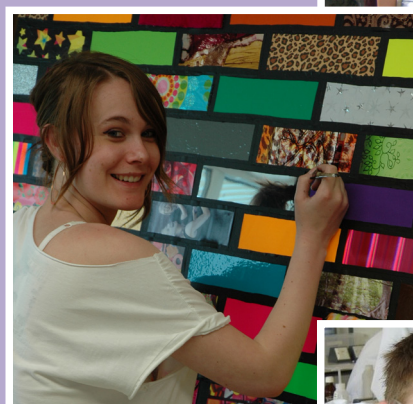


college charter

QE
Queen Elizabeth
Sixth Form College



college charter

queen elizabeth sixth form college

Contents

Introduction	3
1. Students	
a. Information	4
b. The Admissions Procedure - Applying to College	5
c. Financial Charges & Help	6
d. The Student Experience - Teaching & Learning	7
e. The Student Experience - Guidance & Counselling	8
f. The Student Experience - Student Association	9
g. The Student Experience - Equality & Diversity	10
2. Employers & The Local Community	
a. Employers	11
b. The Local Community	12
c. Parents	12
d. Partner Schools	13
e. Higher Education	13
3. Complaints Procedure - What to do if things go wrong	
a. The College	14
b. Other Problems	15
c. Data Protection and Freedom of Information Requests	17
d. Names and Addresses	17
4. Inspection Summary	18
5. Mission & Strategic Objectives	19

The College actively promotes equal opportunities and values diversity.

Introduction

At QE we take our commitment to our students and other stakeholders very seriously.

We are determined that the experience offered by the College will enable all students to enjoy, achieve and progress successfully to the next stage of their lives.

This Charter is developed through discussion with a range of stakeholders. Its purpose is to clearly define what individuals and organisations can expect from the College. The responsibilities of students are described in the 'QE Expects' document, which is issued to every student during the College induction process.

We hope that you find the Charter helpful and easy to understand.

Tim Fisher

Principal

The Charter has been designed to fit the parameters of the common inspection framework used by OFSTED to ensure that what the College offers is consistent with good practice.

If you require this Charter to be made available to you in an alternative format (eg large print, braille) or in another language, you should contact the Assistant Principal (Community and Students).

Students

a. Information

If you apply for a place at the College, you will quickly discover that, central to our admissions philosophy, is the view that you cannot make good decisions unless you have sound information. This applies equally to three fundamental questions.

- Shall I apply to the College?
- If I do come to the College, which courses should I take, given my interests, abilities and aspirations?
- If I do come to the College, what support procedures are available to enable me to be successful and to enjoy my time at college?

Much information will be gathered from direct discussion with members of staff - during interview, at Open Evenings or if you attend our Bridging Week. You will also be able to meet College students who will provide you with their perspective on College life.

The main sources of written information about the College are

- The College Prospectus - a general guide to the College including brief descriptions of our examination courses and results and the support available, which you should read from cover to cover. The Prospectus is available from the College Office and details can be accessed on the College website:
<http://www.qeliz.ac.uk>
- Course details - available from subject areas, at Open Evenings, the College website or on request.

These provide you with information on

- the admissions procedure
- the full range of College courses
- extra curricular activities
- examination results for the previous year
- support and guidance for students
- other items, including student comments, which may be of interest to you.

If you feel you need any additional information which is important to you and which will influence your decision making, then you should contact the College (tel. 01325 461315) and ask to speak to the Vice Principal (Guidance) or the Principal.

If you are over the age of 19 you should refer to the Assistant Principal (Community and Students).

If you require any information to be made available to you in an alternative format (eg large print, braille) or in another language, you should contact the Assistant Principal (Community and Students).

