



**UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK**

**OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH**

**Compliance of the University of Limerick with the  
(Irish) Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes  
of Education and Training to International Learners**



***July 2019 (IED)***

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## 1 Background Context

In July 2015, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), the state agency responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of quality assurance in further and higher education providers in Ireland), published a *Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners*. The Code of Practice (or 'the Code'), which both draws upon and informs international effective practice, can be accessed [here](#) or from the QQI website ([www.qqi.ie](http://www.qqi.ie)). The Code represents a set of threshold requirements particular to the provision of education and training to international learners. In the introductory text, QQI indicates that compliance with the Code should be integrated into the provider's quality assurance policies and procedures.

This document provides an evidence-based overview of:

- (a) How compliance with the Code is integrated into the University of Limerick's quality assurance policies and procedures, and
- (b) How the University of Limerick complies with each of the specific criteria included in the Code.

## 2 Integration of Compliance with the Code into UL's QA Policies and Procedures

### 2.1 At University Quality Policy Level

2.1.1 The University of Limerick's overall [quality policy](#) specifically mandates the university to comply with statutory and regulatory requirements relating to quality assurance and quality improvement, of which the *Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners* is one.

2.1.2 Once notified of a new quality requirement, such as the above-mentioned code of practice, the university's Quality Support Unit (QSU) must coordinate an assessment-of-compliance exercise and advise relevant UL units of its findings with a view to ensuring compliance.

*The QSU's Assessment of Institutional Compliance with Statutory and Related Quality Requirements: Policy and Procedure* describes this process.

### 2.2 At University Quality Process Level

#### 2.2.1 Initial compliance exercise:

In accordance with the QSU's *Assessment of Institutional Compliance with Statutory and Related Quality Requirements: Policy and Procedure*, an exercise to assess UL's compliance with the Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners was undertaken from August to October 2015. Coordinated by the QSU, the exercise was conducted in the main by the International Education Division (IED) with input from other relevant UL units, most notably Finance and Marketing. The initial phase of the exercise provided evidence that the university was already compliant with most of the Code's criteria. The process also identified a small number of opportunities for enhancement, all of which have been actioned.

#### 2.2.2 Ongoing compliance:

In accordance with the QSU's document *Assessment of Institutional Compliance with New or Revised Statutory and Related Quality Requirements: Policy and Procedure*, future QSU-coordinated assessments of ongoing compliance exercises are scheduled to be undertaken once every five years. The next assessment exercise for ongoing compliance is scheduled for

January 2021. Publication of revised or updated editions of the Code by QQI in the interim will trigger an immediate assessment-of-compliance exercise. An interim assessment of compliance was undertaken in 2019 in preparation for the UL institutional review in 2020.

Consideration of ongoing compliance and potential compliance enhancements will be pursued automatically by the university's International Education Division (IED) under its quality management system (QMS) related activities and by means of periodic standard [quality reviews](#) of the division.

### 3 How the University of Limerick Complies with the Code

The criteria comprising the Code are structured under four headings:

- General requirements (3 criteria; section 3.1 of the Code)
- Marketing, recruitment and admissions (19 criteria; section 3.2 of the Code)
- Fees, refunds and subsistence (10 criteria; section 3.3 of the Code)
- Supports and services for international learners (13 criteria; section 3.4 of the Code)

All criteria are reproduced below, each one followed by details of how the University of Limerick complies.

#### Code of Practice Principles and Criteria

##### 3.1 General Requirements

###### 3.1.1 Protection of Enrolled Learners

For the purposes of the Code of Practice, all providers, with the exception of those expressly exempted under Section 65(5) of the 2012 Act, must have arrangements in place for the Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL). Such arrangements will apply to all programmes of three months duration or longer where moneys have been paid by or on behalf of the learner, and will comply with the arrangements as set out under Part 6 of the 2012 Act. Providers must refer to the QQI Policy [Protection of Enrolled Learners: Protocols for the Implementation of Part 6 of the 2012 Act](#) for details.

**How UL complies:**

UL is exempt from this because it is a previously established university and so already has protection for enrolled learners in place.

