

Student Handbook 2020-2021

CAFRE reserves the right to add to or amend this student handbook as appropriate and will inform students of any additions/amendments as soon as is practicably possible

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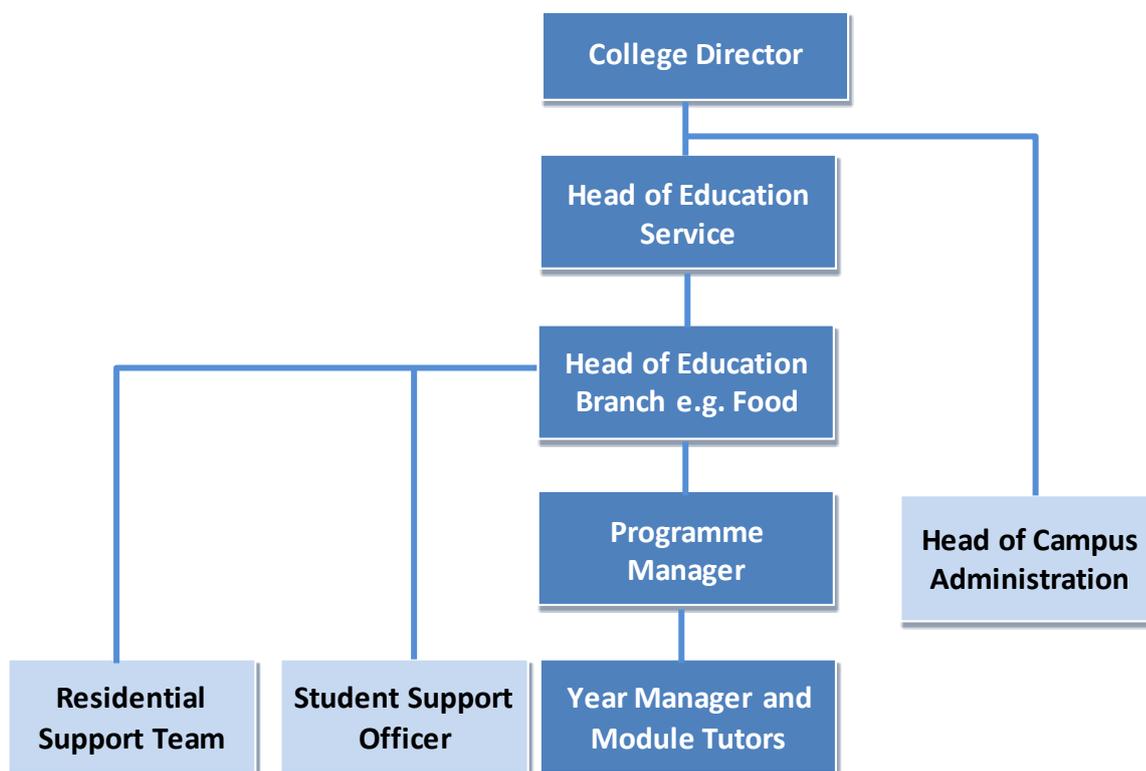
Foreword

This is your Student Handbook which contains information and guidance that will help you make the most of the opportunities available to you while studying at the College. It explains CAFRE's codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and provides you with relevant contact details and web links where you can find out more information. Please take time to read it. This handbook complements the course specific handbooks relevant to your course which you should also read.

Introduction

The College of Agriculture Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) is an integral part of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). CAFRE operates across three campuses located close to Antrim (Greenmount Campus), Cookstown (Loughry Campus) and Enniskillen (Enniskillen Campus) under one management structure. In addition to the education and training provided, CAFRE promotes technology transfer, entrepreneurship and people development through its short course programmes. CAFRE has established links with Queen's University, Belfast (QUB), Ulster University (UU), Pearson's, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH), Institute of Packaging (IOP), City & Guilds and the Northern Ireland Open College Network (NIOCN). The breadth of courses that are delivered include a range of short courses and formal programmes from Level 2 through to Level 7 in land-based subjects – Agriculture, Horticulture, Equine, Food and Agri-business Development.

Academic Structure



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SECTION 1:

CAFRE GENERAL POLICIES

1. Student Charter

Our policies are designed to ensure high standards of teaching and pastoral care and the Charter below sets out the responsibilities of the College (hereafter referred to as CAFRE) and the student to achieve this outcome. CAFRE is committed to providing an environment that supports and develops students through high quality learning and teaching and services that promote a positive student experience. CAFRE will act in a fair, just and legal manner in its dealings with you, provide equal opportunity to all and comply with appropriate legislation. The Student Charter sets out these commitments.

The College is committed:

- To promoting an active learning community in which you have the opportunity to develop as an independent learner.
- To respecting the rights of all students and CAFRE staff and treating them with dignity; to having regulations, policies and processes in places which will work towards equality and diversity and prevent discrimination.
- To being professional in our dealings with you including setting out the standard of service you can expect; to providing you with fair and efficient complaints, appeals and disciplinary procedures within their defined remits.
- To providing you with full and accurate information about CAFRE, its facilities, its courses and its regulations.
- To providing well-designed, relevant and quality-assured courses, which optimise student choice as far as is reasonably possible. Courses should be well resourced enabling students to develop academic knowledge and applied skills.
- To delivering the programme you have been accepted onto as described within the specific course handbook and informing you of any substantial changes to the programme structure in terms of content or delivery/assessment thereby giving you the opportunity to consider these changes and consequently either register for the new programme or remain on the original programme.
- To having all submitted coursework, assignments and examination scripts marked promptly, checked and moderated as appropriate, and made available with feedback to you as soon as possible (usually within three working weeks) subject to CAFRE rules concerning retention.
- To providing an appropriate learning environment with a range of study areas and access to resources and support, both on campus and online.
- To communicating with you as efficiently as possible through a variety of means, principally electronic and online.
- To providing timely and accurate information about fees you are liable to pay and relevant academic administrative processes such as registration and assessment.
- To providing a wide range of student and academic support services designed to promote your well-being and enhance your progress.
- To creating opportunities for you to express your views about your experience as a CAFRE student, and become involved in CAFRE's decision-making processes at various levels as far as is reasonably possible.

- To safeguarding information you supply in compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation, the Freedom of Information Act or any other statutory obligations; including explaining to you why we need to collect information.

As a student you are expected to commit yourself:

- To be actively engaged in the process of learning and value the contributions of others such as your peers, staff or external 'experts';
- To study diligently, organise your work effectively and endeavour always to produce and submit quality assessment tasks and assignments by the required dates and deadlines, observing CAFRE's requirements for originality and presentation and to seek help if needed;
- To pay attention to and act on all feedback given to you by your tutors in connection with assessment and retain all assessed work completed during your programme ;
- To attend all scheduled sessions punctually and follow CAFRE procedures in relation to absences from class;
- To respect the rights, beliefs and values of, and to treat with dignity, all fellow students and CAFRE staff; to observe regulations, policies and processes which support equality and diversity and to refrain from the use of inappropriate language. You must not act or behave in any manner which is or may be perceived to be discriminatory to others on the basis of religion, gender, political opinion, marital status, dependency, age, disability, ethnic origin or sexual orientation.
- To behave in a responsible manner on and off campus and ensure that your actions do not have an adverse impact on CAFRE's reputation, its environment, your neighbours, the local community or those who work or study at CAFRE.
- To read the information in all official CAFRE publications and comply with all CAFRE procedures, regulations, policies and communications.
- To respect other users of the learning environment.
- To pay all fees and charges when they are due.
- To engage positively with the support services as appropriate and provide constructive views on how CAFRE can enhance its services.
- To provide feedback and comments on the quality of your learning experience and contribute to CAFRE's decision making procedures, wherever and whenever reasonably possible, for the benefit and advancement of all.
- To provide CAFRE with accurate information when requested and keep it updated especially your contact details, next of kin and medical details.

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2. Welfare and Support Services

Life and study can be challenging. If you are experiencing personal, emotional, social or academic problems, you should seek support either from your tutor or through the CAFRE counselling service.

Counselling Service

CAFRE provides confidential support to all students/learners attending its education and training programmes. The service is available to help you realise your full academic and personal potential. The College Student Support Officer is available at the three campuses on a weekly basis and will be able to direct and advise you on specific issues relating to student support. Staff based at each campus will also be able to help you access Counselling Services.

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3. Equality and Diversity Policy

CAFRE is committed to providing equality of opportunity and promoting diversity. CAFRE will promote equality of opportunity for:

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- Men and women;
- Persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without.

CAFRE will promote good relations between persons of different religious beliefs, political opinions or racial groups. All eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for education, training and progression in CAFRE on the basis of their ability, aptitude and the course entry criteria.

All students have a right to live in a harmonious college environment and atmosphere in which they are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no-one feels under threat or intimidated. This right is protected by law. CAFRE will foster a culture that encourages every student to develop to their full potential and which rewards achievement.

If you feel you are being unfairly treated you should inform your Year Manager or Tutor or Programme Manager as soon as possible. If the matter cannot be resolved you have a right to make an appeal following the procedures outlined within the appeals procedure.

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4. Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy

1. Policy Statement

CAFRE is committed to providing a working and learning environment which is free from harassment including discrimination, victimisation and bullying, and one in which no student feels under threat or intimidated.

In striving towards the achievement of such an environment, allegations of harassment and/or bullying by students will be taken seriously. If substantiated, allegations of harassment and/or bullying will provide grounds for disciplinary action and may give rise to a student being suspended from their course. CAFRE recognises that incidents of harassment and/or bullying can affect a person's work, morale and health, therefore, all complaints (informal or formal) will be dealt with promptly and treated confidentially. Information will only be divulged on a need to know basis and with the knowledge/permission of the complainant.

This policy applies to all students and relates to those who are being bullied by another student, a member of staff or employer whilst on placement. The procedure aims to highlight the actions a student should take if they believe they are being subjected to behaviour which may be considered as harassment and/or bullying.

2. Vexatious Complaints

Bullying and harassment are considered to be serious matters and consequently if a complaint is found to be vexatious, this may lead to disciplinary action against the person lodging the complaint. Vexatious is defined as a complaint that is brought without sufficient grounds purely to cause annoyance to the alleged harasser.

3. Definition of Harassment/Bullying

Bullying can be defined as repeated behaviour which is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient and undermine their ability and confidence.

Harassment is defined in equality legislation as unwanted conduct related to religious belief, political opinion, sex, gender reassignment, race, sexual orientation, disability or age, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. Harassment may also be a criminal offence which could contravene Health and Safety legislation. Complaints of this type of harassment can also be brought under the Protection from Harassment (NI) Order 1997.

4. The Effects of Bullying

Persistent bullying can result in:

- Insecurity
- Loss of confidence
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Shyness
- Poor academic achievement

- Isolation and
- Threatened or attempted suicide.

5. Examples of Harassment/Bullying

Many forms of behaviour can constitute bullying and/or harassment; this list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive and other forms of behaviour may be regarded as harassment.

- Oral or written harassment through derogatory remarks, jokes, insults, offensive language, gossip and slander. Written harassment includes, but is not limited to, letters, emails, online social media postings and texts.
- Visual displays of posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags, bunting, pictures, emblems or any other material which may be considered to be offensive (including the use of emails or mobile devices to send or view such material).
- Physical conduct ranging from the invasion of personal space and/or inappropriate touching to serious assaults.
- Open aggression, threats and shouting.
- Unjustifiable exclusion e.g. withholding information, isolation or non-co-operation of colleagues, exclusion from classroom and social activities.
- Intrusion by pestering, spying, following and/or stalking.
- Humiliation and intimidatory actions which demean or undermine the individual.

CAFRE will respect the particular sensitivity of allegations of harassment and their consequences and the need for confidentiality. As a general principle, confidentiality will be agreed and maintained wherever possible. However, there may be situations where confidentiality cannot be maintained and this will be made clear. For example, if a student tells a member of staff in confidence something that constitutes an unacceptable risk to the student or to another person or is illegal, the member of staff will have to take action. The decision on whether a complaint should be progressed normally rests with the student, but action may have to be taken against the student's wishes to deal with an unacceptable risk.

