postponed until the next Well-Being drop-in session at that Campus. These sessions are not for staff to bring students who have disclosed a cause for concern to them instead of completing the relevant paperwork themselves.

### You can expect:

- confidentiality;
- the service to provide an initial session as soon as is possible after being requested;
- to be advised regarding ongoing counselling as appropriate;
- the opportunity to discuss with your counsellor issues, number of sessions and frequency of contact.

### You are expected to:

- make use of the support available;
- make every effort to keep an appointment and give advance notice in the event of having to cancel.

## Support and advice

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The College Welfare Service provides information sheets and booklets about such issues as budgeting and benefits. Welfare advisers can provide information, advice and support with student loan and money problems, fees issues, tenants rights, welfare benefits, council tax and other such issues.

### You can expect:

- confidentiality;
- information, advice and support in relation to general welfare and financial issues;
- help in identifying relevant internal and external agencies who may be able to advise;
- a "drop in" service for quick queries at specified times and sites;
- to be able to book an appointment with a Welfare Adviser if more time is necessary;
- to discuss issues on a one-to-one basis.

### You are expected to:

- make every effort to keep appointments and give advance notice in the event of having to cancel.

## Careers service

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The College offers information and guidance to assist you in your career choice and also in planning both for future courses and employment opportunities. Our aim is to offer a confidential, impartial and accessible service, staffed by qualified careers advisers, to help you develop skills and knowledge for life-long career management.

### You can expect:

- Access to up-to-date information covering occupations, further study, employers and vacancies;
- a variety of computerised guidance programmes and information databases;
- specialist career workshops e.g. sessions of CV building, job applications on request

### You are expected to:

- attend when you are booked onto a career workshop or employer presentation;
- recognise that although we are here to help you to make decisions, we are not here to make decisions for you.

## Student Financial Support

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The Government framework of funding available changes regularly.

### You can expect:

- that the College will advertise government schemes in line with the release of information from external agencies;
- that it will put in place the required systems to administer such schemes.

### You are expected to:

- research sources of financial support;
- submit an application against published criteria.

## Financial Commitments

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We aim to provide up-to-date and accurate information on relevant aspects of student finance. There are certain services for which the College will invoice students for payment of fees e.g. tuition.

### You can expect:

- clear and accurate information about tuition fees and other College charges, together with details of any payment arrangements that may be offered;
- guidance from student advisors when dealing with your financial commitments.

### You are expected to:

- pay College fees and charges in accordance with defined time-scales;
- notify the College of any change in details in connection with the payment of fees and charges;
- make appropriate use of available services if you are experiencing difficulties with our financial commitments.

## Opting in and out of The Students' Union

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**As a Student of Leeds City College, you are automatically a member of Leeds City College Students' Union. Leeds City College Students' Union is a student led charity working in partnership with Leeds City College to enhance the education of its students, ensuring their experience is the best! It is run by students for students.**

The Students' Union is here for a whole range of things, from advice and getting your voice heard both at College and nationally, to events and clubs and societies. Recently voted NUS Further Education Students' Union Award 2015, they are here to make your experience as memorable as possible.

Under the terms of the Education Act 1994, any student will have the right to opt out of the membership of the Students' Union. A student should not be unfairly disadvantaged with the regard to the provision of certain services and activities within the college.

If a student decides to opt out he/she will not be able to take part or be considered in different thing and roles within students' union. The following are some examples of things you would not be able to do:

- be involved in the government or administration of the union
- stand for elections of any union office
- be a member of the National Union of Students (NUS) or any other body to which the Union may from time to time be affiliated and/or represent the Students' Union on any other national body or organisation to which the Students' Union affiliates.
- be elected to the leadership of a student led society
- be represented to the college at an academic or behavioural disciplinary by The Students' Union.

### As a Students' Union member you can expect:

- encouragement to realise the value of the extra-curricular opportunities available;
- accessible information about activities and facilities and the resources available to support them;
- the opportunity and the information to enable you to discuss the possibility of setting up a new club or society within the Students' Union.

### If you decide not to become a member of the Students' Union you can expect:

- to enjoy access to all formal College events, activities and facilities;
- to have access to Union services as detailed in the Students' Union Offices;
- not to be unfairly disadvantaged by virtue of your decision.

## Religion

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**The College recognises the spiritual and religious needs of students and aims to provide support for their needs and for the conduct of religious worship and prayer.**

### In the furtherance of these aims, the College:

- facilitates public meetings and events which enable the exploration of religious traditions and dialogue between them;

- recognises the need for facilities to be provided for meetings concerned with worship and devotional activities internal to religious groupings.

### We are committed to providing you access to:

- information concerning student religious societies within the College and places of worship and religious organisations;
- space set aside and advertised as available for worship, prayer and meditation at designated times.

### You are expected to:

- behave with courtesy and respect towards all members of the College and all religious traditions represented in that community.

## International students

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**Leeds City College welcomes international students and provides specialist services in recognition of the particular needs of these students.**

### You can expect:

- an invitation to attend an induction at the start of your programme;
- language support for students whose first language is not English (fees may be charged depending on level of need);
- a confidential and effective advice and information centre.

### You are expected to:

- request and take note of a pre-arrival pack from the College once a confirmed offer and acceptance to study at the College has been received;
- ensure that you have made all necessary preparations regarding finance, immigration requirements and English language proficiency at IELTS 6.0 level or equivalent prior to enrolling on the programme;
- make appropriate use of specialist support provided.
- understand your responsibilities as a Tier 4 student and comply with your Student Visa conditions

## The College environment

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**The College is committed to providing an environment which supports the student learning experience.**

### Catering

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**Over several years the College has sought to improve and extend its catering facilities. A catering service is available on all the main College campuses.**

### You can expect:

- any special needs to be met wherever practicable;
- all reasonable care to be taken to observe health and hygiene regulations with respect to the safety of food and drinks.

### You are expected to:

- notify us of any special needs;
- conduct yourself in a responsible manner in all refectory areas;
- respond to requests to vacate any area required by other users without undue delay;
- leave all refectory areas in a clean and tidy condition.

## **Estates**

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**The College is working to create and maintain a safe environment within College owned estate.**

### **You can expect:**

- an environment which meets with the needs of the College community;
- relevant learning and teaching facilities.

### **You are expected to:**

- adhere to the published guidelines and regulations for use of the facilities and to use them in a responsible manner.

## **Security**

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**The College endeavours to provide a safe and secure environment.**

### **You can expect:**

- surveillance that monitors the majority of College buildings;
- a rapid response to security problems which arise on campus.

### **You are expected to:**

- wear your College ID Card as identification when on College premises;
- share responsibility for making the College a safe place;
- report anything suspicious or potentially dangerous to a member of the College staff.

## **Health & Safety**

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**The College has a published Health and Safety policy which we expect students to adhere to. This accords with the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, including the relevant Statutory Provisions, Repeals and Modifications.**

## **No Smoking Policy**

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**The College has a no smoking policy on all campuses and sites.**

### **You can expect:**

- information relating to the College's No Smoking Policy;
- help and guidance on giving up smoking to be offered by student support services.

### **You are expected to:**

- abide by the College's No-Smoking Policy.

## **Environmental Policy**

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**The College is committed to preserving and improving the environment and accepts its responsibility to pursue practices and operate in such a way as to enhance the quality of the local, national and global environment, through recycling schemes and links with environmental agencies.**

### **You can expect:**

- positive and responsible attitudes to the environment through the curriculum and within the estate strategy;
- greater awareness and understanding of environmental issues.

### **You are expected to:**

- support the College's environmental policy.