###### 3.1.2 Tax Compliance

- a. Providers shall be fully tax compliant on an ongoing basis (this may be demonstrated through up-to-date tax clearance certificates valid for a 12 month period).

**How UL complies:**

UL's annually-updated tax clearance certificate is held by its Finance Department.

### 3.1.3 Fees

- a. Providers shall have a fees policy that details the manner in which fees will be collected from learners and that incorporates a refund policy (see Section 3 for more information on Fees requirements).

#### **How UL complies:**

Information on tuition fees for all students, including due dates, is available on the Finance Department's website. The current fees schedule is accessible from the [Fees page](#) of the site.

Student fees regulations and charges (including information on how to make international payments and a fees refund policy) are specified in the Fees Regulations document, which is accessible from the [Fees page](#) of the Finance website.

From the perspective of the International Education Division (IED), the following additional information is given in all international full-degree undergraduate and postgraduate offer letters:

*Please note your Acceptance Deposit is deducted from your tuition fees. You will forfeit the Acceptance Deposit if you accept a place, achieve the results stated above and subsequently fail to enrol.*

*Tuition Fees are subject to yearly review.*

The course acceptance form has been retired by IED as of 2019 as payment of €600.00 deposit acts as signifier of acceptance. All relevant information and direction is covered in the offer-email (appendix X).

The Fees Regulations document also states the following: *Where a non EU student does not meet the entry requirement stated in their conditional offer letter, the University will refund the course fee paid. Where a non EU student is not successful in obtaining a visa to study in Ireland, the University will refund the course fee paid.*

## 3.2 Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions

### **Principle**

Recruitment of learners shall be conducted in a transparent and ethical manner. Providers shall ensure that clear, unambiguous and up-to-date information is provided in their marketing and promotional materials.

Providers will demonstrate compliance with the following criteria in the areas of:

- Marketing
- Recruitment
- Admissions and Enrolment Information Provision

### 3.2.1 Marketing

- a. Providers shall ensure that information provided to potential international learners about themselves and their provision is clear, unambiguous and up-to-date. This shall include information about the intended purpose of the provision (e.g. to prepare a learner for further study or specific employment, etc.).

#### **How UL complies:**

An annual programme list brochure, which includes programme calendar dates, duration of studies and associated costs, is produced and used in international markets. The type of programme being offered is clear on the brochure, e.g., foundation programme/bachelor's

degree/master's degree, etc. The Graduate and Professional Studies [website](#) and the Undergraduate [website](#) are updated regularly to reflect changes to the University's programmes.

- b. Providers shall be compliant with information for learner requirements set out in Section 67 of the 2012 Act; i.e. ensure that the following information is made available to learners about all programmes:
- i. Whether or not a programme leads to an award, and if so:
    - the awarding body making the award;
    - the title of the award; and
    - whether the award is recognised within the National Framework of Qualifications (and if so, confirm the award type and NFQ level);
  - ii. Details of the arrangements for PEL where appropriate.
  - iii. The procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression in place.

**How UL complies:**

- i. Within IED, the title of the award is clearly stated on the UL prospectus and on the offer letter the students receive before they enrol on a programme. For example, the postgraduate offer letter includes the following text:

*The University has reviewed your application and is pleased to offer you provisional acceptance on the Master of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering programme for the academic year 2019/20.*
- ii. As a previously established university (as per 3.1.1 above), UL is exempt in this regard.
- iii. Access, internal transfer and progression information is all available in the [Student Academic Administration Handbook](#), which all new students receive during enrolment.

- c. Providers shall ensure that information is provided in a way that is accessible to international learners. This information should support international learners in understanding all matters related to a programme prior to enrolment.