6. Steps to take if you are a Victim of Bullying

- The first step is to contact your Tutor or Year Manager or Programme Manager immediately and discuss the problem. If necessary, request a private meeting and give as much information as possible. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- We will arrange a follow up appointment to discuss the findings of any investigations and the action taken.
- If there is no improvement or if you feel that the incident is very serious you should make an appointment to see the relevant Head of Branch.

7. Procedure for Investigating Allegations of Bullying

All reported incidents will be investigated as a priority. Investigations will be conducted with discretion and an appropriate course of action will be decided on, in agreement with the victim where possible.

Parents will be kept fully informed where appropriate and counselling will be provided for both victims and perpetrators.

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5. CAFRE Student Health Promotion Policy

The College aims to promote the health and well-being of its students by supporting healthy lifestyles through balanced nutritional intake, appropriate physical activity, good stress management and positive health behaviours.

To achieve this aim it provides:

- A smoke-free environment;
- Healthy food choices at meal times;
- A range of physical activities through its clubs and societies;
- Information to students via professional organisations attending the campuses;
- Ongoing health promotion activities whilst working with the Student Representative Council at each Campus;

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6. Drug and Alcohol Policy

Substance abuse i.e. alcohol and drugs seriously limits the ability of individuals to succeed academically, professionally and personally. Substance abuse is linked to health problems, accidents, decline in academic performance, vandalism, financial difficulties, sexual misconduct and illegal activities and can affect the entire College community. CAFRE endeavours to increase the awareness of the dangers of substance abuse among all students.

The supply, possession and use of drugs on College property, other than those prescribed by a doctor for personal use, is a **CRIMINAL OFFENCE**. The College will treat such breaches very seriously and will inform the PSNI in all instances.

Consumption of alcohol on College premises is only permitted in the 'Cyber bar' (Greenmount campus) or 'Swift's bar' (Loughry campus) or in discrete residential areas reserved for students over 18 years of age. Students under 18 years of age are not permitted to consume alcohol and those over 18 years of age must comply with all regulations in relation to the use of alcohol. It is a disciplinary offence for anyone to supply alcohol to a minor on campus.

If you suspect anyone of dealing in drugs on Campus please let College staff know at once (in total confidence). Information and help on substance abuse is available from any member of the Accommodation Team, your Tutor, and the Student Support Officer. You will be provided with whatever information, advice and help you may require.

Students suspected of being under the influence of Drugs or Alcohol will not be permitted to participate in practical or classroom-based activities.

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7. Health and Safety Policy

The College has a duty to ensure that an assessment of the risks to the Health & Safety of students and others is carried out as required and that students are instructed in all safety aspects of the work they have to perform and are supervised accordingly. All practical skills classes start with a risk assessment to make students aware of the hazards associated with the particular activities they will be undertaking. Anyone who is late and misses this risk assessment will not be permitted to participate in the practical activity. Risk assessments are available from your Course Tutor for all your practical activities.

All students have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and that of other students and people who may be affected by their actions. This also applies outside normal teaching hours. Students must comply with all legal requirements relating to health and safety on all College premises.

Students must comply with Bio-security Procedures, Farm Safety Regulations, Fire Regulations, COSHH Regulations, Food Safety Regulations and Animal Health precautions in operation at the College. Students who do not use the specified protective clothing will not be allowed to participate in practical activities. The College's bio-security policy requires that you must not wear Agriculture/Equine personal protective clothing at home or on other farms/yards.

The College accepts no responsibility for any injuries received through disregard of College Regulations, staff instructions, and safety regulations or by students' negligence. Action, which damages safety equipment including fire detection equipment, is a criminal offence and will be treated as such by the College.

If you see a danger or hazard or notice any defect in equipment provided by the College, you should report it immediately to a member of College staff.

ACCIDENTS OR INJURIES WHILE STUDYING AT CAFRE

Details of all accidents must be reported to a member of staff supervising the group who will record it in an Accident Book. If you have been involved in an accident outside College, you should inform your Year Manager or a member of the Residential Support Team, if after 5.00pm.

A member of staff in charge will request the emergency services as appropriate.

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8. CAFRE Internet and E-Mail Usage Policy

The Internet provides easy and open access to world-wide information services and additional facilities and resources. You will be given Internet access by the College, along with visitors and guests to the College (fixed line and Wi-Fi). The primary use of the Internet is for educational purposes and to carry out tasks in relation to training and completion of coursework. However, by its nature it also presents risks such as hacking and virus infection. .

All Internet access is monitored and recorded and can be traced back to individual users. This also applies to users accessing the Internet through the college Wi-Fi.

As a result:

- You must keep your internet login details confidential as you are individually responsible for all activity on your IT account.
- You must take all reasonable care when accessing websites or attempting to download material to avoid potential virus infection.
- You must NOT attempt to download material from the Internet, unless it is expressly permitted by the terms of the website and does not contravene copyright law.
- The College reserves the right to inspect all files stored in private areas of the network or on hardware attached to its computers to ensure compliance with its policies. This includes devices such as wireless computers, USB keys, PDAs, CD or DVD disks which are connected to the College network.
- You must NOT attempt to install software from CD/DVDs, external devices or via the internet. Only hardware and software approved by the College and authorised by the CAFRE IT team can be used on the CAFRE network.
- You must NOT access, post or send any information which is illegal or offensive, or which could, in any way, compromise or be defamatory to the College.
- You must ensure that the downloadable content (transmitted on behalf of organisations) has been approved and is identifiable as either an official view or a private opinion.
- The following actions are deemed unethical and unacceptable and could result in disciplinary action being taken:
 - viewing or downloading any information which could be considered illegal or offensive e.g. pornographic, racist or sectarian material;
 - using the internet or social media to write/disseminate derogatory remarks about staff, other students or the college;
 - attempt to gain unauthorised access to information sources – commonly known as 'hacking', e.g. attempting to access other users' IT accounts, attempting to access secure folders on the network;

- using or knowingly allowing someone else to use your computer, computer network, computer system, program or software to defraud or to obtain money, property, services or other items of value by false pretences, promises or representations;
- interfering with the availability and/or integrity of computer-based information and/or information resources;
- using the internet for political lobbying;
- transmitting or causing to be transmitted, material that may be considered as harassment or mocking of others;
- breach of any laws relating to the unauthorised use of computing resources or networks;
- violation of copyright, licence agreements or other contracts e.g. installing or copying software or materials without the appropriate licence and/or approval.

You should be aware that the possession of child pornography or sexting is a criminal offence and that the College will fully co-operate with law enforcement authorities to identify and take action against any student accessing, possessing or disseminating such material.

You should note that you could be personally liable to prosecution and open to claims for damages, should your actions be found to be in breach of the law.

You may be suspended by the College and/or have your IT privileges removed if you are found to be in breach of the College Regulations.

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9. Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy

The context of this section has been based on Child Protection Guidelines and other literature issued by the Department of Education, Northern Ireland, Child Care (NI) and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. Full details of these protection orders can be supplied on request.

CAFRE promotes the welfare and safety of all children and vulnerable adults to ensure that they are protected from exploitation, abuse and neglect when engaged in education at the college. It supports the application of the highest standards of safeguarding practice, including robust recruitment, selection and supervision procedures for all staff and volunteers engaging with children and/or vulnerable adults. This includes taking all necessary steps to prevent unsuitable people from having access to children/vulnerable adults, and completing an appropriate level of check through Access NI of all staff who are in regular contact with students.

POLICY STATEMENT

CAFRE is committed to practices which protect learners from harm and will endeavour to:

- ☞ Ensure that staff show respect and understanding for students' rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects these principles;
- ☞ Follow carefully the NICS procedures for recruitment and selection of staff;
- ☞ Provide awareness training and support for staff and specialist training for designated officers;
- ☞ Provide information to students, parents and staff;
- ☞ Share information about concerns with statutory child protection agencies/staff who need to know and involve parents and students as necessary;
- ☞ Regularly review the safeguarding policies and procedures.
- ☞ Ensure that all staff recruited who have regular contact with students are registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority and have had an Enhanced Disclosure with a Barred List check prior to employment.

DESIGNATED PERSONS

Each Campus has a number of designated persons who have undertaken the recommended training and have specific responsibilities for child and vulnerable adults' protection matters. There is at least one designated officer for each 250 students enrolled at each Campus and a minimum of two officers per Campus with at least one of each gender.

CAFRE Designated Officers:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Greenmount | – Brian Simpson/Alison Young |
| Loughry | – Judith Mullan/Emanuele Armaforte/Betty McLean |
| Enniskillen | – Michelle McKenna/David Downey/Catherine Crowley |
| Cross-campus | – Alison Young |

DEFINITION OF ABUSE

Abuse occurs in families from all social classes and cultures and in institutions and organisations. Abusers come from all walks of life, occupations and professions. Abuse consists of anything which individuals, institutions, or processes do, or fail to do, which directly or indirectly harms children or vulnerable adults or damages their prospects of safe and healthy development.

The abuse may take a number of forms, including:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect
- Self-Injury
- Bullying

Private Meetings with Staff

- It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, interviews will be conducted in a room with visual access, or with the door open. Where such conditions are not possible, another adult in the vicinity will be advised that the interview is taking place.
- Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children and vulnerable adults with other professionals, e.g. Social Services, investigating agencies. Where any type of abuse is suspected, staff have a legal duty to report it to the appropriate authorities.
- If someone provides confidential information to a member of staff which gives cause for concern about possible abuse and the student requests that the information be kept secret, the member of staff will inform that person that he/she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate authorities (usually a designated person).
- There should be no unnecessary/inappropriate physical contact between staff and students. However it is recognised that physical contact may be necessary in the course of skills instruction.
- Relationships between staff and students should be professional at all times.
- Staff and students should never communicate with each other through social networking sites and chat rooms unless through a College approved Facebook group nor should they be 'friends' with each other on social media.
- Mobile telephone texting will only be used to remind students of meetings.
- The College discourages staff from offering students lifts in their personal vehicles.

Risks posed by Developments in Communications Technology

In an increasingly complex world, the opportunities for abuse are growing with increasing opportunities through the misuse of video, computer, internet, text messaging and other media.

- ***The Internet***

Students must exercise constraint in the use of the internet and consequently all internet access by students will be monitored and recorded.

- ***Photographs***

In compliance with the Data Protection Act (1998), and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2019), CAFRE will monitor the use of photographs, videos and webcams of clearly identifiable people. The following guidelines will apply:

- Permission (verbal or written) will be obtained from all the people (learners and adults) who will appear in a photograph, video or webcam image before the photograph is taken or footage recorded.
- It should be made clear why that person's image is being used and what it will be used for.
- Learners should not be identified by personal details apart from name and area. Contact details such as email or postal addresses, or telephone numbers will not be included.
- Written consent will be obtained from parents or carers before using photographs of children.
- Learners will not be forced to participate in photographic opportunities.
- Signs will be displayed on buildings which have CCTV cameras in operation.

- ***Mobile Telephones***

Staff should not use personal mobile phones to record images of learners and should not give their personal mobile phone numbers to learners.

- ***Social Media***

Social media forums such as Facebook/WhatsApp/Snapchat etc. should not be used to provide feedback on programmes/individuals/tutors within CAFRE and should not be used to communicate sensitive material regarding other students.

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SECTION 2:

ADMISSIONS

1. General Admissions Policy

1.1 Overall aims of the policy

The aims of the Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy are to ensure that:

- Opportunities are in place to allow access and progress to higher levels of study.
- Selection is based on clearly specified criteria which are published in the CAFRE prospectus and available on the CAFRE Internet site www.cafre.ac.uk
- No candidate is excluded from entry to a programme by reason of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or responsibility for dependants.

1.2 Admission regulations

CAFRE's Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy complies with all appropriate national legislation and takes account of national guidelines governing the recruitment and admission of students, for example, the regulations of validating Universities and Awarding Bodies.

1.3 Principles of Selection

1.3.1 Aims of selection

- To attract and retain students from a wide and diverse community who have the potential to complete the chosen programme of study successfully and benefit from the experience.
- CAFRE is committed to transparency in its admissions procedures. All applicable selection criteria are published in relevant recruitment literature (e.g. Prospectus) and on relevant websites (e.g. CAFRE website and the Entry Profiles on the UCAS website).
- Selection is primarily based on academic criteria; and no candidate will be excluded from entry to a programme by reason of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or responsibility for dependants.
- Applications from students who have previously studied at CAFRE and have been suspended, expelled or withdrawn from the college will be considered carefully and such students may be prevented from enrolling at the college where it is deemed to be in the best interests of the student and /or the college.