b. The Admissions Procedure - Applying to the College

If you are interested in applying for a place at the College you can expect

- a prompt response to your initial enquiry and any further enquiries you may have during the admissions process
- to have the opportunity to visit the College during Year 10 (if you attend one of our partner schools)
- a member of staff to visit your school (if it is one of our partner schools), usually during the Autumn Term of Year 11 to talk about the College and the application procedure
- to be invited to one of our Open Evenings which will be advertised in the local press
- to have the opportunity for a personal visit if you do not attend a local school and cannot attend one of the Open Evenings
- to receive a College Prospectus
- to have an individual interview and to be informed of the outcome by an agreed date.
- to be invited to Bridging Week at the end of June/beginning of July (if you are 16 - 19 and have been offered a place on a full time course)
- to have the opportunity, during Bridging Week, to attend classes in a variety of different programme areas and to have a post bridging guidance interview.
- to have the option of a further interview with a specialist member of the guidance team, after GCSE results have been published, if you feel you need additional guidance prior to enrolment
- to be given, immediately prior to enrolment, further guidance on your proposed course and be referred for specialist careers advice if appropriate
- if you have learning difficulties, disabilities or any other needs, to be invited to inform us of the nature of the specific needs you may have so that we can discuss appropriate provision for you.

c. Financial Charges and Help

(i) Students in the age range 16 - 18 years

If you are a day-time student under 19 years of age at the start of the academic year (1st September), then you can expect

- free tuition
- the College to provide the majority of essential books and classroom equipment for daytime students, although a charge may be made for supplementary activities such as fieldwork and visits. Part-time evening students are expected to provide their own books.
- the College to pay for your first entry for any examination which is a part of your programme of study
- advice on where to seek assistance if you are experiencing financial difficulties
- the right to apply to the Darlington Education Charities Fund if you have a specific need for financial assistance
- the right to apply to the College's Learner Support Fund for financial assistance; details can be obtained from the Assistant Principal (Community & Students) or the College office.

(ii) Students aged 19 and over

If you are aged 19 or over at the start of the academic year (1st September), then you can expect

- the College to charge for tuition and examination fees (details are available from the College office).
- the College to consider, in certain circumstances, not charging full fees; details of its policy on the remission of fees can be obtained from the Co-ordinator of Adult & Community Education or the College office
- the College to provide the majority of essential books and classroom equipment for day time classes, although a charge will be made for supplementary activities such as fieldwork and visits
- advice on where to seek assistance if you are experiencing financial difficulties
- the right to apply to the College's Learner Support Fund for financial assistance; details can be obtained from the College's Adult Guidance Tutor or the College office
- the right to apply to the Darlington Education Charities Fund if you have a specific need for financial assistance and you are under 25 years old.

d) The Student Experience - Teaching & Learning

If you become a student at the College our purpose will be to work in partnership with you. Our primary concern is to enable you to acquire new knowledge and skills which allow you to achieve your potential and you can expect

- to be part of a civilised, inclusive community that values diversity in which you feel safe, and to be treated with respect and consideration
- all staff to have high expectations of their students
- to be taught by well qualified staff who have a good and up-to-date knowledge of their subject(s)
- the programme areas in which you are taught to have well planned schemes of work designed to facilitate the successful completion of each course
- to be given details of the specification for any course you are taking
- to be introduced, at the start of the course, to the nature and scope of the subjects you are taking and the type of study methods that will be appropriate
- to have an initial assessment within subjects to identify your individual learning needs
- support in developing particular learning skills related to your course
- lessons to be prepared and taught in a manner appropriate both to your needs and the nature of any external examinations
- assignments to be set on a regular basis, assessed fairly and to be returned within agreed deadlines
- regular progress monitoring and action planning
- the opportunity to evaluate the learning experience on each course and within the College generally
- your performance, progress, attendance and punctuality to be thoroughly recorded and monitored
- materials and teaching methods to promote equality of opportunity and to recognise and value diversity
- to have the opportunity to take part in enrichment activities to broaden your studies and equip you for life after college
- lessons to interest and challenge you
- learning resources, accommodation and facilities to be appropriate for effective, safe study.

Given the nature of the partnership we are seeking with our students, the College will have high expectations of you; in particular, you will be expected

- to attend all the classes which have been timetabled for each course you are taking - unless there is a very good reason not to
- to complete any work set to the best of your ability
- to meet deadlines for the completion of assignments
- to contribute to the civilised, inclusive community we are seeking by behaving in a courteous, responsible, adult manner and by treating others - staff, fellow students, visitors and local residents - with respect, consideration and sensitivity
- to make a positive contribution in your classes
- to participate in College events or extra curricular activities if you feel you may benefit from them or have a particular contribution to make
- to adhere to the College's policies which reflect our concern for the health and welfare of all our students. The College has a Student Disciplinary Procedure which can be found on the student section of the College's virtual learning environment.

