

HE CONSUMER PROTECTION PLAN

Audience:	STUDENTS (HE)
Requirement:	ESSENTIAL
Policy Owner:	Exec Dir Business & Civic Partnerships
Review Delegation:	C&Q
Review Cycle:	Annual
Last Review:	December 2023
Due for Review:	December 2024

Higher Education (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 a prospectus containing information on course structure, entry requirements, assessment methods, proposed duration and dates, fees and additional costs. The course prospectus states clearly to customers that these arrangements are subject to change and customers are directed to the college website for the most up to date information on our offerings. Our 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's attention this will be investigated through the college complaints procedure. SHCG individual college website pages provide details of the different levels of courses available and links to the various courses on offer. The fees are held within this section along with links to the application form and relevant funding information:

Fareham College [University Level Courses - Fareham College](#)

Eastleigh College [Qualifications at Levels 4 and above · Eastleigh College](#)

City College Southampton [Courses \(southampton-city.ac.uk\)](https://www.southampton-city.ac.uk)

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](#)

Fareham College Policies [Corporation & Governance - Fareham College](#)

Eastleigh College Policies [Policies & Procedures · Eastleigh College](#)

City College Southampton Policies [Governance \(southampton-city.ac.uk\)](#)

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

Your contract terms and conditions

The college contractual terms and conditions can be found in the HE admissions policy and Fee's Policy, available on the SHCG website [Policies – SHCG | South Hampshire College Group](#). Specific reference to course fee's that are subject to change are referenced on the course page prior to application.

Special considerations relating to the course are also clearly explained on the course webpage. 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. Learner agreements will be issued once the learner has fully met the entry criteria and submitted the supporting documentation for this. 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 Office of the Independent Adjudicator's (OIA) good practice framework is used to ensure that our policies, review and validation methods are fair and demonstrate best practice. We ensure that staff know, and are competent at following, the processes through a thorough staff induction and by ensuring process updates are communicated regularly.

Should you however, want to make a complaint, 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.

For specific information about fees and how, when and under what circumstances you may be eligible for refund in line with CMA guidance, pls refer to the SHCG Fees policy available via the website