1.3.2 Selection criteria

- The admissions criteria will take into account CAFRE policy, national guidelines, and relevant legislation.
- Selection criteria are considered carefully to ensure that the assessment of applicants is fair and transparent.

- Selection criteria are reviewed regularly to ensure their ongoing relevance to curricula and teaching and learning practice.
- Subject to Awarding Body approval, CAFRE may request, and take into account additional information which may include alternative evidence of the ability to meet the selection criteria where standard evidence is not available and there is sufficient evidence regarding the reasons why it was not possible to demonstrate meeting the criteria by standard procedures.
- Evidence may be gathered through a variety of means including interview, tests, reference or the assessment of previous employment experience or academic work, subject to awarding body regulations.

1.4 Entrance Requirements

1.4.1 Further Education programmes

CAFRE applies minimum entrance requirements for all its Further Education programmes which take into account the recommendations of Awarding Organisations. However, programmes can specify additional entrance requirements and these appear against individual programme entries in CAFRE's printed prospectuses and online prospectuses at: www.cafre.ac.uk.

1.4.2 Undergraduate programmes

CAFRE applies the general entrance requirements of validating Universities for all its Higher Education programmes. These represent the minimum qualifications which applicants are normally expected to present for entry. However, programmes may specify additional entrance requirements and these appear against individual programme entries in CAFRE's printed prospectuses and on-line prospectuses for taught programmes at: www.cafre.ac.uk.

1.4.3 Postgraduate taught programmes

CAFRE normally requires applicants to its taught postgraduate programmes to possess a degree or equivalent qualification from a recognised institution. Specific entry requirements will be detailed against the individual programme entry in CAFRE's printed prospectuses and on the CAFRE website; www.cafre.ac.uk.

1.4.4 Enhanced entry criteria

Where programmes are significantly oversubscribed, CAFRE reserves the right to apply enhanced entry criteria, in conjunction with Awarding Organisation and UCAS regulations.

1.4.5 Non UK qualifications

CAFRE accepts a broad range of non-UK qualifications. Further information may be found in general information. Contact details for more specific advice may be obtained by emailing enquiries@cafre.ac.uk

1.4.6 Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)

CAFRE recognises both certificated and experiential learning irrespective of the context in which it is achieved. Accordingly, CAFRE will accredit alternative forms of learning, provided that these can be evidenced in writing by the student and authenticated and agreed at the appropriate level with the Awarding Organisation.

1.4.7 Applicants who are not citizens of the European Economic Area

CAFRE is currently not registered with the UK Borders Agency to accept applicants who are not citizens or who do not meet residency criteria. For further details see <https://www.gov.uk/study-uk-general-student-visa-tier-4>

1.5 Disabled Applicants

CAFRE strives to be an inclusive learning environment and welcomes and encourages applications from persons with a disability.

1.5.1 Selection and entry criteria

- CAFRE will consider making reasonable adjustments to course general entrance requirements which are deemed essential to a programme e.g. work experience but are not attainable for reasons related to the specific needs of individuals with disabilities, subject to awarding body regulations and health and safety considerations. However, academic entry requirements will not be waived.

1.5.2 Communication during the application process

- All applicants are strongly encouraged to inform CAFRE about any disabilities or medical conditions at an early stage in the application process to enable timely consideration of support that may be needed and timely provision of this support
- Applicants are encouraged to make direct contact with the CAFRE Student Support Officer, following receipt of an offer of a place on a course (including conditional offers) to discuss their support requirements
- Applicants who disclose a disability or medical condition are assured that the information provided will be treated sensitively and in accordance with CAFRE's data protection policy.

1.5.3 Administration of the Admissions Process

- All CAFRE staff involved in the admissions process will be aware of the potential need to make reasonable adjustments to application/administration procedures for disabled applicants.
- To facilitate processing of applications, CAFRE staff may need to seek further information from applicants and/or colleagues as appropriate.

1.6 Admissions Procedures

1.6.1 Further Education and part-time provision

Applications to further education or part-time programmes are made directly to CAFRE. Deadlines by which applications must be submitted will vary and will be publicised on the CAFRE website. Deadlines may be extended for undersubscribed programmes.

1.6.2 UCAS Procedure

CAFRE will observe the procedures and deadlines for handling applications as set out by UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service www.ucas.com). All applications for admission to full-time undergraduate degree programmes must normally be made through UCAS except for applicants who are already in higher education and are transferring to a different programme.

1.6.3 Higher Education applications made directly to CAFRE

Applications to part-time HE programmes, postgraduate and exchange programmes are made directly to CAFRE. Deadlines by which applications must be submitted will vary and will be publicised on the CAFRE website.

1.6.4 Acknowledgement of receipt of application

Applicants will receive an acknowledgement of their application directly from CAFRE or from UCAS via email.

1.6.5 Fraudulent statements/omissions

Admission to CAFRE is subject to applicants disclosing all requested facts and information relevant to their application. If, during the course of the consideration of an application or subsequently, an applicant is discovered to have omitted any information requested, or has made any misrepresentation or given false information or failed to provide essential information, CAFRE reserves the right to refuse their application or withdraw an offer of a place which has already been made.

1.6.6 Applicants seeking deferred entry

CAFRE will consider requests from applicants for deferred entry for a maximum of one year. Applicants should be aware that deferred entry may not always be granted. The decision whether or not to offer a place to applicants for deferred entry rests with the relevant programme manager.

1.6.7 Procedures for making offers

- When making offers for full-time undergraduate programmes which are conditional upon subsequent achievement in examination, CAFRE normally uses the GCSE grades or the UCAS tariff points system. However, where appropriate, CAFRE may also specify specific subjects and grades or alternative means of demonstrating competence.
- Applicants to full-time undergraduate programmes should note that the formal notification of decisions is conveyed through UCAS. This will include details of the conditions which may be attached to an offer of a place. Applicants who are unclear about the conditions of an offer are advised to contact the relevant programme manager to seek clarification.

- Applicants to Further Education and part-time Higher Education programmes are notified directly by CAFRE about the decisions regarding their applications.
- All successful applicants must demonstrate that they have met CAFRE’s criteria at the required level. Offers may be conditional upon subsequent achievement in academic examination or other methods of assessment, as specified during the application process.
- All applicants holding confirmed offers are required to present confirmation of results in the form of official certificates / verifiable evidence at registration. Failure to provide acceptable evidence will result in the place on a course being withdrawn.
- All applicants whose offer of a place is confirmed will receive details of fees, and procedures for registration from CAFRE.

1.6.8 Feedback to unsuccessful applicants

CAFRE will provide feedback on request to unsuccessful applicants. This will not constitute a reconsideration of an application. Feedback will only refer to the selection criteria employed by the programme and will only be provided on receipt of a written request from the applicant.

1.6.9 CAFRE use of applicant data

A declaration of consent on the UCAS form and/or on-line application form gives CAFRE permission to process personal and sensitive data (e.g. ethnic origin, disability). This enables CAFRE to compile internal student records. This information will be managed in accordance with CAFRE’s Data Protection Policy

1.6.10 Procedure for applicants disclosing a criminal record

CAFRE has a duty to ensure the safety of its students and staff. Applicants will be asked to disclose criminal convictions at registration and on CAFRE accommodation applications where they:-

- i. Have an unspent criminal conviction; or
- ii. are subject to a Non-Molestation Order or an Order under the Protection from Harassment Order (Northern Ireland) 1997 or an Anti-Social Behaviour Order or a Sexual Offences Prevention Order; or
- iii. are subject to a police investigation and/or who are subject to pre-charge, police or court bail conditions which have an impact on their ability to attend campus or carry out study;

Disclosure is for the purpose of assessing the risk of harm or injury to other students, staff, visitors or other users of College facilities or to its reputation. Where a disclosure is made the Head of CAFRE Administration will consult with senior colleagues, and/or other appropriate persons to agree appropriate restrictions. Failure to disclose any of i, ii, or iii above will be deemed to constitute a disciplinary offence and may result in the revocation of the place or expulsion from the course.

1.6.11 Freedom of Information requests

CAFRE is aware of its responsibilities to respond to requests for aggregated data under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

1.6.12 Data Protection

CAFRE's use, retention and storage of data fully complies with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, ([Data Protection Act 2018 \(DPA 2018\) - legislation.gov.uk](#))
More information can be found:

<https://os.cafre.ac.uk/website/cafreols/privacy-notice.pdf>

<https://os.cafre.ac.uk/website/cafreols/daera-privacy-statement.pdf>

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2. Applications for courses from students who have disabilities, medical conditions or learning needs

Before interview

Where you have disclosed conditions that may impact on your ability to successfully complete a programme of study, the Programme Manager will consult with the Student Support Officer and if necessary invite you to attend an interview.

At interview

The Programme Manager will assess the impact of any learning need or disability on your ability to complete the course for which you have applied. Where there is insufficient information for the Programme Manager to make a decision, you may be asked for additional information either from your doctor, Educational Psychologist or other specialist. You will receive a decision in writing within 5 working days.

If you are refused a place, or an assessment is made on your ability to achieve with which you disagree, you can appeal this decision through CAFRE's appeals procedure.

Dealing with Health and Safety and assessment concerns

The Programme Manager will discuss any areas of concern with the Campus Health and Safety representative, Student Support Officer and/or Adviser of Studies (QUB/UU) before taking appropriate actions. These may include:

- Completing a Special Needs Risk Assessment for those activities within the programme where your participation would give rise to Health and Safety concerns. Copies of signed Risk Assessments will be placed in your file;
- Identifying alternative units/modules which could be studied which would not impact on your achievement;
- Identifying alternative methods of assessment which would not impact upon your condition and would not hinder your achievement;
- Consulting with the Adviser of Studies (QUB/UU) or External Verifier/Accrediting Organisation on the feasibility of these approaches.

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3. Applicants who previously studied at CAFRE and were either suspended or expelled from their course

- 3.1 Learners who have been withdrawn, suspended or expelled from their course or found to have been in serious breach of CAFRE regulations and wish to reapply to CAFRE to undertake the same programme or apply for any other course **do not** have an automatic right to re-enrol.

While CAFRE recognises that individuals' behaviour can change with experience and maturity, it also recognises that there are situations where it would not be in the learner's best interests, CAFRE's best interests or in the best interest of other learners or staff to re-enrol on a CAFRE course.

- 3.2 If a learner who has previously been withdrawn, suspended or expelled from CAFRE or has been in serious breach of the CAFRE regulations applies for a course, their application will be referred to the Chair of the Committee who dealt with the original case (or the person who is now in this role).

If the Chair has any concerns in relation to the application they will refer it to an Application Consideration Panel (ACP). The ACP will decide if the application should be permitted to proceed for normal processing or be rejected.

The ACP will consider all the relevant facts concerning the applicant such as the circumstances surrounding the original withdrawal or disciplinary offence, the subsequent behaviour of the learner and the likelihood of a recurrence of the behaviour which lead to their withdrawal from the course.. The panel will also consider the potential impact of the applicant's return to CAFRE on staff and other learners.

The ACP will be entirely independent of the Committee which dealt with the original case and will normally consist of:

1. A chairperson (HOB /Grade I) who was not the Chair of the original committee and has not been involved in any way in the student's case.
2. The Head of DAERA (Education) Policy Branch.
3. The Head of College Administration (or Deputy).

The panel will review the relevant files and will normally meet within three weeks of the application being received. The panel will also have the right to call the applicant for interview should it be necessary to make a more informed decision.

The ACP decision will normally be communicated by the Head of Administration on behalf of the Panel Chair to the applicant within 5 days of the panel convening.

- 3.3 The applicant will have one right of appeal to a CAFRE Head of Service or another Head of Branch who again has not been involved in the original process. A request for an appeal must be received by CAFRE within one calendar month of the date of the ACP decision letter. The request for appeal should detail the grounds upon which the appeal is made and provide all supporting evidence necessary to consider the appeal.

