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This policy applies to all College activity including ESF contracts.

STUDENT REFERENCES POLICY

1. PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 The College supports its students as they move into their next phase of education, training or employment. The majority of references requested are for these purposes. It is important therefore to provide a reference which supports a student's transition and staff should complete this in a timely manner.
- 1.2 Student references are required for a range of purposes and in some circumstances the College may be under a legal obligation to provide a reference. The College has a legal duty to exercise reasonable care when preparing a reference as an individual may be able to bring a claim for damages where they have suffered loss resulting from an inaccurate reference.
- 1.3 In order to minimise the risk of liability arising from giving references, the procedures below must be adhered to.

2. PROCEDURES

- 2.1 Requests for references should normally be in writing and sent to the relevant Programme Lead.
- 2.2 Emergency telephone requests, e.g. from University Admission tutors, should be dealt with by telephoning back to verify the caller and either reading or emailing a reference from the student's file. A verbal reference should be followed up in writing as soon as possible afterwards. If a reference from the student's file/ProMonitor record is not to hand, under no circumstances should a verbal 'off-the-cuff' reference be given. An assurance should be given that a fully verified reference will be delivered as soon as possible thereafter.

- 2.3 References must be fair and accurate with respect to factual content and any opinions expressed should be based on evidence that can be produced if necessary.
- 2.4 References should be restricted to factual matters such as attendance dates, course information, achievements, time keeping, absence etc.
- 2.5 Where it is necessary to give a descriptive analysis or opinion, the writer should state the parameters within which the reference is given, for example, how long the writer has known the student and in what capacity/circumstances.
- 2.6 The information provided in references should be capable of substantiation, by written evidence if possible.
- 2.7 References should state that the information given is accurate as far as is known to the writer.
- 2.8 Writers of UCAS references should always refer to the UCAS Notes of Guidance before writing the reference. UCAS references are audited annually to ensure quality and consistency.
- 2.9 References should be written on College headed paper, from a College email address, or a proforma where provided, signed by the appropriate Programme Lead, approved and endorsed by the Curriculum Director.
- 2.10 References should meet the deadline set by the person requesting the reference.
- 2.11 A copy must be placed in the student's file/uploaded to ProMonitor.
- 2.12 If the student has left the College, the dates of the student's attendance should be clearly stated, and it should be made clear that the information provided in the reference is therefore not current.
- 2.13 All references are confidential and may not be disclosed to third parties. However, it is important to bear in mind that the student has a right to see any reference written for them.
- 2.14 Reference requests received by e-mail should be dealt with in accordance with the Leicester College Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- 2.15 It is important to remember that any references provided are representative of the College and content will be assumed to be endorsed by the College.