The College's commitments to you and yours to the College are set out in your Learning Agreement and further highlighted in the 'QE Expects' pamphlets.

e. The Student Experience - Guidance & Counselling

The College will help you to manage your learning and to achieve your potential. We regard guidance and support as fundamental to this process. This will commence before you even apply to the College; it will be an integral part of your programme of study during your time at College; and, should you feel you need assistance after you have completed your course, we will continue to offer guidance and support. If you become a full-time student at the College, therefore, you can expect

- objective and impartial guidance throughout the admissions procedure (see section 1b)
- the College to help you make a "guided choice" when you are trying to determine the programme of study most appropriate to your interests, abilities and aspirations
- a structured, supportive introduction to the College and to the courses you start at the College

- to be issued with a Student Diary/Planner which gives detailed information about the College and which will help you manage your time
- guidance on general as well as subject specific study skills
- a structured programme of careers and higher education guidance
- to be allocated a Group Tutor and Principal Tutor who will oversee your progress and welfare
- access to the College's staff who have careers and higher education responsibilities
- a structured programme of personal interviews with your group tutor and subject teachers so that they can discuss with you your progress and plans
- a reference (for employment or higher education) which reflects your performance and commitment in the courses you are taking and your contribution to any aspect of College life
- guidance and support should you experience personal difficulties, including access to the College counsellor, mentors and College nurse
- access to the College Chaplain and the opportunity to take part in collective worship
- appropriate assistance from the learning support team if you have a learning difficulty, disability or other specific needs.

NB: part-time students also have access to this support on an individual basis.

f. The Student Experience - Student Association

The College has a Student Association which is a non-political organisation, primarily concerned with aspects of student life at the College, such as

- charity fundraising
- facilities and services for students
- social events
- the student voice
- financial assistance for clubs and student extra-curricular activities.

The Association holds open meetings regularly to discuss student matters. Each tutor group is represented, giving all students the opportunity to have their views expressed. The Student Association is intended to

- enhance the student experience
- encourage student participation in College matters
- provide students with the opportunity to make their views known on a variety of issues.

You can become involved in student affairs in the following ways

- volunteer to be your tutor group's representative at the Association meetings
- stand for election as the President or Vice President of the Student Association; if you are successful, you will represent the students at meetings of the Board of the Corporation (Governing Body) and attend regular meetings with the Principal and other senior members of staff
- volunteer to work on the Student Executive Committee eg as a Treasurer or an Events and Entertainment officer. Members of the Executive Committee also attend whole College Committees.

You are automatically a member of the Student Association if you enrol at the College. There is no membership fee and you will be issued with a student identity card.

g. The Student Experience - Equality and Diversity

The College has an Equality and Diversity Policy which can be obtained from the Assistant Principal (Community & Students) and is published on the College website. It is intended that this policy is implemented for the benefit of all the College's students, employees and users.

There is also a standing committee which meets regularly to monitor and review policy, procedures and practice; its purpose is to ensure that all students and staff receive equal treatment and freedom from discrimination and to actively promote equality and diversity. This is a forum for students and staff to express their views.

Furthermore, if you wish to study at the College and feel that you have specific needs such as those arising from a disability or learning difficulty, you are invited to indicate its nature on your application form. You should also discuss this with the member of staff who interviews you and the College will make reasonable adjustments to make sure you have equality of opportunity. The College's Equality and Diversity Policy and Equality Duty Statement are available from the College Office and are published on the website: www.qeliz.ac.uk

Employers & The Local Community

The College works in partnership with a number of groups, in addition to its students, who have an interest in its well-being and effectiveness. Stakeholders in the College will be asked their views about the College.

a. Employers

(i) Recruitment

Many of the College's students will be seeking employment in the local area after completing their courses. When students have made applications for posts and references are requested then employers can expect

- a clear statement describing the programme of study which the student is following
- an analysis of the student's competencies, particularly with respect to the skills of literacy, numeracy, problem solving and communication
- an indication of the student's contribution to any other aspects of College life.

