

ASK Code of Practice



Advice & Support at Keele (ASK) provides advice, information and representation to all students¹ and staff at Keele University.

What can you expect from ASK?

Advice, information and representation.

Access to ASK

Pre-booked Appointments:

Monday 10:00 - 12:00
Tuesday 10:00 - 12:00
Thursday 10:00 - 12:00
Friday 10:00 - 12:00

Drop in:

Monday 13:00 - 16:00
Tuesday 13:00 - 16:00
Wednesday 13:00 - 16:00 (13:00 - 19:00 term time)
Friday 13:00 - 16:00

Advice face-to-face, via email, letter, Live Chat or telephone.

A reception area stocked with a range of useful, up to date literature, relevant to the student population.

A useful, informative and easy to navigate website.

Free, independent, confidential, impartial, accurate and up to date advice.

¹The term 'student' means prospective and current students. If you have recently left the University, ASK would normally seek to refer you to appropriate agencies. However, 'recently' does allow ASK some flexibility, as it *may* be appropriate for ASK to continue to offer some assistance; please see our 'Withdrawal of Service' policy.

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Staff in ASK to work to national codes of practice and agreed up to date policies such as a: Confidentiality Policy, Complaints Procedure, Equal Opportunities, Withdrawal of Service, Gift Policy.

Initial advice or signposting at the first advice session. Advice will be as complete as possible at this stage. There may be follow up work that the ASK Adviser suggests you should carry out, or the ASK Adviser agrees to undertake work on your behalf.

To be advised of your rights and responsibilities and options available to you, based on the information you supply.

You can expect to be offered the same service regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

To be allowed access to ASK and its services. See also Withdrawal of Service Policy.

To be informed of a conflict of interests, or a potential conflict of interests. See Confidentiality Policy and separate leaflet about conflict of interests.

To be made aware when confidentiality may be breached. See Confidentiality Policy.

To keep accurate, up to date records of client contact and casework undertaken.

You can expect to receive timely updates about the progress of your case². Your file will remain the property of ASK; you are welcome to read to at any time and to request a copy for your records should you need it.

To respect a request to remain anonymous. We will treat information given in confidence (subject to the current Confidentiality Policy). If you wish to remain anonymous, we will do what we can to accommodate this. This will

² This will either be by telephone, in person, via email or where ASK is taking (legal) proceedings on your behalf we will confirm what we are doing for you in writing.

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obviously constrain any advice, representation or negotiation work we will be able to undertake on your behalf.

To brief the elected officers. To provide (anonymous) evidence sheets documenting issues or trends adversely affecting the student population, to be used to lobby the University or other external organisations.

Not to identify you as a service user. This means that we will **not** speak to you out of the office, unless **you** acknowledge us first.

ASK will not advise clients to use fraudulent or unscrupulous means to achieve their aims. See also our Confidentiality Policy. ASK aims to achieve the best outcome for you, though advice is tailored to your circumstances.

ASK will not advise student landlords on housing/tenancy related issues, whether they are renting to students or to the private sector, unless it is in the *tenants'* interests to do so.

What we expect from you:

To keep appointments and arrive on time. If you arrive more than 10 minutes after your appointment time, you will be asked to make another appointment or return during drop in times.

To give us accurate information and keep us informed of any developments. Be honest with us. See Confidentiality Policy.

To carry out any action agreed with the ASK Adviser.

Not to expect ASK Advisers to advise you out of hours. Please don't knock on the door outside opening hours, please see '*What are we doing when we are closed?*'

Not to expect the ASK Adviser to discuss the particulars of a case other than your own.

ASK offers its services to staff, however ASK retains the right to refuse to do so, or, to cease advising a member of staff if it is to the detriment of a

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student, or it may prevent a student using the service due to *potential* conflict of interest. Please also see ASK's Confidentiality Policy.

Members of university staff are requested to source advice relating to employment / university matters elsewhere (e.g. Citizens Advice, Union representatives, solicitors, ASK Legal Surgery etc.).

KeeleSU staff are requested to seek employment advice from alternative sources (e.g. Citizens Advice, Union representatives, solicitors, ASK Legal Surgery etc.).

Where alternative sources of assistance are necessary or recommended, ASK will assist in finding appropriate agencies.

What we would like you to do:

Let us know, if you can, the outcome of your case.

Offer any suggestions of ways we can improve our service. Please use the feedback survey at www.keelesu.com/advice/asksurvey.

Let us know if you are pleased with the service. See our Gift Policy.

Use the Complaints Procedure if you are dissatisfied with the service you received.

Complete client surveys, carried out from time to time.

Thank you for using Advice and Support at Keele.