

The Advice Centre Code of Standards

Statement of Intent

The Advice Centre seeks to give relevant, professional and independent advice in an environment that is friendly and approachable. The aim is to enable students to solve their problems with help, but by giving them the confidence and ability to do so themselves. This is done by giving students options on solutions to issues, and allowing them to make their own empowered choices on the best way forward.

The Advice Centre also endeavours to provide students with relevant information that can help them through their time studying at Imperial College London.

A client of the Advice Centre can expect to be:

- Advised confidentially on their case, unless express permission is given to discuss the case with a third party.
- Given independent and impartial advice at all times.
- Assisted with their issue or enquiry at the Union Adviser's earliest opportunity. This may be by arranged appointment or straight away on a drop-in basis.
- Be treated with respect and made to feel at ease at all times, no matter what the enquiry or issue.
- Be given reasonable time to fully explore and explain the enquiry. An appointment will normally last 20 minutes, while a drop in enquiry is normally restricted to 10 minutes. These timings are nominal and can be extended if necessary in more complex cases.
- Be seen promptly and on-time for a prearranged appointment.
- Contacted within 24 hours during weekdays if an enquiry is made to when the Advice Centre is closed or the Union Adviser is absent for any reason.
- Advised and supported honestly and openly.
- Be referred to more specialist organisations if, in the opinion of the Union Adviser, this service is needed or would be of benefit. These organisations will be vetted and investigated for appropriateness before this happens. They are also published on the Imperial College Union website and listed in appendix 1.
- Updated on the developments in their case as soon as possible by the Union Adviser and also sent any correspondence which is received by the Union Adviser on their behalf.

What the Advice Centre expects of its clients:

- Honesty throughout interview, giving a full and accurate account of the issue.
- To arrive promptly and on time for an appointment.
- To treat the Union Adviser and reception staff with respect, in conjunction with Imperial College Union's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- To bring any documentation related to the enquiry to any appointment.
- To inform the Union Adviser if other agencies are being consulted in parallel to an enquiry at the Advice Centre—College support services or external welfare agencies, for example.

Conflict of interest

The Advice Centre will not be able to advise both parties where there is a dispute between them; in this case, the Union Adviser will only be able to advocate on behalf of the client who approaches the Advice Centre first.

If a complaint is received against any part of Imperial College Union, this will be referred to the Union President and dealt with accordingly from there.

Equal Opportunities

The Advice Centre is committed to equal opportunities, and its staff are bound by the Imperial College Union Equal Opportunities Policy. The Advice Centre endeavours to promote this policy to its clients, and also to seek out non-adherence.

Feedback

The Advice Centre actively encourages the provision of feedback to gauge the effectiveness of the service provided. This includes feedback on the effectiveness of publicity and events organized by the Advice Centre.

This should be given through the Union's website on the following page:

<http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/information-and-advice/student-adviser/>

The Advice Centre will respond to every feedback enquiry received in a fair and responsive manner, and aims to answer any queries or deal with any complaints in a confidential manner as quickly as possible.

Appendix 1 – Referral agencies

Internal

Student Counseling Service
Imperial College Careers Service
Student Hub
Disability Advisory Service
College Tutors
The Health Centre
Student Accommodation centre
International Office

External

Citizens Advice Bureau
Nucleus Legal Advice Centre
Victim Support
The Havens (Sexual Assault Clinic)
Gills Solicitors
Shelter