- 3.4 Once an ACP has ruled on an individual case their decision will remain in force for a period of at least three years or as specified by the APP. Thereafter any further applications will be reconsidered anew.

The ACP has the right to impose conditions of study at CAFRE and regular reviews on any student it has considered and approved to undertake a course the college.

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4. Student Support Policy

Policy

CAFRE will follow best practice in relation to the identification and support of your needs for all programmes. It will ensure that you are clear about what you can expect from the College and the information you need to provide to the College. The College will identify and engage the services of organisations and individuals to provide specialist support which it cannot provide itself.

All applicants and enrolled students will have the opportunity to disclose any disability, medical, learning or personal problems/needs and discuss with the Student Support Officer the impact of these on their learning and social inclusion while at College.

If you fail to declare a disability, learning, medical, or personal need/problem (which the College would not be reasonably expected to know) then the College cannot be expected to make adjustments to accommodate your particular need.

Confidentiality

CAFRE will advise you of the extent to which a disability, learning, medical, or personal need/problem can be kept private and an explanation if it cannot be kept private. The College will maintain appropriate confidentiality with respect to your age-related legal rights.

Disclosure Opportunities

As a prospective student you will be given the opportunity to disclose any disability, learning, medical or personal needs/problems when applying for a place on a programme, at interview and at induction. In addition you will be provided with details of how disclosures can be made during the academic year.

If you are under 18 years old, disclosure may be carried out in conjunction with a parent/guardian while ensuring that appropriate confidentiality is maintained with respect to your age-related legal rights.

Identification of student support needs by staff

Where staff identify or suspect that you have an undeclared support need, you will be given the opportunity to discuss, in confidence, the perceived need and agree appropriate support action(s).

Student Support Mechanism

If you have a learning and/or personal need you will be supported appropriately where reasonably practicable. However you will be expected to provide independent professional evidence assessment of any condition you have declared to validate your claim and specify the support required.

An action plan will be produced which will detail the individual support to be provided and review outcomes. Programme Managers will be responsible for the implementation of your support plan.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety of individuals is paramount when considering applications from people with disabilities and learning needs. Agreement will be reached between you as a prospective student and the Student Support Officer in conjunction with the Programme Manager regarding any restrictions which may be placed on your access to the full programme.

CAFRE reserves the right to ask you to withdraw from the course if you fail to disclose a disability, learning, medical, or personal need/problem which presents an unreasonable Health and Safety risk for the college, yourself, or any other person who could be affected by this risk.

Review of student support

Records of the actions taken to support you shall be retained for three years after you have completed your learning programme, after which time they shall be disposed of.

Dealing with students as they progress to higher level courses

In order to prepare students for Higher Education or future employment, CAFRE will promote the use of assistive technologies to reduce the reliance of students on one-to-one support.

Appeals

If you have special needs and you feel that you have been discriminated against, or that your learning or personal needs have not been satisfactorily met, you can appeal through the College Appeals procedure.

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5. Tuition Fee Regulations

You are liable for the relevant course tuition fee when you register and enrol formally on your programme of study. The appropriate fees are payable from the date of first registration to the date of the end of the academic year or completion of the course.

Further Education programmes

There are no tuition charges for Further Education programmes with the exception of Veterinary Nursing and the Work Based Diploma in Poultry. Please contact the relevant programme manager for the fee structure of these two programmes at www.cafre.ac.uk.

Full-time undergraduate programmes

For students enrolled on the Ulster University HE programmes in Agriculture, Horticulture, Food and Equine, the 2020/21 fee is £1,745 for an academic year and the fee for the placement year £845.

The Tuition fee levied by QUB for the BSc Agriculture technology programmes has not yet been finalised for 2020/21. The 2019/20 tuition fee was £4275.

Taught postgraduate, and part-time programmes

The arrangements for the charging and payment of tuition fees for taught postgraduate and part-time programmes of study, as well as any financial support available, are different from those applicable to full-time undergraduate programmes. The fee for the postgraduate Business programme in 2019 – 20 was £457 for full-time study and £230 per year of part-time study. The Tuition fee levied by QUB for these programmes have not yet been finalised for 2020/21

Repeating a programme year following outcome of an Ulster University Exam Board

If students are repeating a year with attendance as deemed by the Exam Board then they will be liable to pay the full tuition fees for that year.

If students are repeating a year without attendance as deemed by the Exam Board then they will be liable to pay the Ulster University registration fee which is currently £230.

Students on Queen's University programmes will follow their University procedures.

Tuition fee debt

Students with outstanding debts relating to resits and/or tuition will not be permitted to graduate or progress to the next year of a programme.

Further Information

Students studying Higher Education courses can apply for financial support to assist with their living expenses and/or tuition fees through student loans as well as government grants, bursaries and scholarships from the College. Full details of financial support available can be found at: www.cafre.ac.uk

If you have special needs, or find yourself in financial difficulties (which could not have been predicted), you may also have access to additional sources of funding. Further information may be obtained from the Student Support Officer.

6. Eligibility for a Refund of Higher Education Tuition fees

If you are considering withdrawing from your studies or taking a leave of absence you should seek advice from your Programme Manager.

Refund of tuition fees will only be made on receipt of a fully completed refund application form which can be obtained from the College Administration office.

If you leave your course after registration but before 3rd January 2021, you will be liable to pay 25% of the tuition fees.

If you leave your course on or after 3rd January 2021 but before 7th April 2021 you will be liable to pay 50% of the tuition fees.

If you leave your course after 7th April 2021, you will be liable to pay 100% of the tuition fees.

If you leave your course before 2nd December you will not be eligible for financial support from the Student Loan Company and will be personally liable for your tuition fees.

Arrangements for Veterinary Nursing – please consult the relevant Course handbook.

Refunds can only be granted if you have followed the correct procedures.

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7. Making Payments to the College and Student Debt Policy

It is important that you pay your debts to the College because having an unpaid debt may affect your ability to complete your course.

Causes of Debt

As a student you may incur debt to the College in three main ways:

- Accommodation and meals charges
- Tuition fees (mostly , relates to HE students)
- Disciplinary fines, resit fees etc.

If you are under 18 years of age, the responsibility for the debt rests with your parent or guardian. If you are over 18, you are fully responsible for your own debts.

Making Payments

The College is part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and uses its accounting system AccountNI for issuing invoices and collection of payments.

You will be invoiced as follows:

- For tuition fees (HE programmes with the exception of QUB Agriculture Technology) and accommodation charges if living in College accommodation, you will be invoiced in September/October and January/February. QUB Agriculture Technology tuition fees will be paid directly to QUB and invoiced separately.
- For damages and fines as and when they arise.

Payments/issuing of reminders:

Payments can be made directly to AccountNI or to the College. Reminders will be issued as follows:

- First Reminder after 30 days.
- Second Reminder after a further 14 days.
- Final reminder after a further 14 days.

If you are under the age of 18, reminders will be issued to your parents/guardians.

Consequences of failure to pay

- If you have not paid for your Semester 1 accommodation you will not be allowed back into accommodation in Semester 2 until the bill for Semester 1 has been paid in full. College management may progressively withdraw certain privileges until outstanding debts are paid. These may include access to the library, ICT facilities and accommodation on site.

- If you have not paid for your first semester's accommodation within 7 days of being issued your final reminder, the College reserves the right to ask you for an upfront payment for the second semester's accommodation.
- In addition, the financial processes as outlined previously in DAERA's Financial Accounting and Procedures guidelines will be applied. If a debt is still outstanding after the final reminder deadlines, legal action will be initiated to recover the debt unless you have made some attempt to settle the debt i.e. DAERA will take you to the small claims court or County Court (depending on the amount outstanding) to recover the debt.

Financial Support and Advice

The College fully recognises the financial pressures which affect many students today and in all cases will be as understanding as possible to help you or your parents/guardians resolve any debt problems you might have.

If you have difficulty repaying any debt to the College you should talk initially to your Tutor, Year Manager or Programme Manager. Support is also available from the Student Support Officer who can help directly or by referral to professional debt counselling and support organisations.

A Hardship Fund is also available through the Student Support Officer. If you are suffering financial problems in relation to your studies, you are advised to contact the Student Support Officer to discuss how assistance may be provided. Training on money management is also provided through the Student Support Officer.

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8. Hardship Fund (Discretionary)

OVERALL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The Hardship Fund is targeted at students in particular need and maximum payments are in the region of £650 per annum. The Hardship Fund must only be used for approved individual student applications. CAFRE will aim to process applications for the Hardship Fund within 6 weeks and information on the application process and closing dates will be made available to all students during induction.

Students who have obtained financial assistance from the Hardship Fund may see an impact on their social security benefits.

ELIGIBLE STUDENT CRITERIA

The Hardship Fund is only open to students who are enrolled on **full-time further education courses** at CAFRE. In exceptional cases, CAFRE may award hardship funding to students enrolled on higher education courses or part-time courses at CAFRE.

Students must normally meet residence requirements as detailed in the “Further Education Financial Support for Students in 2020/21” available at: www.eani.org.uk/feapplication.

All further education students **must** first apply for financial assessment to:

Further Education Awards Section
The Education Authority
1 Hospital Road
Omagh
Co Tyrone
BT79 0AW
Email: feawards-wr@eani.org.uk
Tel: (028) 8225 4546
Text phone: (028) 8241 1550

- Students on full-time higher education courses **must** apply to Student Finance NI for a maintenance grant, maintenance loan and tuition fees loan at: <https://www.studentfinancenl.co.uk>.
- Before applying for support from the Hardship Fund, students **must have exhausted all other avenues of financial assistance**.
- The Hardship Fund is not normally available to students who are repeating courses/modules or to students who are continually absent from their course e.g. due to sickness.
- The Hardship Fund is only available to students whose course is part of their educational progression (unless in exceptional circumstances, such as a requirement for new qualifications because of the current economic climate).
- The Hardship Fund can assist with additional living costs associated with learning. Verification of costs will be obtained by CAFRE. In most instances CAFRE will be aware of the cost of

accommodation and food as the majority of students reside within the campuses of Greenmount, Loughry or Enniskillen, or in rented accommodation close to the campuses.

- Due account will be taken of the availability and extent of financial support available to the individual student from other sources such as student loans or social security benefits. CAFRE will also consider whether the deficit between income and expenditure constitutes real need and cannot be reduced to a manageable level by the student.
- If CAFRE suspects that fraudulent or misleading information has been provided by the student, payment from the Hardship Fund will be suspended, pending the outcome of an investigation. If abuse of the Hardship Fund is confirmed, the student's entitlement to claim from the fund will be withdrawn permanently and CAFRE will seek to recover any monies already paid in accordance with the DAERA Financial Accounting & Procedures Manual.

APPLICATION PROCESS/TIMETABLE

The Hardship Fund is open to all students and information will be made available from the start of the academic year on the criteria and approximate timings of assessment and decisions on Hardship applications. Where necessary a personal interview with the student may be arranged.

The first payment will not normally be made until January, and will be conditional on confirmation that the student remains on their programme of study.

APPEALS PROCESS

Students will have the right of appeal if they were unsuccessful in their application for support from the Hardship Fund, details of which will be included in their application outcome letter.

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9. CAFRE Academic Calendar 2020/21

The College academic calendar is shown below. Please note that the Veterinary Nursing Programme does not follow this calendar. Full details for each course will also be provided within your specific course handbook.

