

# **Guidance Services**

## **Statement of Service**

### **Introduction**

This is a full guide to the services offered by the Guidance Team to external customers, learners and prospective learners at Milton Keynes College.

Whilst this document is in written format and in English, it is acknowledged that our clients are from many different backgrounds. This Statement of Service can be made available in audio, large print format, or in other languages upon request. Please ask a member of the Guidance Team for more details. A short version of our Statement of Service is freely available at each campus and at our outreach centres.

We aim to provide free, impartial, client focused information, advice and guidance, to enable you to make informed decisions. We also aim to widen and encourage participation in learning through working with local partnerships. We are committed to promoting lifelong learning so that everyone can make the most of their skills, experience and interests.

### **Services**

All of our services are delivered in accordance with the principles of the national IAG Board and meet the requirements of the nationally recognised Matrix standard.

### **Customer Views**

Our clients rate our services highly with customer satisfaction over 90%.

The Ofsted/Ali inspection stated 'Pre entry guidance and information processes are well managed. Students receive impartial guidance at enrolment. There is an efficient centralised interviewing process. Surveys of students' views show that students are very satisfied with the advice and guidance service.'

## How to contact the Guidance Team

Guidance staff are based at the Chaffron Way Campus and can be contacted in person, by telephone or email.

All Guidance Team staff have received appropriate training for their role. All staff work to the nationally recognised Matrix standard for information, advice and guidance. Staff giving guidance have, or are working towards, appropriate qualifications.

### Campus Addresses

**Chaffron Way Campus  
Woughton Campus West  
Leadenhall  
Milton Keynes  
MK6 5LP**

**Bletchley Campus  
Sherwood Drive  
Bletchley  
Milton Keynes  
MK3 6DR**

**Main Switchboard  
[www.mkcollege.ac.uk](http://www.mkcollege.ac.uk)**

**01908 684444**

### Opening Times:

#### Guidance

01908 684404  
01908 684456

Monday - Thursday  
Friday

8.30am to 5pm  
8.30am to 4.30pm

Drop – In Chaffron Way Tuesday 11am – 1pm and Thursday 1pm – 3pm  
Bletchley Monday 12pm- 1 pm and Wednesday 3pm – 4pm

At key times in the year evening guidance appointments are available by telephoning the unit.

If clients wish to contact us outside office hours, voicemail is available and messages will be responded to within two working days.

## **Guidance Team**

### **Information**

We offer a free, impartial service specialising in college courses but also offer information on other education and training providers. The service can be accessed in person, by telephone or by email. We also provide this service at information events offered by the College such as open evenings.

Our information is reviewed annually to ensure it is current. All information is provided in English but if required another language version or format (e.g. Audio) is available to clients upon request. You can also access information on the College Website.

The Guidance Team provides in depth course information on Milton Keynes College provision. We aim to ensure information is accurate and up to date. Clients may be referred to the College library where they may access further careers reference material. Software package Adult Directions is available together with help to access this. Information detailing other local provision is also provided.

### **Advice**

Course advice is available through non-bookable 15 minute sessions with one of our advisors at the Guidance Unit Drop-in advice sessions on:-

#### **CHAFFRON WAY**

- Tuesdays 11am – 1pm
- Thursdays 1pm – 3 pm

#### **BLETCHLEY**

- Mondays 12 pm – 1pm
- Wednesdays 3 pm – 4 pm

If however the client has a more complex enquiry a full bookable appointment will be made; we also offer referral to other training providers and help-lines where appropriate.

## **Guidance**

If clients are seeking to develop themselves through learning or training, but are not sure which route to take, an impartial, confidential guidance interview will enable them to discuss options and opportunities available. They will be encouraged to reflect on their existing skills and qualifications then build this to further develop their skills through training or qualifications. The session will help clients to aim for a realistic and achievable plan enabling them to reach their full potential.

This service is offered on an individual basis with one of our professional guidance advisors, the service is free and is available to everyone. Guidance interviews usually last about 45 minutes and a follow up session can be offered.

Clients of all ages and from all backgrounds are welcome. We actively seek to increase participation in education.

Impartial guidance is also available at outreach venues e.g. schools, training centres or community centres.

One-to-one appointments with our Advisors are bookable in advance by telephoning the Guidance Unit. We will make every effort not to delay or cancel appointments; however, if unavoidable, clients will be contacted and offered another appointment time within 10 working days. We ask that clients arrive in good time for their appointment and if, for any reason, they are unable to attend that they advise the unit in advance. Everything discussed will be kept confidential within the limits of our confidentiality policy and any referral will only take place with the client's permission. Clients will be sent a written record of their guidance interview in the form of an action plan.