(ii) College Courses

The College provides places on courses for students other than school leavers wishing to continue their education on a full time or part-time basis. Both full and part time day courses are available for adults. The College also offers a wide range of evening classes at Advanced, Intermediate and Recreational levels. The employers of individuals released to take College courses can expect

- clear and accurate information on course content, assessment methods, target qualifications and financial charges
- reports on the performance and progress of each student to be made available if requested.
- that their employees will receive the same entitlement as all our students to high quality teaching, the effective management of their learning and equality of opportunity.

(iii) Work Experience

If you offer work placements for this College's students, you can expect

- a clear statement of the intended purpose of the placement
- that students will be well prepared
- that College staff will seek your comments on student performance and the value of the experience.

(iv) Business Associate Scheme

The College is seeking to be responsive to the needs of local employers and strengthen its links with them. Local businesses can expect

- the College to seek information from them which will inform decision making
- the opportunity to become business associates of the College.

b. The Local Community

Members of the local community can expect

- the College to be responsive to its educational needs
- information to be readily available on all College examination and leisure courses - please contact the Co-ordinator of Adult & Community Education if clarification is needed
- information on the availability of College facilities generally - please contact the Estate Manager
- detailed information on the performance of the College, particularly with respect to examination results
- the College to encourage its students to become involved in community activities and to seek placements for those wishing to take part in community service.

c. Parents

The College is very sensitive to the key role of parents in enabling and supporting their sons and daughters to achieve their educational potential. In seeking to work in partnership with the parents of students in the 16 - 19 age range, we feel that specific reference should be made to them in this charter.

Parents can therefore expect

- their daughters and sons to receive equality of opportunity
- full information on the admissions procedure and the support and guidance available to students
- the opportunity to visit the College prior to their son/daughter making an application
- to be kept informed of decisions made during the admissions procedure
- to be invited to attend the enrolment interview with their son/daughter
- the opportunity to attend parents' consultation evenings, at least once each academic year to discuss the performance and progress of their son or daughter with each subject tutor
- to be kept informed should the College be concerned about the well-being of their son or daughter
- the College to respond to concerns parents may have
- the opportunity to attend a meeting which will provide information on higher education courses, application procedures and finance
- to receive an assessment report 4 times each year from each course being taken by their son or daughter.
- to be asked about their views on the College.

d. Partner Schools

The education of young people after the age of 16 is the continuation of a process started several years beforehand. The College acknowledges that its own continued success is dependent on the work done by schools in the area. We will therefore strive to maintain close links with our partner secondary schools which can expect

- to have named College staff who will be responsible for all aspects of liaison with that school
- oversight of these links to be the responsibility of the College's Vice Principal (Guidance)
- to be invited on a regular basis to review liaison arrangements
- to receive information on programmes of study agreed with each of their former pupils
- to receive information on examination results for each of their former pupils
- to be informed of the destinations of their former pupils after they have left College
- College staff to attend parents' or careers' evenings whenever invited
- the College Principal to attend meetings with partner school head teachers to discuss matters of common concern
- the College to be familiar with the programmes of study followed by students in school and the links with those offered by the College
- the College to support the school in its activities and within the context of a true spirit of partnership.

Each year the College welcomes students from a large number of secondary schools in both the state and independent sectors, many of which have their own sixth forms. We are happy to work closely with all these although the term 'partner school' refers to 11 - 16 schools in the Darlington and surrounding area: Bedale, Bishop Barrington, Darlington School of Maths and Science, Darlington Education Village, Greenfield, Hummersknott, Hurworth, Longfield, Sedgfield, St Aidan's, St Francis Xavier, Staindrop, Sunnydale and Woodham. Priority is given to partner school applicants in the admission process.

Please refer to the College Admissions Policy for further information.

e. Higher Education

Each year a large number of students progress from the College to higher education. The College has close links with a number of higher education institutions which can expect

- a named person at the College - the Assistant Principal (Community & Students) - to be responsible for College liaison with universities and other places of higher education
- a team of College staff to be able to provide guidance to students wishing to apply to higher education
- the College to keep itself and its students well informed of developments and opportunities available in higher education
- the College to seek to extend its curricular links with local universities
- the College to provide detailed and helpful references analysing students' abilities, commitment, wider interests and potential for further study.