Week No	2020/2021	FE Greenmount and Enniskillen	Greenmount and Enniskillen HE	Loughry	BSc Ag Tech	Postgrad QUB FT & PT
	24-Aug-20					
0	31-Aug-20					
1	07-Sep-20	Registration/Induction				
2	14-Sep-20	1	Induction	Induction	Induction	Induction
3	21-Sep-20	2	1	1	1	1
4	28-Sep-20	3	2	2	2	2
5	05-Oct-20	4	3	3	3	3
6	12-Oct-20	5	4	4	4	4
7	19-Oct-20	6	5	5	5	5
8	26-Oct-20	Mid-term break / Block Release	Study week (6)		6	6
9	02-Nov-20	7	7	7	7	7
10	09-Nov-20	8	8	8	8	8
11	16-Nov-20	9	9	9	9	9
12	23-Nov-20	10	10	10	10	10
13	30-Nov-20	11	11	11	11	11
14	07-Dec-20	12	12	12	12	12
15	14-Dec-20	13	13	13	13	13
16	21-Dec-20	Christmas Break	Christmas Break		Christmas Break	Christmas Break
17	28-Dec-20					
18	04-Jan-21	14	14 (Study)	15 (Study)		
19	11-Jan-21	15	15 (Exam)	16 (Exam)	14	14
20	18-Jan-21	16	End of Semester Break	End of Semester Break	15	15
21	25-Jan-21	17	1	1	16	16
22	01-Feb-21	18	2	2	17	17
23	08-Feb-21	19	3	3	18	18
24	15-Feb-21	Mid-term break / Block Release	Study week (4)	Study week (4)	19	19
25	22-Feb-21	20	5	5	20	20
26	01-Mar-21	21	6	6	21	21
27	08-Mar-21	22	7	7	22	WBL (22)
28	15-Mar-21	23	8	8	23	WBL (23)
29	22-Mar-21	24	9	9	24	WBL (24)
30	29-Mar-21	Easter	Easter	Easter	Easter	Easter
31	05-Apr-21	Easter	Easter	Easter	Easter	Easter

Week No	2020/2021	FE Greenmount and Enniskillen	Greenmount and Enniskillen HE	Loughry	BSc Ag Tech	Postgrad QUB FT & PT
32	12-Apr-21	25	10	10	Easter	Easter
33	19-Apr-21	26	11	11	25	25
34	26-Apr-21	27	12	12	26	26
35	03-May-21	28	13	13	27 Assessment	27 Assessment
36	10-May-21	29	14 (study)	14 (study)	28 Assessment	28 Assessment
37	17-May-21	30	15 (exam)	15 (exam)	29 Assessment	29 Assessment
38	24-May-21				30 QUB prog	30 Assessment
39	31-May-21				31 QUB prog	
40	07-Jun-21	Exam Board / Course results meetings				Exam Board
41	14-Jun-21	Course Review meetings and collation of course outcomes				
42	21-Jun-21	Awards days (To be confirmed)				
43	28-Jun-21					
49	05-Aug-21	Supplementary Exams			Supplementary Exam date to be set by QUB	
50	12-Aug-21	Supplementary Exams				
51	19-Aug-21					
52	26-Aug-21	Programme Reviews				

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SECTION 3:

**COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS
PROCEDURES**

1. Customer Complaints Procedure

CAFRE is committed to providing its customers with a high standard of service. We welcome your comments on the quality of service you received and your suggestions on how we can improve our service.

A customer service complaint is any communication to us, which expresses dissatisfaction with the quality of our service.

How do I make a complaint if I am unhappy with the quality of service I have received?

To make a complaint about the quality of service provided by CAFRE, follow the procedure as outlined in the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) website on 'How do I make a complaint':

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/how-do-i-make-complaint-if-i-am-unhappy-quality-service-i-received>

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2. Appeals against a Refusal of a Place on a CAFRE Programme

Procedures

- 2.1 Letters confirming the outcome of an interview for a place on a CAFRE programme will be issued by the Head of Campus Administration.
- 2.2 If you are refused a place on a programme, the letter of refusal will detail:
 - the reason/reasons why your application was refused;
 - the name of the person to whom your appeal should be addressed (the Head of Branch) and the deadline by which your appeal should be submitted.
- 2.3 You can appeal by email, letter or by telephone.
- 2.4 Your appeal must be submitted within 5 working days of the issue of the letter of refusal.
- 2.5 The Head of Branch will consider the grounds for your appeal against the interview record and the entry requirements agreed with the programme manager.
- 2.6 You will be notified within 5 working days of the outcome of the appeal.
- 2.7 There is no further right of appeal.

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3 Academic Appeals Procedure

You will be informed of the academic appeals procedure during induction.

Process for academic/grievance appeals

If you raise any academic or grievance appeals, every attempt will be made to resolve them on an informal basis. If not resolved at this level, the formal documented appeals/grievance procedure can be invoked.

Should you raise an appeal relating to a non-academic matters the appeal will be dealt with by the following people in this order:

- Programme Managers or Accommodation Manager/event organiser as appropriate
- Appropriate Head of Branch
- Head of Education Service or Head of Knowledge Advisory Service
- College Director

If you raise any appeals relating to academic matters, the appeal will be dealt with by the following people in this order:

- Internal Verifier/Moderator.
- Appropriate Head of Branch
- Awarding Organisation

or as stipulated in the Awarding Organisation's Academic Appeal procedure.

Any appeals made will be directed through the relevant campus' Education Administration office who will log your appeal and acknowledge it, and then direct it to the appropriate person.

Lodging academic/grievance appeals

The formal academic/grievance appeals procedure will only be invoked if you lodge an appeal in writing.

Unless you have exceptional circumstances, an appeal must be made within 10 working days of the event/decision leading to the appeal. If no appeal is made within 10 working days, you will be deemed to have accepted the original decision related to the appeal as being fair.

Costs

Where external organisation e.g. Awarding Organisations set charges for reviewing appeals, their costs will be charged to you. In the event that they are needed for reviewing your appeal.

Review of academic/grievance appeals

In the event of your appeal proving successful and the outcome would be beneficial to other learners, the outcome shall be applied to all learners involved.

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4. Malpractice and Maladministration Procedure

Definition of malpractice

Malpractice is essentially any activity or practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the internal or external assessment process and/or the validity of certificates.

It covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises, or could compromise:

- The assessment process;
- The integrity of a regulated qualification;
- The validity of a result or certificate;
- The reputation and credibility of CAFRE; or,
- The qualification or the wider qualifications community.

Examples of malpractice:

- Collusion or permitting collusion in examinations/assessments.
- Plagiarism by learners/staff.
- Copying from other learners (including using ICT to do so).

Definition of maladministration

Maladministration is essentially any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration.

Process for making an allegation of maladministration

If you identify or are made aware of suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration at any time, you must immediately notify the College in writing/email, enclosing any supporting evidence that you may have. The Head of College Services Branch will then inform the CAFRE Director as to the nature of your allegation

The Head of College Services Branch will then conduct an investigation into your allegation

In all cases of reported suspected maladministration, we will protect your identity in accordance with the duty of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

Confidentiality and whistle blowing

If you decide to make an allegation of maladministration, you may wish to remain anonymous and if you are concerned about possible adverse consequences you may request that your identity is not revealed.

Investigating timelines and summary process

The aim is to complete the investigation within 10 working days of receipt of the allegation.

Investigation report

After an investigation, a draft report will be prepared and made available to the parties concerned and to the regulatory authorities and other external agencies as required.

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5. Whistle Blowing Procedure

CAFRE has procedures in place for:

- Dealing with your academic issues through an academic appeals procedure
- Dealing with personal complaints through the complaints procedure
- Expressing your views on the course, campus etc. through staff student consultative committees, questionnaires, and directly to the teaching and residential support team.

If however you are concerned that something is happening which is wrong you can raise it either in person, or anonymously without fear of harassment or victimisation by contacting the Head of Administration, CAFRE, who will provide you with the appropriate forms to complete.

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SECTION 4:

STUDENT PROCEDURES

1. Additional College Regulations

- You must carry your ID card with you at all times. If you lose your ID card, a replacement (charged at £10), can be obtained by contacting the relevant Campus Administration Office.
- You must not bring firearms, ammunition and knives (other than small pocket/pruning knives approved by an instructor and only carry them during practical activities) or anything else which may be used as a weapon onto the campus. Fireworks are prohibited on the campus.
- You must be clean and appropriately dressed when attending meals and lectures. Protective clothing, working clothes and boots must not be kept in bedrooms or worn in the restaurants/cafes. You should keep your working clothes in the locker rooms and your work boots in the designated changing areas provided. You are not permitted to enter the campus restaurants in your sock soles.
- All items purchased in the campus dining rooms or cafes can be paid for via two methods. Residential students are issued with a cater card and non-residential students pay cash. To avoid being refused service residential students you should present your card or cash at the till every time you purchase food/drink.
- CAFRE will take no responsibility for any loss or damage to student property. It is your responsibility to ensure that your property is insured against damage or loss. It is your responsibility to remove all your possessions from the campus at the end of the academic year.
- You are not allowed to keep dogs or other animals/pets on the CAFRE estate except in special circumstances (e.g. guide dogs) and with the prior permission of the Head of Branch.
- You are responsible for any visitors you bring onto the campus. Visitors must be signed in and out and introduced at the Accommodation Office to the staff on duty. Visitors may not stay overnight except with the prior permission of the Accommodation Manager. All visitors must be off the campus buildings and estate by 11.00pm.
- You must not enter any locked, restricted or 'out of bounds' areas. This includes roofs, stores and maintenance plant rooms. For security, bio-security and health and safety reasons students are not allowed access to CAFRE work areas, including farm and stable yards, horticultural centres, or nature trail areas between the hours of 18.00 and 08.00 without permission. If you need access to these areas during this time you must obtain permission from a member of teaching staff or be on official rostered duty.
- You should respect the campus grounds and walk on the surfaced paths provided. Litter should be deposited only in bins.
- Theft of any kind will be considered a serious breach of these regulations and the PSNI will be informed of all instances.
- You must not enter staff offices unless under staff supervision. If you wish to speak to a member of staff you should go to the campus reception or arrange an appointment in class with the member of staff concerned.

- You must have the permission of the Accommodation Manager before you organise any function which could be considered to be associated with CAFRE either within, or outside the campuses or grounds.
- Unless mobile technology is being used as part of learning sessions, mobile phones and other devices must be switched off during lectures, practicals or skills activities. You are not under any circumstances permitted to use your phone in class to record images of staff or other students without the permission of the member of staff in charge of the class. Staff have the authority to instruct you to put your phone away or failing that to instruct you to leave the classroom until such time as you are prepared to comply with this instruction.
- Greenkeeping Golf Academy (Greenmount Campus only)

The Greenkeeping Golf Academy building, driving range and golf facilities beyond the sports pitches are strictly out of bounds to students from 5.00pm to 9.00am.

If you are found to be in possession of golf balls from the driving range you will be deemed to be in possession of stolen property and will be dealt with appropriately under the student disciplinary policy.

Students wishing to use the golf facilities must contact the Greenmount Resource Centre Reception Office for permission.

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2. Attendance Policy

2.1 You are required to:

2.1.1 Notify your year manager / tutor in advance if you expect to be absent.

2.1.2 Inform your year manager if the period of absence is longer than expected.

2.1.3 Provide a medical certificate if you are absent due to illness for a period of more than 5 working days.

2.1.4 Where a period of illness/incapacity has an impact on your ability to fully participate in the practical activities of your programme, you will be required to produce a letter from your GP detailing any restrictions that may apply.

2.2 Year Managers will review your attendance records weekly and follow up any attendance issues identified

2.3 Lateness will be dealt as a misdemeanour under the behaviour policy. You should therefore ensure you are on time for all classes and scheduled activities.

2.4 Year Managers will contact you if you have been absent without authorisation within **ONE working day** to determine the cause and likely date of return. If you are under the age of 18, parents/guardians may also be contacted.

2.5 If you have been absent for 3 days unauthorised, and contact cannot be made with you, the Programme Manager will write to you.

2.6 If you have been absent for **3 days**, or the equivalent of 3 days in missed classes, or **three consecutive classes within the same unit**, you will be interviewed by the Programme Manager and Year Manager. Depending on the outcome, you will be advised/referred to Student Support Officer as appropriate. A written record of the interview will be placed in your file and will constitute a **formal warning** if your absences cannot be justified.

2.7 If you have been absent for **5 days**, or the equivalent of 5 days in missed classes, you will be interviewed by the relevant **Student Progress Committee (SPC)**. This committee may refer the case to the relevant funding committee with recommendations that awards/loans are suspended.

2.8 Programme Managers have discretion on referrals to the SPC, and can refer you to the SPC in advance of the trigger points detailed above should this be deemed necessary.

2.9 If you are absent for 10 days or the equivalent of 10 days in missed classes you will be interviewed by the relevant Progress Committee, and unless a satisfactory reason can be given, will be deemed to have withdrawn from the programme.