**How UL complies:**

Information is disseminated to students in a number of ways:

- All offer holders receive their offer letter by email.
- Pre-arrival information, including orientation dates, are sent to students by email.
- Orientation schedules, visas and immigration information, welcome events and a checklist is posted on IED's [website](#).
- Weekly 'countdown' emails are sent to students prior to orientation with information on what to expect when they arrive at UL.
- Queries relating to programme-specific material is passed on to the course leaders by IED staff.
- Social media are used to circulate important messages in an expedient and accessible manner.
- Within Ireland, UL have pioneered an online pre-arrival package, Campus Connect, which has evolved since its infancy in 2015. It is an online, interactive and customised package designed to connect with students six months before they arrive on campus and to ease their transition to UL and to Ireland. It also offers an interactive peer forum, where potential students can interact with each other (based on country of origin / study programme etc,) and with existing UL students who can advise and respond to potential students based on their own experiences.

Note: the University outlines its handling of data in its [Data Protection Policy](#). All UL departments, to include IED, work to this policy.

- d. Providers shall accurately represent their organisation and facilities in all marketing and promotional materials.

**How UL complies:**

All marketing brochures and material are factual and up to date.

The annual programme list used by IED is updated and sent to each faculty for checking before being printed to ensure information is accurate and up to date.

The IED website is continually updated to include the most up-to-date and relevant material for international students.

Social media sites are continually monitored and updated by a dedicated member of staff.

- e. Providers shall provide contact details for an appropriate person(s) to provide assistance with queries from international learners prior to enrolment (e.g. a programme co-ordinator or international officer).

**How UL complies:**

The IED contact email address for international student queries is included on offer email template which is sent from [international@ul.ie](mailto:international@ul.ie). A specific IED member of staff answers student queries using the [international@ul.ie](mailto:international@ul.ie) email address. Queries relating specifically to programme material are passed on to the course leader. Queries regarding a specific area in the IED will be forwarded to the relevant staff member for action.

- f. Providers shall clearly state attendance requirements. Sanctions for learners who do not fulfil these requirements shall be clear, including the process of expulsion<sup>3</sup>.

**How UL complies:**

The student's visa support letter states the following:

*The student will undertake 5 courses/modules of study per week.*

*Each module will consist of at least 2 hours of lectures and 2 hours of tutorial/laboratory work every week. Therefore the student will be scheduled for a minimum of 20 contact hours per week, which will be timetabled from Monday to Friday each week.*

Specific course/module sanctions will be made available by the individual lecturers and course directors. UL procedures in relation to student expulsion are outlined in the [Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures](#).

- g. Providers shall state the commencement dates for all programmes.

**How UL complies:**

Programme commencement dates are available on the University of Limerick academic calendar [here](#) and all international students are contacted in July & August with the details via email.

- h. Where appropriate, providers shall provide information on "foundation" programmes for entry into academic programmes (in particular higher education programmes) or transition to new academic cultures or disciplines.

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<sup>3</sup> Visa required students may be subject to greater scrutiny of attendance to ensure compliance with the immigration regime of the State.

**How UL complies:**

This information is advertised in IED brochures, on the [website](#) and at education fairs.

When applying, if a student does not meet the direct entry requirements, they are informed of the [Foundation pathway](#) if they are eligible for that route.

### 3.2.2 Recruitment

- a. Prior to enrolment, providers shall ensure the availability and provision of all relevant financial information.

**How UL complies:**

The deposit figure is stated on offer letters and course acceptance forms. A link to the tuition fees is included in the offer email template. The fee schedule is published every year on the [UL website](#). IED provides further information on paying fees on the [IED website](#).

- b. Providers shall ensure that the learner is made aware of any insurance required or advised; e.g. medical or travel insurance.

**How UL complies:**

Students are advised of insurance requirements in the offer email template. The information is also published on the [IED website](#).

- c. Providers shall ensure that any contractual arrangements entered into, in future, with a recruitment agent incorporate the principles of the London Statement, and that any existing contracts will be amended appropriately when scheduled for renewal<sup>4</sup>.

**How UL complies:**

All UL agent retainer agreements signed by UL and the agent clearly state the responsibilities of UL and those of the agent. The principles of the London Statement are fully embedded in the agent retainer agreement. Contracts due for renewal also include these principles.

Because UL follows a strict code of conduct when recruiting new students, the agent must accept to recruit only quality students whose objective is to obtain an education in Ireland and who will fully respect the University's code of conduct and the student visa regulations. The University will terminate relations with any agent sending students who do not respect these conditions.