Complaints procedure - what to do if things go wrong

a. The College

This charter indicates what people and organisations can expect from the College. If, as a student, parent, employer or a member of the local community, you are not satisfied with the teaching or any other service provided by the College, you are advised to follow the procedure outlined below.

(i) Principles

The College's Complaints Procedure is designed to:

- encourage the resolution of problems by informal means where possible;
- ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly, in an impartial, non-adversarial manner;
- allow the swift handling of complaints within established time-limits;
- keep people properly informed during the procedure;
- address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress where necessary.

(ii) How to make a complaint

A complaint may be perceived to be a minor problem or a major issue. If it is the former, you should start at stage one of the procedure which aims to resolve such problems on an informal basis. If it is a more serious concern, you should go straight to stage two which entails contacting the College Principal.

a) Stage One: Minor Complaints

If the complaint is a minor one, you should, in the first instance, make contact either with a member of staff you find approachable or possibly a senior member of staff. This might be a Principal Tutor, the Assistant Principal (Community and Students) or the Vice Principal (Guidance).

They will advise you how to proceed so that the issue can be resolved. At this stage, the matter will be dealt with informally and it is hoped that a mutually agreeable solution can be found.

b) Stage Two: Unresolved Minor Complaints or More Serious Concerns

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of stage one or you believe that the complaint is not a minor one, you should move to stage two of the procedure. This entails taking your complaint directly to the Principal, by speaking with or writing to him, explaining the nature of the problem. If you write, the Principal will acknowledge your letter and reply in full within ten working days. If your complaint is about the Principal, you should write to the Chair of the Corporation at the College address and he will reply within ten working days.

c) Stage Three: Appeals

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of stage two, you will have the right of appeal to the Corporation. This should be done by writing to the Clerk to the Corporation at the College address, within ten working days of hearing the outcome of stage two. The Clerk will then call a meeting of the Appeals Committee to consider the complaint and the College's response to it. He will provide you with details of the procedure to be followed by the Appeals Committee. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be final.

If at any stage you require assistance in making a complaint you should contact the Assistant Principal (Community and Students) who can provide support including accessible versions of College policies and other documentation.

b) Other Problems

If you have concerns about issues which are beyond the direct responsibility of the College, you may find the guidance below helpful.

(i) Availability of Courses

If you find that a course you wish to study is not available in the Darlington area, you should contact the College for confirmation of the present position and future developments. If you find the situation is not satisfactory you should then refer to the Local Authority or the Young People's Learning Agency.

(ii) Qualifications

If you are unhappy about the quality of a particular qualification which will be the end product of one of the College's courses, you should, in the first instance, contact the Vice Principal (Curriculum). If you are still not satisfied you can complain to the relevant awarding body.

(iii) Results

If you believe that your results are not correct, you should contact the College and speak to the Vice Principal (Curriculum), who will advise you. It is possible to appeal although this has to be done through the College and will involve a fee. If the result remains unchanged and you wish to take the matter further, it is possible to appeal through the College to the Independent Appeals Authority for School Examinations (in the case of GCSE, GCE A level and AS examinations).

(iv) Transport Claims

In the first instance you should apply to your local education authority (Darlington or County Durham for most students, but North Yorkshire and Stockton for some). If your claim for travel expenses is unsuccessful you may apply to the College for a travel subsidy. Details of the application procedure are available from the College office. If you think you have been treated unfairly in either of these respects, you should initially contact the College for advice. You may subsequently wish to complain to council officers or your local councillor. If you are not satisfied with the outcome you can complain to the commission for Local Administration in England ("Local Government Ombudsman" - see section 3c). If your family income is in the region of £35,000 pa or less you may be eligible to some financial support for travel. Details are available from the Assistant Principal (Community & Students)

(v) Financial Support for Students

There are a variety of ways in which students may access financial support during their time at the College. Any student whose family is on a low income may be eligible for assistance from the learner support fund. Students who experience financial difficulties should make an appointment to speak with the Assistant Principal (Community & Students) who will advise on these and any other forms of support that might be available. Copies of the policy used for allocating awards can be obtained from the Vice Principal (Guidance) or the College Office.

c. Data Protection and Freedom of Information Requests

For information about yourself which is held by the College you can make a request under the Data Protection Act. For information which is not about yourself, you can make a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This request must be in writing using the Data or Information Access Request Form which can be found on the college website from the Data Protection or Freedom of Information options on the About QE menu.