2.10 Your relevant funding body will also be informed.

2.11 Programme Managers will refer to the current academic year only when considering penalties for absence.

2.12 Any appeals you submit will be dealt with under the CAFRE appeals procedure.

3. Learners who are not from within the European Economic Area (EEA)

- 3.1 If you are not a citizen of the EEA, and you miss 10 days of classes, the Programme Manager will inform the Head of Campus Administration, and they in turn will notify the UK Border Agency (within 10 days of being notified).

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3. Examinations and the Submission of Coursework Regulations

All examinations at the College follow the guidelines of the Joint College for Qualifications and full details can be found on their website at www.jcq.org.uk/exams.office

Most programmes at CAFRE are assessed through a variety of methods such as: formal examinations, assignment, practicals, on-line tests etc. Details of the assessments for your course will be included in the course specific handbook which will be given to you during induction. Any changes to the assessment structure will be communicated to you as soon as possible, so that relevant adjustments can be made. Each programme will have its own criteria for achievement. If you have a specific need, alternative assessment arrangements must be agreed and approved by the Student Support Officer.

All coursework and assessments must be completed at the times stipulated within your course handbook. If for any reason you cannot submit them on time, you must submit an extenuating circumstances form which is available on your VLE or from Administration Office, fully detailing the nature of the reasons for your late submission. A number of mitigating circumstances (see below) will be taken into account with respect to late submissions/missed assessments.

Applications for extenuating circumstances must be submitted:

- For examinations: as soon as possible after the examination and not later than 5 working days following the examination
- For coursework: before the date the coursework is due to be submitted

Applications must explain the impact of the extenuating circumstances and be supported by documentary evidence where appropriate. The Programme Manager will consider your application for consideration of special circumstances and where an extension to the deadline for submitting coursework has been granted, you will normally be given 10 working days to submit the work from receipt of the approval, without penalty.

Where extenuating circumstances were deemed to have affected your work for an examination or assessment you will be required to undertake an additional appropriate assignment or test without the imposition of a resit financial penalty.

If you wish to appeal the decision of the Programme Manager please refer to the Appeals Section within this booklet.

If you are not performing well academically or are in breach of certain regulations e.g. attendance, as identified by the Course Team or Examiners' Committee you will be asked to appear for interview by the Progress Committee. The Progress Committee is normally chaired by a member of the CAFRE Management Team (e.g. Head of Branch) and will include your Programme Managers. It will also include other staff who may have information on the issues being discussed. The Students' Progress Committee meets approximately once per semester to deal with any issues arising but may be convened at any time as necessary. It has the authority to suspend students or recommend expulsion in addition to other sanctions.

(EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES)

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES	NOTES
<p>Normally acceptable</p> <p>1. Death of a close relative</p>	<p>'Close' means parents and guardians, partner or spouse, children and siblings. It may include grandparents or other relatives if the relationship was close.</p>
<p>2. Serious illness of student</p>	<p>It should be an incapacitating illness or an ongoing illness or medical condition. It also includes breaks and serious sprains to the normal writing hand/arm. Medical certification must be obtained; self-certification is not acceptable.</p>
<p>3. Serious illness of a close relative</p>	<p>See notes above for the definition of 'close'.</p>
<p>4. Financial problems</p>	<p>Stress brought on by financial concerns (supported by a medical note). Note: It is the student's responsibility to maintain a proper balance between work and study.</p>
<p>5. Civil unrest</p>	<p>Terrorist activity; widespread public disorder; bomb attacks; bomb scares; withdrawal of and delays to rail/road public transport services.</p> <p>There must be widely publicised media/news coverage to support such grounds.</p>
<p>6. Serious personal disruption</p>	<p>Divorce; fire; burglary; serious assault; jury service. Corroborating evidence must be produced.</p>
<p>Possibly Acceptable</p> <p>1. Pregnancy</p>	<p>This depends on the stage of the pregnancy, the imminence of childbirth, and any medical reports suggesting that an extension might be appropriate. It also includes the stages following childbirth. Pregnancy of a wife/partner would be acceptable in certain circumstances.</p>
<p>Not normally acceptable</p> <p>1. Social activities</p>	<p>Hectic social life; parties; visits to/from friends.</p>
<p>2. Temporary self-induced medical conditions</p>	<p>Hangover; drug taking (excluding prescribed medication)</p>
<p>3. Non-serious personal and domestic disruptions which could have been anticipated or planned</p>	<p>Moving house; weddings; holidays; failed transport arrangements.</p>
<p>4. Minor ailments</p>	<p>Coughs; colds; sprains (other than in the writing hand/arm)</p>
<p>5. IT related</p>	<p>Computer crashes, loss of data, formatting issues, access to Wi-Fi, corruption of data storage devices</p>

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4. Assignment Regulations

Higher Education

A sample of completed assessments will be co-marked by a second (or several), competent member(s) of staff. Examinations and coursework will be internally moderated and all fails, scripts of 70% and above, and all borderline scripts reviewed. In addition a sample of at least 20% of the remainder will be randomly selected for moderation with at least two being selected from each classification band.

Feedback and marks should be returned to you within three weeks of the submission date.

Further Education

All marked assignments are internally verified before feedback and marks are returned to you. This process should be completed within three weeks of the submission date.

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5. Disciplinary Policy

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals studying at CAFRE, including those on placement, those undertaking short courses and those attending other training events or College activities.

The Disciplinary Policy relates to all matters of misconduct, except those relating to academic misconduct. Alleged incidents of academic misconduct, will be dealt with under the relevant policy.

In pursuance of our Student Charter principles of ensuring that the dignity and rights of all students and staff are protected, and being mindful of our duties towards the safety and wellbeing of all within the College, this policy sets out how the College will address any inappropriate action or behaviour of students, their family members or third parties associated with students.

Records of disciplinary matters will be retained in line with our records disposal schedule, following the conclusion of the student's course.

Application of the policy

It is a requirement that CAFRE students behave in a manner that does not impact on the proper working of the College in its broadest sense. This policy explains what constitutes misconduct, the procedures that will be followed when dealing with misconduct and the sanctions that will be applied.

While the relationship is primarily between the College and you, the student, at times other parties such as family or friends may have reason to be on the campus grounds or interact with students/staff. These parties need to understand that all such interactions must be entirely appropriate, as you have a responsibility to the College to ensure that no inappropriate behaviour takes place by your family, friends or associated third parties.

This policy defines misconduct as either 'Gross Acts of Misconduct' or 'General Acts of Misconduct' depending upon the seriousness of the misconduct, and the procedures for dealing with each are explained.

CAFRE will administer this policy fairly, reasonably and in accordance with the principles of natural justice. The Head of Education Service has overall responsibility for student discipline with implementation delegated to Heads of Branches and the Accommodation Managers for the exclusion, suspension or expulsion of students on disciplinary grounds.

Where mental health, illness or disability has impacted upon your behaviour or conduct, the matter may be considered under an alternative appropriate policy such as the Fitness to Study Policy. CAFRE will remain mindful, when implementing this policy, of its obligations under equality law, including its duty to make reasonable adjustments in respect of students with disabilities.

It should also be noted that if any alleged misconduct involves issues that fall under other policies, such as Health and Safety, the College may also consider these in its response to such matters, in addition to any disciplinary sanctions that may be applied.

Definition of Misconduct

Under this policy misconduct is defined as improper interference, in the broadest sense, with the proper functioning or activities of the College or those who work or study at CAFRE or action which otherwise damages, or is calculated to damage CAFRE or its reputation.

How acts of misconduct are dealt with will be dependent on the seriousness of the offence.

General Misconduct

Acts often constituting general misconduct are detailed below. These tend to be dealt with by lecturers, year managers and programme managers. This list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

1. Disruption of, or improper interference with, the academic, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the College, whether on College premises or elsewhere;
2. Obstruction of, or improper interference with, the functions, duties or activities of any student, member of staff or other employee or any authorised visitor to the College;
3. Inappropriate¹ use of photographs videos or other forms of media, and the unauthorised posting of such material on the internet and other forms of social media;
4. Action likely to cause injury or impair safety on College premises including the irresponsible use of motor vehicles; including the parking of vehicles other than in approved car parking areas on campus and on roadways in the immediate vicinity of the college campus.
5. Discrimination against or harassment or bullying of any student, member of staff or other employee or of the College or any authorised visitor to the College.
6. Damage to, or defacement of College property or the property of staff, students or visitors caused intentionally or recklessly, and misappropriation of such property;
7. Misuse or unauthorised use of College premises or items of property, including computer misuse;
8. Conduct which constitutes a criminal offence where that conduct:
 - (a) Took place on College premises or
 - (b) Affected or concerned other members of the College community or
 - (c) Damages, or may damage, the good name of the College;
9. Behaviour which brings the good name of the College into disrepute;
10. Failure to disclose name and other relevant details to staff in circumstances when it is reasonable to require that such information be given;
11. Failure to comply with the disciplinary process without reasonable excuse or with a previously imposed penalty under the policy.

¹ As defined in section 1.8 of the CAFRE student handbook

Any of the above actions may, depending on their nature and circumstances be deemed to be gross acts of misconduct

Gross Acts of Misconduct – Definition

Gross misconduct will automatically result in formal disciplinary proceedings and will be dealt with by senior staff. Gross acts of misconduct are detailed below. This list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

1. Possession of controlled or controlled prescribed drugs, without a valid prescription or psycho-active substances with or without the intention to supply.
2. Violent behaviour towards a fellow student, members of staff, visitor or other member of the College community.
3. Possession of fire arms or other weapons likely to cause injury.
4. Serious or persistent acts of bullying, harassment or intimidation including cyber bullying.
5. Serious breaches of College Health and Safety rules and regulations.
6. Deliberate falsification of records / giving false information.
7. Theft, fraud, deceit, deception or dishonesty.
8. Causing deliberate and serious damage to property.
9. Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening or offensive behaviour or unacceptable communication² (verbal or nonverbal) whilst on College premises or engaged in any College related activity or when communicating with other students staff and members of the College community;

In all other cases of misconduct (not specified above), the Heads of Branches in consultation with Programme Managers will decide if an offence constitutes a gross act of misconduct.

Unacceptable behaviour communicating with the College and its staff

CAFRE expects students, family members, friends and third party associates to use established procedures and normal channels of communication when contacting staff members.

CAFRE will not tolerate verbal or written communication that is considered to be unacceptable and will take action to protect its staff from such behaviour or communication, irrespective of the source. Communication is deemed unacceptable if it is:

1. abusive, offensive, defamatory;
2. aggressive, threatening, coercive, intimidating;
3. unreasonably persistent, demanding;
4. Involves inappropriate use of social media and photographs (please refer to section 1.8 of the CAFRE student handbook).

² *Relates to communication which is abusive, offensive or defamatory, aggressive, threatening or intimidating; unreasonably persistent or demanding and inappropriate use of social media*

If your communication or interactions with staff at the College is deemed to be unacceptable you will be asked to modify your behaviour.

If your unacceptable behaviour/communication continues, CAFRE will take action to prevent your communication reaching the staff member(s) and refuse to engage in any further communication with you.

If your communication or behaviour is deemed to be threatening or defamatory, CAFRE may refer the matter to the appropriate authorities e.g. PSNI and/or take legal action against you.

Students should take notice that the actions and behaviour of your family, friends and third party associates on your behalf where these actions are condoned by you could have an impact on you and your right to remain at CAFRE.

Criminal Investigations

Students and those making allegations should be aware that any information or allegation or evidence of gross misconduct considered to constitute a criminal offence will be referred to the police. Where a matter is under investigation by the police, CAFRE reserves the right to delay considering the matter under its own disciplinary procedures until the outcome of the police investigation is known. Equally CAFRE is not precluded from progressing its own disciplinary action where police involvement is taking place.

Circumstances of criminal investigations may also dictate that the student(s) who is (are) the subject of a police investigation will be suspended or excluded until the investigation or potential criminal proceedings, arising from the investigation have been completed. In these instances the decision to suspend or exclude will rest with the relevant Head of Education Branch. In making such decisions where a student is the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator of an alleged criminal act is also a student, and the police have not determined that exclusion from the campus is required, CAFRE will make reasonable endeavours to balance the interests of all parties involved when making decisions around suspension and/or access to the campus. It will also use its best endeavours to offer support to both parties should they wish to access such support.

