

HIGHER EDUCATION CONSUMER PROTECTION PLAN

Audience:	STUDENTS (HE)
Requirement:	ESSENTIAL
Policy Owner:	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BUSINESS & CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS
Review Delegation:	CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE
Review Cycle:	Annual
Last Review:	March 2025
Due for Review:	March 2026

SHCG HE Consumer Protection Plan

Provider's name: South Hampshire College Group

Provider's UKPRN: 10007928

Your overall approach to ensuring compliance with consumer protection law

South Hampshire College Group is fully compliant with consumer protection law and committed to ensuring that its customers are treated lawfully and fairly. The Higher Education Board of Studies is responsible for consumer protection and closely monitors key processes to ensure that the organisation remains compliant. The evidence that demonstrates this can be found in the HEBOS meeting minutes and records relating to any consumer law such as admissions, complaints, marketing literature, self-assessment documentation, course approvals and associated college policies.

The College has a Higher Education Admissions Policy which is reviewed annually. The College maintains responsibility for all admission decisions for its HE programmes and staff are suitably trained. Our Fee Policy contains the additional information needed to help students make informed decisions, including additional course costs, examination fees and financial support, are also clearly set out. The College has practices, policies and procedures in place that support fair admission. This includes a policy for recognition of prior learning and equality and diversity, both of which are current and reviewed at strategic level. Students are aware of the admissions process and all policies relating to students are accessible through the SHCG website and the student virtual learning environment.

Annual programme monitoring reviews are conducted as a live process throughout the year and course leaders are responsible for ensuring these are finalised by the end of the academic year and submitted to HEBOS and awarding bodies for scrutiny and feedback acted upon accordingly. HE progress boards are conducted termly and are designed to closely monitor key performance indicators, CMA compliance is reviewed during these meetings to ensure we remain fully compliant with CMA guidance.

Student Voice is a key focus of these meetings and any issues arising are acted upon and recorded via the meeting minutes. The HE strategy and HE admissions policies are informed by the Competition and Markets Authority; specific guidance provided is incorporated accordingly. Higher Education specific policies are reviewed and agreed at the HEBOS and the Head of Governance is responsible for recording these on the college register of policies. A reminder is sent to notify policy owners of impending review dates to ensure updates are timely and well communicated. The college has access to professional legal advice with regards to consumer law and contractual obligations, enabling us to deal with any emerging issues lawfully.

Your approach to providing information to applicants and students: research and application stage, offer stage and enrolment stage

We publish details of all our HE courses on the SHCG website, including information on course structure, entry requirements, assessment methods, proposed duration and dates, fees and additional costs. A link to the online application form can be found on each course page. Other course marketing material is reviewed regularly to ensure that the information shared with our prospective customers is current and transparent. Should any concerns be raised to the college group's attention this will be investigated through the SHCG complaints procedure.

Course web pages can be accessed here: <https://shcg.ac.uk/higher-education/>

University of Portsmouth [Collaborative courses](#) | [University of Portsmouth](#)

Further policies available to our customers can be found here:

SHCG Policies [Policies – SHCG | South Hampshire College Group](#)

University of Portsmouth Policies [Policies and standards | University of Portsmouth](#)

All applicants for a place on an HE course will be interviewed by the course leader to provide an opportunity for IAG and a discussion about the suitability of the course for individual applicants. Interviews will be held face to face in the college but online interviews via Teams/Zoom or other online platforms can be provided if required. All applicants will be sent a letter with an offer of a place if they are successful at interview, this letter will clear set out any conditions.

As much of the enrolment process as possible will be carried out online in advance. Remaining enrolment processes will be completed on the first day that students attend for their course. A member of the MIS team will be allocated to each HE class to provide face to face conversation regarding fees and to respond to any outstanding questions. This will also provide a final check that the process has been completed in full before the course begins.

Your contract terms and conditions

The college's contractual terms and conditions for HE can be found as an appendix to the HE admissions policy which is available on the college website.

Other policies relating to HE provision which are referenced in the terms and conditions can also be found on the SHCG website and are also linked to from the college's VLE page for HE students.

A provisional offer is made to the student following on from a student interview, at this point the offer is subject to the student meeting the entry requirements for the course and providing the relevant documentation to support this. Learners will be invited to complete the online enrolment process once they have fully met the entry criteria. In addition to the policies listed on the website, HE specific policies relating directly to the students are located on the college Virtual learning environment. Students are introduced to the VLE during induction to ensure they are fully aware of all policies and procedures relating to their study.

Your complaint handling processes and practices

The complaints procedure can be accessed through the SHCG website [Policies – SHCG | South Hampshire College Group](#).

Where students are studying at a partner organisation we will follow the college processes and procedures which are aligned with the lead institute of study. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator's good practice framework is used to ensure that our policies are fair and demonstrate best practice. Complaints records, external review and validation ensure that our policies are fair. We ensure that staff know, and are competent at following, the processes through a thorough staff induction and ensuring that process updates are communicated thoroughly. A register of policy updates is kept by the Head of Governance who ensures these are disseminated to all communication sources.