Or follow the link <http://www.qeliz.ac.uk/pages/foi>.

The form should be completed and sent to:

Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College, Vane Terrace Darlington DL3 7AU
Fax: 01325 361705 Email: enquiry@qeliz.ac.uk

d. Names & Addresses

- | | |
|---|---|
| (i) The College Principal
Mr Tim Fisher
Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College
Vane Terrace, Darlington DL3 7AU
Telephone: 01325 461315 | (ii) Chairman of the Corporation
Mr Chris Wiper, Queen Elizabeth
Sixth Form College, Vane Terrace,
Darlington DL3 7AU
Telephone: 01325 461315 |
| (iii) Peter Lauener
Chief Executive
Young People's Learning Agency
Head Office, Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road, Coventry CV1 2WT
Telephone: 0845 3372000 | (iv) Darlington Borough Council
Mr Murray Rose
Director of People
Town Hall, Darlington DL1 5QT
Telephone: (01325) 380651 |

If you need the address and / or the telephone number for your local education authority and you do not live in County Durham, please contact the College.

- | | |
|---|---|
| (vi) Local Government Ombudsman
Mrs Anne Seex
Beverley House
17 Shipton Road, York YO30 5FZ
Telephone: 01904 380200 | (vii) Connexions Tees Valley
13 Horsemarket
Darlington DL1 5PW
Telephone: (01325) 480055 |
|---|---|

(ix) Other Addresses

If there are any other addresses and/or telephone numbers you would find helpful in connection with the College's activities please contact the College office and ask for the Principal's secretary.

Inspection Summary

Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College was inspected by Ofsted in October 2007. The report, published in November 2007, confirms that QE is a centre of excellence and is one of the country's leading colleges.

The inspectors focused on five key areas - effectiveness of provision, capacity to improve, achievement and standards, quality of provision, leadership and management - and they concluded that the College was outstanding in all aspects of its work. Hence the top grade - grade 1 - was awarded across the board.

Summary of Key Strengths

The full Ofsted report is published on www.ofsted.gov.uk. It identifies the following key strengths:

- high success rates
- students make excellent progress
- outstanding teaching and learning
- broad curriculum and extensive opportunities for enrichment
- effective partnership working with local schools, community, employers and higher education institutions
- excellent academic and personal support
- thorough and effective arrangements for quality assurance
- a culture of high expectations for both staff and students
- strong senior leadership which effectively promotes improvement
- the use of accommodation and resources to support learning
- strong focus on the views of students

Mission and Strategic Objectives 2009 - 2014

Mission

The purpose of the College is to achieve and maintain excellence as a provider of education, and as a result enable students to progress successfully to the next stage of their lives.

Strategic Objectives

Leadership, management and governance at the College will be of the highest standard; its focus over the next five years will be the achievement of the following strategic objectives:

- to provide and promote the highest standards of teaching and learning
- to provide a safe, supportive and civilized learning environment that enables students to fulfil their potential
- to provide the highest standard of objective guidance and pastoral care
- to continue to improve quality and add value to students' achievements
- to ensure that students and staff have access to and use the best learning resources available
- to value diversity and embed equality in all that we do
- to safeguard and promote the health and welfare of students and staff and embrace the principles of the Every Child Matters agenda
- to promote an aspirational culture that supports, stimulates and develops students and staff
- to work collaboratively with our partners to meet the needs of our local community
- to contribute to local area planning in the provision of an appropriate and relevant curriculum for 14-19 year olds
- to efficiently manage and provide information to benefit individuals and agencies with a legitimate need
- to ensure good value for money in all college activities.

The College intends to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the objectives of Darlington's Children's Trust and the 14-19 Partnership by striving to meet its own objectives and by working closely with partners including Darlington College, local schools, the Local Authority and other sixth form colleges.



01325 461315

Vane Terrace, Darlington DL3 7AU
enquiry@qeliz.ac.uk www.qeliz.ac.uk
www.facebook.com/qesfc

The College actively promotes equality of opportunity and values diversity