The agent retainer agreement states that the agent:

- Must provide adequate training to ensure that their company's counselling staff clearly understand all relevant aspects of UL's courses and services.
- Must provide full, free and accurate information about UL courses and facilities, academic and English language entry requirements and cost of living in Ireland based only on official publications provided by UL.
- Will conduct business in accordance with the highest business standards and will not perform any act that will, or may, reflect adversely upon the business integrity or good will of UL.
- Has been retained as an independent contractor, has no authority to act as agent or partner or other representative of UL and will observe and perform its activities in conformity with IED's *Admissions Procedure and Code of Conduct*.

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<sup>4</sup> The "[London Statement](#)" is a high-level statement of principles and best practice among agents dealing with international learners.

The *Admissions Procedure and Code of Conduct* document sets out the responsibilities of the agent and provides information on applications and entry requirements, application dates and documents required. The *Admissions Procedure and Code of Conduct* also covers visa applications, student accommodation and pre-arrival information.

Prior to signing an agent agreement, references are checked and, where possible, the agent's office is visited by a member of IED staff.

Agents are constantly provided with up-to-date information and material so that they can accurately represent UL.

Agents in India are invited to annual training sessions in India by Education in Ireland.

- d. The contract between the provider and agent shall include a termination clause in instances where the agent does not comply with the principles of the London Statement or is found to have acted in an unethical fashion to the detriment of international learners.

**How UL complies:**

The principles of the London Statement are embedded in the agent retainer agreement, to include a termination clause attached to this for any instance where an agent does not comply with these principles. The retainer agreement currently states the following:

*Failure to comply with the principles of the London Statement to the detriment of the international students will mean an immediate termination of this contract.*

In more general terms, the retainer states: *The agreement can be terminated at any time by either party upon written notice of one month by either party.*

- e. Providers shall conduct due diligence on the track record of agents in relation to learner protection issues prior to entering into a contractual agreement.

**How UL complies:**

Prior to signing a new agreement, IED requires all prospective agents to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire requests references, and all referees are contacted prior to the signing of new agreements to check the agent's business conduct.

- f. Providers shall ensure that agents are in possession of accurate and up-to-date information regarding the provider and its provision.

**How UL complies:**

A database of agent contact details is kept by IED. New programmes, updates, announcements and brochures are sent to agents by email.

Visits to agents' offices are conducted on a regular basis, and staff training is conducted during these visits.

- g. Providers shall have in place a process for reviewing the activities of agents to ensure that the agent is operating within the spirit of the Code and the London Statement.

**How UL complies:**

All agent contracts explicitly refer to the London Statement. Agents performance are reviewed each year in accordance to the guidelines stated to ensure that they are operating within the spirit of the Code and the London Statement.

- h. Providers shall have arrangements for PEL in place prior to the recruitment of learners (please see General Requirement 1.1).

**How UL complies:**

As outlined in 3.1.1 above, UL (as a previously established university) is exempt in this regard.

### 3.2.3 Admissions and Enrolment Information Provision

- i. Providers shall clearly specify entry requirements for international learners.

**How UL complies:**

Entry requirements relating to learners from specific countries can be accessed from the [Your Home Country](#) page of the IED website.

- j. Providers shall clearly specify English language proficiency requirements for applicants whose first language is not English.

**How UL complies:**

English language proficiency requirements are specified on the [Entry Requirements](#) page of the IED website and in conditional offer letters.

- k. Providers shall provide a timely written response to an international applicant who is refused admission.

**How UL complies:**

IED sends unsuccessful applicants an e-mail outlining the decision taken. The e-mail is sent to the applicant within 48 hours of the decision being made, or received, by IED.

## 3.3 Fees, Refunds and Subsistence

***Principle***

Providers shall provide all learners with clear, unambiguous and up-to-date information on all study costs, including subsistence and accommodation. Providers shall inform learners about fees and other costs associated with undertaking a programme of study in Ireland.