Whilst criminal investigations are underway, the student is obliged to keep CAFRE informed of any progress made or change in their position/status. Where a student is convicted of a criminal offence, CAFRE will take the decision of the Court as conclusive evidence that the offence occurred.

Where a student is acquitted of a criminal offence in Court or where proceedings are not pursued to a criminal trial, CAFRE reserves the right to pursue matters of concern to the college in accordance with this disciplinary policy.

Where criminal proceedings result in a student being taken into custody or being absent from study for a period of more than 12 months, the student may be deemed to have withdrawn from the college. In such circumstances the decision to withdraw the student will rest with the relevant Head of Education Branch.

Procedures for dealing with misconduct

The guidelines shown in flowcharts Appendix 1. Classroom and Practical Discipline and Appendix 2. Accommodation Discipline will be followed by staff.

Student misconduct forms will be used in class/on practical for minor disciplinary issues which as a one off may be fairly insignificant but when repeated become disruptive e.g. continually using a mobile phone in class/practical. The completed form will be passed to your year manager.

Where three misconduct forms have been completed by a member of staff on a student or where there is a general build-up of misconduct forms on a student across a range of classes the matter will be referred to the year manager for consideration.

Senior Student Disciplinary Committee

Where the charge is Gross Misconduct, a Senior Student Disciplinary Committee will be convened. The Senior Student Disciplinary Committee is a formal committee normally comprising the relevant Head of Branch, Programme Manager and Accommodation Manager. If appropriate the student support officer will also be present. A note taker (who may be a member of the panel) will formally record the main points and outcome of the meeting.

You will be formally invited to the Senior Student Disciplinary Committee. You should note that if you do not attend a Senior Student Disciplinary Committee meeting without reasonable excuse, the Chair may decide to proceed in your absence.

If you are 18 years of age and over you can be accompanied by either a member of the student community or your parent/guardian as a support person if you so request. The name of the person accompanying you must be notified in advance of the Senior Student Disciplinary Committee.

CAFRE will decide whether your nominated support person is acceptable depending on the past behaviour of that person in their dealings with the college.

If you are under 18 year old, your parents/guardians will automatically be invited.

Sanctions for misconduct

There are a range of penalties which can be imposed depending on the seriousness of your misconduct. Authorised members of staff and the Senior Student Disciplinary Committee may impose penalties for non-gross acts of misconduct apart from suspension or expulsion, which may only be imposed by the Head of Branch. The list below is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

If you are found guilty of misconduct or Gross misconduct you may receive:

- Formal warning (no penalty is imposed but a record of the offence is kept and could be referred to in subsequent disciplinary action)
- Formal warning with conditions (e.g. no penalty is imposed providing stipulated conditions are met regarding your behaviour over a specified period)
- Financial penalties. Full payments towards damages caused. Fines for specific offences e.g. intentional setting off fire alarms.
- Suspension. This involves your total or partial prohibition for a specified length of time from attendance at, or access to the college and of any participation in college or Student Union sponsored activities. It may be subject to provisions such as the entitlement to attend examinations.
- Expulsion means that your registration with the College is cancelled and that you will be withdrawn from their course.

In cases of Gross misconduct where there may be a risk to staff and/or students and/or property, or to the College's reputation, or the College's ability to manage students, the College reserves the right to immediately suspend or exclude you from some or all or parts of the College facilities pending the outcome of investigations.

Where an urgent decision to suspend or exclude is made, you will be given the opportunity to make representations as soon as is reasonably practicable. The decision to suspend or exclude may be communicated verbally in the first instance but will be confirmed to you in writing as soon as practical and ideally within 5 working days. The written confirmation will include details of the reasons for the decision and on the right to appeal.

Appeals

The grounds of appeal against any decision or penalty imposed under this policy are as follows:

1. Significant procedural irregularity
2. New evidence becoming available which was unavailable at the time that the decision or penalty was being considered
3. Disproportionality of penalty applied.

There is one right of appeal, to an independent Head of Branch, and Head of Education Service against a sanction imposed by the Senior Student Discipline Committee. Your appeal must be received within 5 working days of the written notification of the decision to you. Such appeals will only be considered in writing and will not normally require a re-hearing of the issues.

Your appeal must clearly set out the basis for your appeal based on the grounds for appeal as stated above. The decisions relating to your appeal and reasons for the same will be notified in writing to you within 10 working days.

Once the college's appeals procedure has been exhausted you have no further right of appeal as this appeal process meets the requirements of the DAERA complaints process.

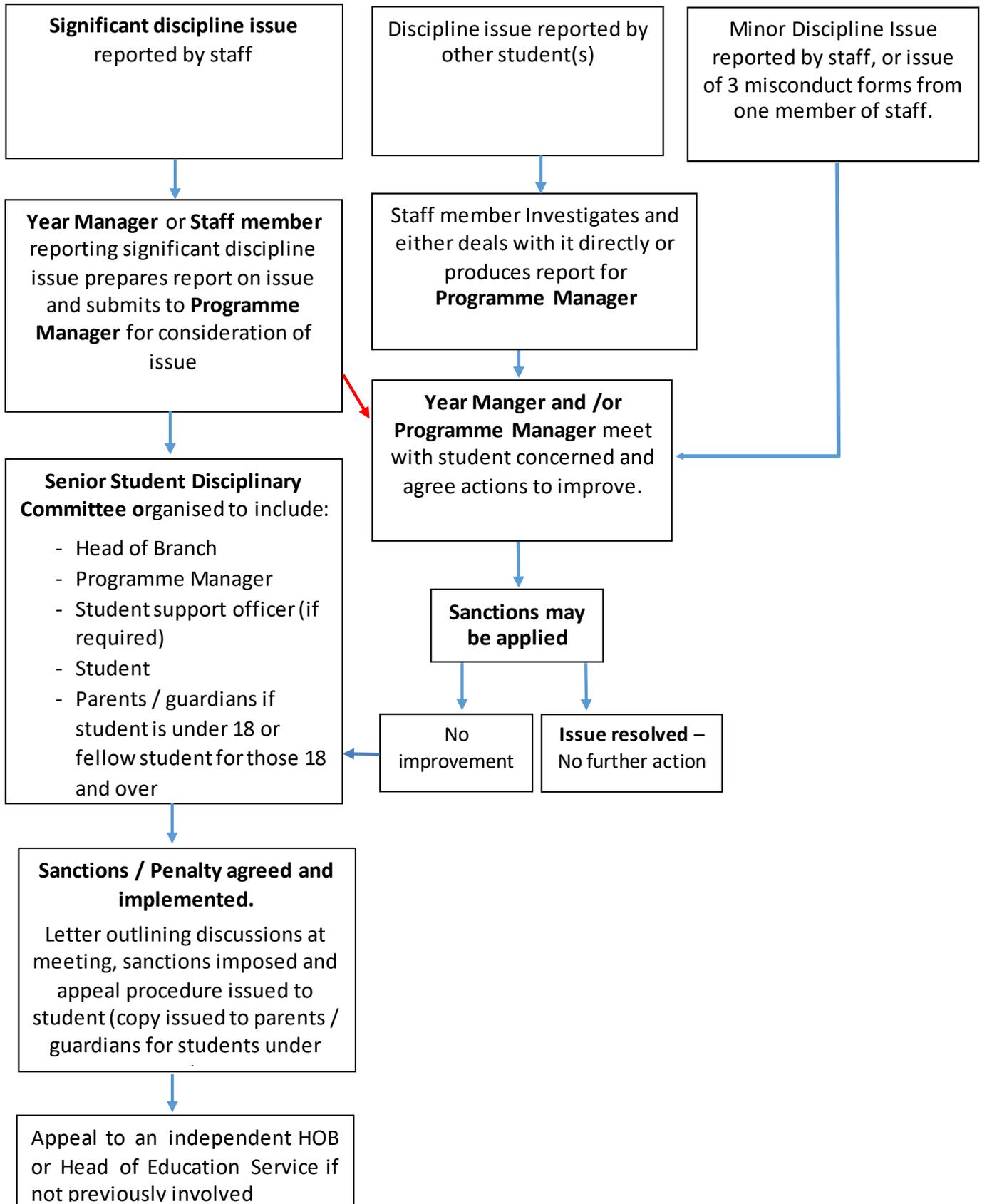
CAFRE disciplinary appeals cannot subsequently be pursued under the DAERA quality of service complaints procedure.

Where there are no valid grounds for appeal you will be notified of this fact within 10 working days of the receipt of notification of your appeal. Appeal decisions may confirm, rescind or amend, the disciplinary decision under consideration.

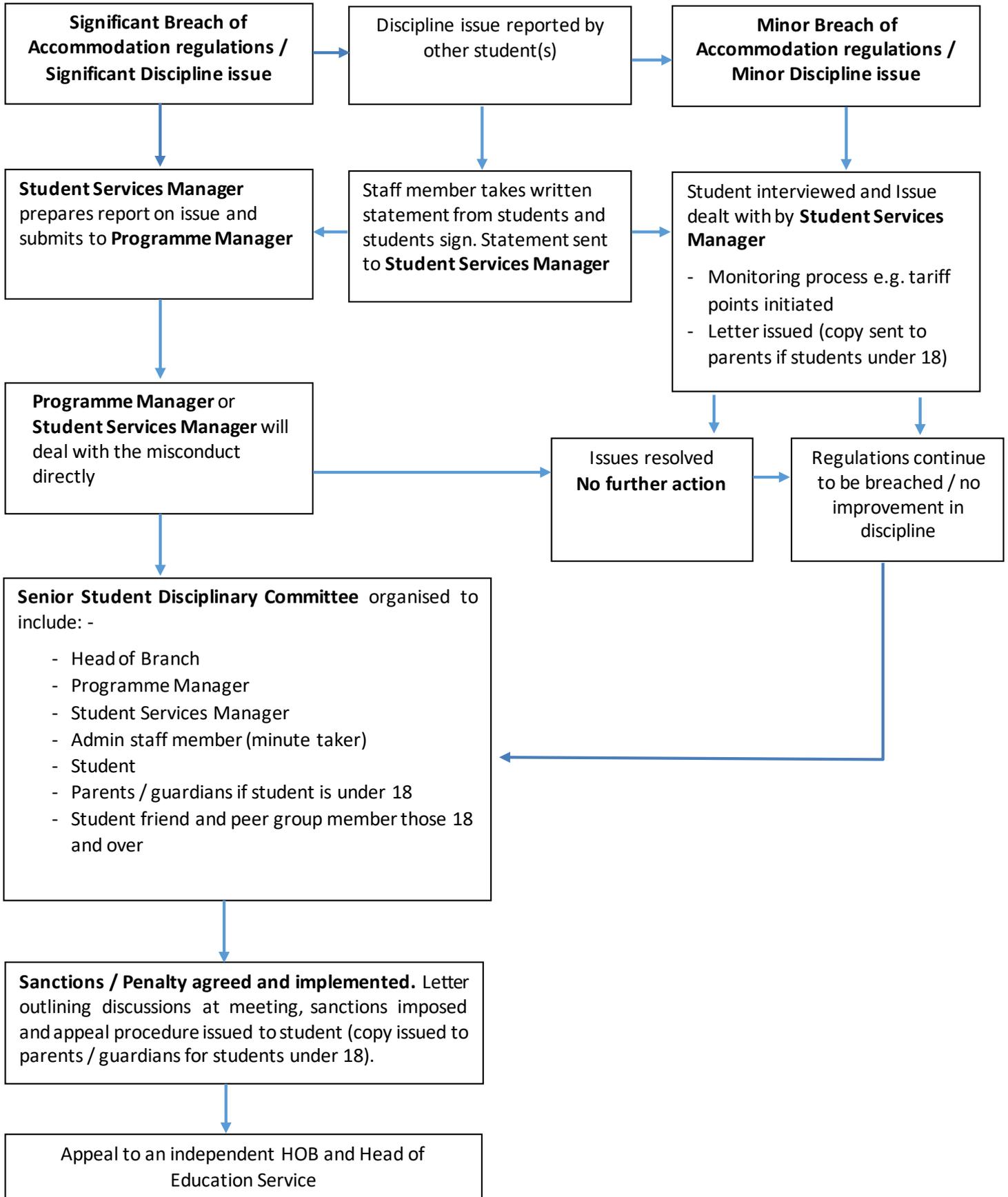
Recording and Filing

Written warnings, confirmation of sanctions and records relating to acts of misconduct will be retained on your file for the period of your course and will be shared with your immediate tutors and programme manager and will be retained in line with our record disposal schedule, following the conclusion of your course.