## **Referrals**

We refer clients to appropriate services. This happens when another provider or organisation offers services that are more closely related to the clients' needs. It can be for information, advice and guidance, learning provision, employment opportunities or work experience.

Effective referral requires that staff have sufficient knowledge of the clients' needs, plus accurate information of the proposed provider for an appropriate match to be made.

Information about clients will not be passed to a third party without the express permission of the client, in line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Data Protection Acts 1984 and 1998.

## **Networking**

Staff within guidance services work to establish a network appropriate to its client group. Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning have focused developments upon those who are under-represented in education. Participation with NextStep will continue to increase the external network available to the College. Network information will be updated annually.

## **Client Records and Confidentiality**

It is important that you understand how the information that you supply to us is used and stored. We comply with the Data Protection Act 1984 and 1998 and have developed our practice with close reference to Matrix Quality Standards.

Personal data that you supply when you make an enquiry, an application or enrol will be stored securely on our computer system. Computer systems holding personal data are password protected and held securely in line with the Data Protection Act.

We will also hold written records in securely locked filing cabinets at our Chaffron Way campus. All written records are destroyed by shredding when they are no longer required. Three years is the maximum period of time that paper-based records are kept. You should be aware that information you provide may be shared with other College staff where it is relevant to your admission or your learning. However, should you wish to share information in confidence please make this clear to the member of staff with whom you are dealing.

Wherever possible they will respect your wishes. However, if not sharing this information with the appropriate person either within or outside the College would put you or someone else at risk, we are required to divulge the information that you have given us, even if this goes against your wishes.

Sometimes we may need to explain to you how keeping other information confidential could impact upon your learning opportunities. Upon request you are entitled to copies of any data held about you. For more in depth information, please ask any member of Guidance Team for a copy of our full policy.

Where the College is contracted to provide information, advice and guidance for another organisation clients will be informed that the College is delivering the service, and be made fully aware of any implications of this. At all times the service will comply with the requirements of the National IAG Board's Principles for Coherent IAG Delivery and the Data Protection Act of 1984 and 1998.

## **Standards of Service**

Those using our service can expect:

- Friendly, helpful and courteous staff who are competent in delivering information, advice and guidance
- Impartial assistance which is client focused and provides equality of opportunity
- Up-to-date and accurate information
- To receive our service free of charge
- That we monitor and review our service and seek to make improvements

In return we would ask you to:

- Treat all staff with respect and courtesy
- Attend your appointments on time
- Let us know if you cannot attend an appointment
- Provide us with feedback on our service
- Let us know if you have any special requirements
- Try to come prepared to your appointments, having thought about your ideas and the questions you may want to ask



The Guidance Team adhere to all Milton Keynes College corporate policies including: Student Charter, Equal Opportunities Policy, Complaints Procedure and other College policies. A summary of each of these policies is given below. Copies are available from Reception.

## **Equality of Opportunity**

The College is committed to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment for all students.

Our Equal Opportunities policy states that Milton Keynes College welcomes all members of the community, recognises the worth of every individual and actively promotes equal opportunities for all.

## **Milton Keynes College/Milton Keynes Adult Continuing Education Disability Statement**

Milton Keynes College currently makes provision for approximately 550 students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The provision available is diverse and ranges from support for students on mainstream courses through to specialised programmes for students with profound and complex learning difficulties. Further details on the provision and arrangements to meet the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are contained within the Disability Statement.

### **Complaints/Compliments Procedure**

The Guidance Team aim to provide a customer focused service to meet client needs. Our staff are committed to providing the best service possible and we continuously evaluate and monitor our service to improve it.

To help us ensure that our service is always of the highest standard, we ask clients for feedback on the service received. Feedback informs the Customer Services quality assurance process.

If clients are unhappy with our service, we positively encourage them to use the College complaints procedure as outlined in the College Charter. This procedure is an important part of our commitment to improving standards and ensuring that clients give us their opinions.

If clients are not satisfied with the service that they received, we ask that they talk to any staff member. All complaints are initially responded to within a 24-hour period. Clients will receive a full written explanation of actions taken and/or planned within 10 working days. The whole procedure is confidential between the relevant persons.

The Guidance Team actively seek, monitor and action customer feedback throughout the year, which in turns feeds the College policy of monitoring and reviewing services through the annual self assessment process.

Our Disability Statement suggests alternative ways of accessing the complaints procedure for those with a disability or learning difficulty.