Providers will be assessed against and asked to demonstrate compliance with the following criteria in the areas of:

- Tuition and tuition-related fees
- Additional costs

### 3.3.1 Tuition and tuition-related fees

- a. Providers shall provide information on compulsory fees for the full duration of the programme from registration and admission to graduation or exit from the programme. Where fees may change, this shall be clear to applicants in information provided.

**How UL complies:**

Student fees regulations and charges (including information on how to make international payments) are specified in the Fee Regulations document, which is accessible from the [Fees page](#) of the Finance website.

The following information is also given on all international full-degree undergraduate and postgraduate offer letters:

**\*\*Tuition Fees are subject to yearly review**

- b. Providers shall provide information on the collection or payment of fees (including sanctions for late payment and debt collection for moneys owed).

**How UL complies:**

Student fees regulations and charges (including information on how to make international payments) are specified in the Fee Regulations document, which is accessible from the [Fees page](#) of the Finance website. Specific details on late fee penalties are included. Students are given information on how to make payment in the offer email.

- c. Providers shall establish a fees structure that supports the mission of the organisation and reflects the costs associated with quality provision.

**How UL complies:**

IED works within the fees framework and structure as defined by the Finance (Fees) Department. In establishing a fees structure, the Finance Department considers a range of factors, such as the cost of delivering the programme, competitor pricing and government policy.

- d. Providers shall ensure that there are no additional fees or unexpected charges that international learners have not been made aware of.

**How UL complies:**

Student fees regulations and charges (including information on how to make international payments) are specified in the Fee Regulations document, which is accessible from the [Fees page](#) of the Finance website. The document specifies the entire set of charges students can expect to have to pay.

- e. Providers shall issue a receipt to international learners upon receipt of payment of fees which will include a breakdown of fees paid.

**How UL complies:**

TransferMate currently issue receipts of payment to all international students for any payments they make.

- f. Providers shall establish and publish a policy on full and partial refunds. This policy shall outline the conditions under which a refund will be granted (e.g. a refused visa application in the case of a non-EEA learner).

**How UL complies:**

Student fees regulations and charges (including information on how to make international payments and a fees refund policy) are specified in the Fee Regulations document, which is accessible from the [Fees page](#) of the Finance website.

- g. Providers shall provide information on any financial supports or resources that exist within the organisation, or nationally, for international learners.

**How UL complies:**

Information on the full suite of international student scholarships is available on the IED website at <https://www.ul.ie/international/undergraduatepostgraduate/scholarships>.

Information on US federal student loans for North American students is available on the IED website at <https://www.ul.ie/international/undergraduatepostgraduate/us-federal-student-loans>.  
Information for Canadian students on Canadian student loans is available on the IED website at <http://www.ul.ie/international/financing/canadian-student-loans>.

### 3.3.2 Additional Costs

- h. Providers shall provide information on the full cost of studying in Ireland.

#### **How UL complies:**

Information on the cost of living in Ireland is included in our marketing brochures, and [website](#) and is provided to students over email.

- i. Providers shall furnish prospective learners with information regarding the average cost of living (e.g. food, transport, medical care) for the course duration.

#### **How UL complies:**

This information is provided to the student at offer stage and is published on our [website](#).

- j. Providers shall provide information on:
- i. Fees for accommodation services, if offered by the provider, or for placement with a host family
  - ii. Fees for complaints and appeals procedures as relevant (e.g. rechecking of exam results)
  - iii. Any other costs related to provision of student services as considered relevant by the provider.

#### **How UL complies:**

- i. Accommodation fees are easily accessible and updated annually online at <http://www.studentliving.ul.ie/index.jsp?p=144&n=168>
- ii. This information is available online and in the [student handbook](#) that each student receives during orientation.
- iii. This information is available in the student handbook specified in ii. above.

## 3.4 **Supports and Services for International Learners**

### ***Principle***

Providers shall foster a supportive environment which supports the well-being and integration of all learners into the student body and ensures a positive learning experience for all learners.

Providers will be assessed against and asked to demonstrate compliance with the following criteria in the areas of:

- Pastoral Supports and Services
- Academic Supports and Services
- Staff Training

### 3.4.1 Pastoral Supports and Services

- a. Providers shall designate appropriate personnel to be responsible for inquiries about pastoral care issues from international learners (e.g. course co-ordinator, counsellor or international officer).