Appendix 1. Classroom / Practical discipline issue



Appendix 2. Accommodation discipline issue



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6. Fitness to Study Policy

1. CAFRE is committed to supporting and responding to students' needs and to seeking to ensure a positive student experience which provides an enabling environment where students can undertake their studies and engage the wider CAFRE community.
2. The fitness to study policy is much wider in its scope than academic fitness. The college will respond to and manage situations where your fitness to study is a concern e.g. where:
 - a. You are clearly struggling academically and becoming too dependent on academic support;
 - b. You pose a risk to your own health, safety and/or wellbeing and/or that of others;
 - c. Your behaviour is or is at risk of negatively affecting the teaching, learning and/or experience of other students;
 - d. Your behaviour is or is at risk of negatively affecting the day-to-day activities of the college and/or a placement provider.
3. Where it is determined that you are unfit to study, your participation on the programme of study may be suspended or terminated. This applies to all CAFRE provision, regardless of the mode or place of study.
4. In responding to and managing situations where your fitness to study is a concern, CAFRE will remain mindful of its duty of care and of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 including its duty to make reasonable adjustments.
5. In implementing this policy CAFRE will ensure that it offers and encourages you to seek appropriate support as soon as possible, for example by referring you to the appropriate support service such as their GP, Counselling Service or health care professional. In addition, any student being taken through this Procedure will be entitled to be accompanied and/or represented at Fitness to Study review meetings by a staff member, fellow student, parent or guardian, health care professional or disability support worker.

Where you are under the age of 18, or is an adult at risk, your parent/guardian will be notified of any proposed concerns, and invited to accompany you when interviewed.

When implementing this procedure, the college will work with you in a spirit of support and co-operation and will seek to reach a mutually agreeable outcome wherever possible. Each matter will be dealt with on the basis of individual circumstances. Any decision reached about your fitness to study will be made, wherever possible, through an inclusive process involving you and other individuals such as CAFRE staff, health care professionals and Student Support Services as appropriate in the circumstances.

6. The circumstances that may give rise to concerns regarding your fitness to study will vary. Examples may include (but are not limited to) a deterioration in your physical health, marked changes in your appearance/demeanour, development of unreasonable, uncooperative or aggressive behaviours or other behaviours which could reflect a deterioration in your mental or physical health.

7. Any member of staff to whom a concern about a student's fitness to study is reported, or who themselves has a concern, may wish to discuss their concerns with the Student Support Officer. In so doing, they must remain mindful of the confidential and sensitive nature of the matters being discussed. Concerns about a student's health or well-being should be acted on promptly. Early intervention and support can minimise the risk of further deterioration in health and well-being.

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7. Plagiarism and Misrepresentation

This covers both plagiarism and misrepresentation. Plagiarism is copying the work or ideas of others, and passing them off as your own. Plagiarism can occur as a result of:

- Downloading and using material, including pictures straight from the Internet,
- Copying paragraphs or sentences from articles or books or
- Copying the work of colleagues, with or without their knowledge.

Deliberate plagiarism is cheating and will be dealt with as such.

Accidental plagiarism can be avoided by including references to the original source of the material.

Penalties for plagiarism are as follows:

Type of Plagiarism	Penalty
First Offence (minor)	You will be interviewed by the Tutor responsible for the unit/module. You will be given an informal warning. The plagiarised work will not be marked and your marks reduced accordingly.
First Offence (major)	You will be interviewed by the Tutor responsible for the unit/module. You will be given an informal warning and your mark for the assignment containing plagiarism will be reduced to zero.
Second Offence	You will be interviewed by your Programme Manager and given a formal written warning which will be placed on your file. You will be given a mark of zero for the plagiarised assignment.
Third Offence	You will be interviewed by the Student Progress Committee and either <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suspended for 1 semester or 1 year• Asked to leave the college You will be given a mark of zero for the unit/module and this will be recorded on your student file.

If plagiarism is detected after graduation, CAFRE reserves the right to revoke any qualifications awarded. Students enrolled on a QUB programme should in addition refer to the University's rules and regulations found on the website www.qub.ac.uk

Misrepresentation is producing a false or forged document or impersonating someone else. This is a serious offence and anybody found to have carried out this will be reported to the relevant authorities including the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

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8. Student Representation at the College

There are a number of opportunities for you to be represented on College committees to provide feedback on the programme you are studying. In addition you will also have the opportunity to discuss and evaluate your experience either directly with a Course Tutor or anonymously using programme related surveys.

- **Programme and Module Evaluations**

Depending upon the structure of the programme you are undertaking you will be asked to complete module and programme evaluations anonymously. This evaluation is a web-based survey launched in February each year, and the results from it are used in the preparation of key statistics which are published on the CAFRE website. You will also be asked to complete module evaluations for QUB/UU courses taught at the College.

- **Tutor Meetings**

You will have the opportunity to discuss your progress and academic and non-academic issues with your Tutor/Year Manager at least once per semester. These discussions are in total confidence and offer you the opportunity to highlight any concerns you have with your course.

- **Higher Education Course Committee Meetings**

At least two class representatives will be elected to represent your class at the Higher Education Course Committee meetings which comprise the Programme Manager and staff who deliver your programme. This will provide you with the opportunity to feedback on your programme.

- **Staff Student Consultative Committee (SSCC)**

At least two class representatives will be elected to represent your class on the SSCC which provides you with the opportunity to raise concerns related to your academic work. BAFRE and Agricultural Technology students also have representatives who can attend the QUB SSCC to discuss similar matters.

- **Student Representative Council (SRC)**

Your class group will have the opportunity to elect a representative to sit on the SRC which advises on and supports non-academic and pastoral activities at each campus.

- **Library Users Group (LUG)**

Once per semester a student from your class is invited to attend the LUG which provides feedback on the library provision and how it relates to your studies.

- **Education Management Team (EMT)**

There will be four meetings per year at each of the campuses to which HE students representing the relevant sector will be invited. This meeting is attended by the Heads of Education Branches across the College and addresses educational policies which impinge upon your studies.

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9. Fire Emergency Procedures

Briefing instructions explaining the action to be taken in the event of a fire are located throughout the campuses. In residential accommodation instructions are on the back of each bedroom door. It is essential that you read these instructions when you first take up residence.

The key aspects of the fire instructions are as follows:

1. Sound the alarm from the nearest break glass alarm if you discover a fire.
2. A ringing fire alarm means that you must evacuate the building immediately using the nearest safest exit.
3. The fire alarm is a continuous two-tone siren and you should familiarise yourself with this alarm.
4. Failure to evacuate the building when the alarm has sounded is a disciplinary matter.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. On finding anything suspicious you must notify a member of staff immediately.
2. On hearing the Campus Fire Alarm, you must leave the building immediately using the nearest safest available exit. Do not return to the building for personal belongings. Failure to evacuate during a fire alarm may result in disciplinary proceedings.
3. Stay at your assembly point until you receive instructions from a member of staff such as your Tutor or Programme Manager.
4. Fire equipment/alarms **MUST NOT** be tampered with in any way.

Misuse of the fire alarms, appliances and smoke detectors is a criminal offence and if you cause a false alarm or damage to appliances you may be liable to a fine and/or imprisonment in accordance with the law.

Fire equipment may save your life and the lives of your friends. Tampering with fire equipment in any areas of residential accommodation is a serious offence.

5. You **MUST** not use fire doors except during an emergency evacuation. For fire doors to be effective, the automatic closures on them must function properly and you must not interfere with these doors such as blocking them open.
6. Smoke detection systems are fitted in each bedroom and in all communal areas. As these are very sensitive, you should exercise care when using deodorants and hair sprays as this could activate them.

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10. Smoking Regulations

CAFRE operates a **no-smoking** policy throughout all its buildings at all of its campuses in accordance with Health & Safety regulations. This applies to both tobacco based products and E- cigarettes. Specific areas have been designated for smoking at each campus and the location of these will be clearly identified to you during your induction.

Smoking is strictly prohibited during routine practicals, industry visits and while being transported in College vehicles.

Recharging E-Cigarette devices

Some e-cigarettes have been associated with fires when being recharged. Any e-cigarette left unattended when being recharged will be removed, and may be retrieved by request via your Programme Manager.

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11. Residential Students' Regulations

If you are considering applying to stay at the college as a residential student please consult the Residential Students Handbook which fully details the appropriate rules and regulations. As a non-residential student you must also comply with these regulations if you wish to visit classmates/friends in their accommodation. There are specific rules for under and over eighteen year olds studying and/or in residence at CAFRE.

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12. Use of Motor Vehicles Regulations

The following regulations apply to the use of motorcars and motorcycles by students while enrolled at CAFRE.

1. If you wish to bring a vehicle onto the CAFRE estate you must register it with the relevant Administration/Accommodation Manager by the end of the first week of the first semester. You must provide them with the colour, make, model and registration number of your vehicle. Any changes of details must be notified within one week. You are required to have the proper legal documentation to use the registered vehicle on the public road and to present it to the Accommodation Manager if requested. No other motorised vehicles are permitted on campus without the permission of the Accommodation Manager.
2. All registered vehicle users will be issued with a College sticker, which must be displayed on the car windscreen at all times.
3. The use of the vehicle will be the sole responsibility of you or your parents/guardians but CAFRE reserves the right to restrict vehicle access or refuse entry onto the College grounds.
4. You must only use the main campus entrance.
5. You are only permitted to drive your vehicle in the campuses between the main entrance and the designated car parks for students.
6. At Greenmount Campus, you are not permitted to enter the campus via the farmyard entrance. You are not permitted to drive your vehicles around the campus estate (including driving to access the Walled Garden, Manor House and/or Machinery Building Centre) unless granted permission by the Accommodation staff.
7. You must drive carefully in all CAFRE campuses, within the speed limit of 20mph and use proper care and attention at all times. Incidents/accidents occurring on the CAFRE campuses must be reported to the relevant Accommodation Manager immediately.
8. The College will not accept responsibility for the theft of or from the vehicle or damage to the vehicle whilst on the estate.
9. Some College campuses operate barrier systems and where necessary control cards will be issued. If you lose your card you will be charged for a replacement. You **MUST NOT** misuse this card by lending it to others or by permitting unauthorised access.
10. If you are undertaking practical duties at Greenmount Campus at the weekends you may need to ask the Accommodation Manager for a key if available to the main gates. If you lose this key you will be charged £50 as both the gate lock and suite of keys will have to be replaced. Gates must be locked behind you if you leave the campus.
11. You must park in designated student parking areas only. Parking in staff areas is prohibited.

12. No parking is permitted outside Greenmount Campus entrance areas for Health & Safety reasons.
13. When driving within the CAFRE estate you must observe general road safety legislation including observation of STOP and GIVE WAY instructions, pedestrian crossing areas, the use of seat belts and the wearing of safety helmets for motor cyclists. The Accommodation Manager may inform the PSNI of any breaches of road safety legislation.
14. If you do not comply with CAFRE's rules in relation to motor vehicles you will be asked to remove your vehicle from the campus.

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13. Student Bio-Security Protocol

Bio-security is the term used to describe processes and procedures which protect farm animals and crops from disease and minimise the risk of disease spread from farm to farm. It is essential that all students adhere to the bio-security procedures in place at each campus and follow all instructions given to them by staff to stop the possible spread of animal diseases.

There are three farms at Greenmount Campus known as Development Centres. These include the Dairy Development Centre (DDC), Beef and Sheep Development Centre (BSDC), which includes the Abbey Farm and the Hill Farm Development Centre (HFDC). These are separate livestock holdings and should be thought of as three separate farms. Different bio-security procedures are in place at each Centre. Details of these procedures will be covered during induction and are outlined in your specific course handbook.

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