**How UL complies:**

There is a full-time dedicated international Student Support Officer within IED. The support and integration of international students during their stay at UL is an important aspect of IED activity.

Particular emphasis is placed on the pre-arrival and orientation stage to ensure that the transition from the home university to UL is as smooth as possible. The Student Support Officer offers a buddy programme, English language support, cultural activities and pastoral care.

A number of cultural advisors (very often international students) work with IED to provide dedicated cultural advice for students based on their culture – students are made aware of the opportunity to meet with the cultural advisors and are free to take up this offer if and when they wish to.

IED works collaboratively with UL central support units (e.g. Admissions, Counselling, Chaplaincy, Library) to ensure that all student services are accessible to international students.

- b. Providers shall offer orientation information prior to learners' arrival (e.g. transport and accommodation services).

**How UL complies:**

- Pre-arrival information, including orientation dates, are sent to students by email.
- The offer pack that is posted out to students includes the pre-arrival handbook.
- Orientation schedules, visas and immigration information, welcome events and a checklist is posted on IED's [website](#).
- Weekly 'countdown' emails are sent to students prior to orientation with information on what to expect when they arrive at UL.
- Students are advised of insurance requirements in the pre-arrival handbook and in the *Accepting Your Offer* leaflet, both of which are provided to students at offer stage.

- c. Providers shall ensure that inductions offered to learners also meet the particular needs of international learners (including inter-cultural awareness).

**How UL complies:**

IED offers a 7-day orientation/welcome programme each semester to new international students. The programme includes airport collections, coffee mornings to assist with integration, movie nights, shopping trips to the city, campus tours and a variety of academic workshops throughout the week.

Students are surveyed every November for feedback on orientation and arrival. Survey feedback largely dictates the areas where services can be improved; the Student Support Officer undertakes to deliver such improvements on an annual basis to ensure students' needs are met.

In addition to a host of existing services tailored to international students, the IED orientation programme offers a series of 45-minute workshops, which include sessions on adjusting to life overseas and cultural differences, religion on campus, and mental health and wellbeing.

- d. The induction programme shall be provided to all cohorts of international learners that register or enrol at various times of the year, including learners that access programmes through advanced entry.

**How UL complies:**

The orientation programme is offered to all new international students in September and January every year.

- e. Providers shall provide information on all integration opportunities available to international learners and encourage learners to avail of those opportunities.

**How UL complies:**

In addition to a number of IED international fairs and events held on campus where international students have additional opportunities to integrate with the campus community, IED offers a buddy programme, which pairs one UL volunteer with three international students. The overall purpose of the buddy programme is to improve the mutual integration of UL's international and Irish students, create close relationships and introduce the international students to the true UL experience. The programme has been very well received by students and is considered by IED to be a successful integration tool.

- f. Providers shall ensure that international learners are aware of opportunities to participate in, and be represented at, engagements between the provider and the student body.

**How UL complies:**

From their initial time at UL, through a tailored Orientation programme, International students are immersed in UL engagements. This continues through channels such as the International Festival, International Societies, International Buddy Programme, International Student Ambassador Programme, Annual Farewell Event, cultural activities such as Diwali/Thanksgiving/Chinese New Year celebrations. Additionally, international students engage on-campus in ways that include Student Union Sabbatical Officers - the current Postgraduate Student Union President, and their Vice President Academic Research, are International students.

Additionally, IED engages every day with students in a number of ways, including email, social media and events. In addition, international students can visit the IED reception area throughout the day for assistance on matters requiring face-to-face contact and support.

- g. Providers shall have mechanisms in place to support international learners financially in instances of personal or other emergency or hardship.

**How UL complies:**

UL offers a hardship fund to international students who find themselves in financial difficulty during the semester. The operation of the fund is managed on a case-by-case basis by the Students' Union and Chaplaincy. The Student Support Officer is informed of cases of extreme hardship in relation to international students and determines if further support is needed.

- h. Providers shall facilitate and encourage feedback from international learners on the delivery of any supports and services. This includes informing learners about complaints processes for these services.

**How UL complies:**

Students are surveyed once a year (November) for feedback on the following areas: pre-arrival, arrival, orientation, accommodation, living and academic. IED rotates between seeking external feedback (via the [iGraduate International Student Barometer Survey](#) - a global benchmark for the international student experience) and internal feedback (via [UL's Marketing Centre](#)). Results from both sources are used to inform future decisions in terms of improvements and to identify trends as a result of improvements based on previous survey results. According to the November 2018 I-Graduate results, UL has scored the top mark out of every participating institution worldwide for social activities and clubs and societies. 94.5% of international students who studied at UL responded that they were happy with their study experience placing UL 2nd out of 199 institutions across the globe. The UL International Office was ranked number 1 out of 51 UK and

Ireland universities and UL also scored highest for pre-arrival information for international students.

Formative feedback is received from the reception area, email and individual conversations with students, etc. All feedback received in IED is reviewed for potential action as necessary and appropriate through IED's Quality Management System (QMS).

### 3.4.2 Academic Supports and Services

- a. Providers shall offer academic induction that is tailored to the needs of international learners. Inductions shall be provided to learners and cohorts that enrol at different points during the year, including those accessing programmes through advanced entry.

#### **How UL complies:**

As part of the IED orientation programme, international students are introduced to the academic services that may be particularly attractive to them during their time at UL, such as the Maths Learning Centre, Language Centre and Writing Centre. Since 2016, a fully accredited Academic Literacies module was developed for undergraduate and postgraduate students. Two three-credit modules are now available for any programme across the University with international students for whom English is a second language.

- b. Providers shall ensure the information provided at academic induction is easily accessible throughout the academic year and shall offer reminders of this information at key points during the year (e.g. in the lead up to examinations or submission of assignments).

#### **How UL complies:**

On arrival at UL, every international student receives the [Student Academic Administration Handbook](#), which includes all the academic information that students need to know throughout the year. At orientation, the IED international team explains in detail to students the key academic information they need to study at UL and promotes the Study Skills classes outlined under (a) above. The classes run throughout the semester and are tailored to cover pertinent information at key points in the semester (entry/exam).

- c. Providers shall ensure, where possible and appropriate, that there is a balance of learners of different nationalities (including domestic learners) in different learning settings (e.g. classrooms, tutorials, project-work etc.).

#### **How UL complies:**

IED does not dictate the proportion of international students within a classroom setting. Because international learners take part in pre-existing modules, it is not always possible to balance learners of different nationalities in the classroom.

- d. Providers shall offer support to international learners with English as a second language within the learning environment.

#### **How UL complies:**

Academic Literacies for International Students modules (AW6001 & AW6012) help students develop the practical skills necessary for academic success at UL, critical thinking and research skills, written and oral communication skills necessary to participate effectively in the academic community.

### 3.4.3 Staff Training

- a. Providers shall ensure that staff are provided with training and support regarding intercultural competence to facilitate an appropriate and effective delivery of services to international learners.

#### **How UL complies:**

IED addresses this matter in a number of ways:

- IED staff members attend international education conferences such as the Going Global Conference/NAFSA/EAIE and NACAC on a regular basis to maintain awareness of best practice in this regard.
- Both IED and UL staff regularly engage with organisations that promote best practice in the field and avail of bespoke briefings from such experts on an ongoing basis (e.g. representatives from ICOS, Education in Ireland)
- The IED team attend inter-cultural training workshop regularly, the latest in November 2018.
- Since October 2015, IED and HR offer UL staff a series dedicated workshops covering a broad range of international themes to include teaching in a cross-cultural environment.
- In the context of a customer-service division, wide-ranging and ongoing training takes place across IED staff to ensure all aspects of service are maintained and continually improved.

## Revision History

Rev. #	Date	Approved by	Details of change	Process owner
1	14 Jan 2016	VPA&R	Initial release	Director of Quality
2	24 <sup>th</sup> May 2019	Director of Quality	Interim update of CoP compliance in preparation for the 2020 Institutional (CINNTE) review.	Director of Quality