

Student Charter 2016/17

For all undergraduate
and taught
postgraduate students,
including those who
study off campus



Student Charter

Our mission is to be the UK's leading university for business and the professions, where original research, enterprise, and inspiring teaching deliver global impact.

Together we are building an international reputation as the source of the people and the ideas that will shape the businesses and communities of tomorrow.

Our outstanding graduate employability; commitment to sustainability and global citizenship; international and multi-cultural student body; compact city-centre campus; warmth and friendliness, make Aston a unique and very special place to study.

Partnership

This Student Charter, developed by the University and the Students' Union, spells out our commitment to your education and experience at Aston and our expectations of you both as a student and as a member of the Aston University community.

We aim to help you become an outstanding professional and a responsible global citizen. The University and the Students' Union will work in partnership with you so that you enjoy the highest quality educational experience.

We hope you will work with us to be successful and enjoy your time at Aston.



Professor Alec Cameron
Vice-Chancellor



Ahmed Hassan
Students' Union President
2016/2017

01 Our partnership aims to deliver:

Quality learning	Employability and entrepreneurship	Global citizenship	A great student experience
Independent critical thinkers developed through high-calibre teaching and excellent learning environments within the framework of research informed, professionally focused courses	Sought-after graduates – world leading employability combined with confidence, drive and passion in our graduates	An innovative, international and ethical outlook – developing global citizens and improving the integration of sustainability and social responsibility by embedding such activities into all aspects of University life	An inspirational and supportive experience – fostering high student satisfaction; enabling you to excel academically and to thrive at Aston and beyond



02 You can expect the University to:

Quality learning	Employability and entrepreneurship	Global citizenship	A great student experience
<p>Draw on Aston's cutting-edge research, and our professional expertise to deliver exciting and inspiring learning experiences</p> <p>Provide teaching staff who take advantage of active support from the University to develop and enhance their teaching skills</p> <p>Through My Aston Portal (MAP) provide you with details of learning and assessment, contact hours, exam arrangements, academic guidance and support, signposting to recommended reading, and professional requirements (if appropriate)</p> <p>Offer access to a wide range of learning materials, including recording of lectures where appropriate to complement the learning experience; Library resources; and relevant IT facilities</p> <p>Provide a clear up-to-date timetable for teaching and assessment and as much notice as possible of any unavoidable timetable/session changes</p> <p>Provide clear assessment criteria and meaningful feedback - normally within four working weeks</p> <p>Offer support via your tutors throughout your studies, including during any placement</p> <p>Support and embed student involvement in developing and managing our programmes</p> <p>Be active partners, with student representation in School and University level committees which will influence strategic decisions and will shape the academic programmes</p>	<p>Enhance your employability skills by preparing you for life beyond Aston</p> <p>Enable undergraduates to take a placement year as part of their course and/or provide opportunities for integrated workplace learning within a professional degree programme</p> <p>Support your search for employment or further study with advice and information on careers, qualifications, courses, enterprise and entrepreneurship</p> <p>Provide access to vacancies, advice on application procedures and training for job seeking skills, including support after you graduate</p> <p>Foster and encourage entrepreneurship, social responsibility and intercultural awareness</p> <p>Secure appropriate professional accreditation for our programmes</p>	<p>Create an environment which encourages personal development, free speech, mutual understanding and academic freedom</p> <p>Show respect, courtesy and professionalism to all</p> <p>Provide equality of treatment for all regardless of gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief</p> <p>Offer opportunities for you to develop their cultural intelligence through inter-cultural activities and language learning*</p> <p>Offer you foreign language tuition including free foreign language tuition to eligible first year undergraduates and free English language tuition for international students *</p> <p>Support undergraduates in finding a placement year abroad</p> <p>Encourage and support your participation in elections for student representatives</p>	<p>Provide high quality, safe facilities for studying and socialising*</p> <p>Respect your right to appropriate and effective study, social and living space*</p> <p>Offer clear information about course costs, payment options, payment deadlines and an estimate of any additional costs (if required)</p> <p>Give friendly, professional and helpful support with your studies and any personal, financial or welfare issues</p> <p>Resolve problems through open and transparent communication, informally wherever possible</p> <p>Provide you with a computer account giving access to email, My Aston Portal (MAP), the virtual learning environment, an e-portfolio and other IT facilities</p> <p>Inform you of, and consult with you on, important University plans and proposals</p> <p>Provide clear information about procedures relating to complaints, appeals and disciplinary matters</p> <p>Value and act on the comments you give relating to your experience and use such feedback to make improvements</p> <p>Provide you with feedback about changes that student comments have directly influenced</p>

* Where feasible; for example this may not be relevant to students who are distance learners, on some sponsored programmes or to those studying at partner institutions

03 We expect you to:

Quality learning	Employability and entrepreneurship	Global citizenship	A great student experience
<p>Engage proactively and ethically in all aspects of the learning process, attend and participate in contact time such as classes, group and laboratory work and regularly spend sufficient time in private study, or engage online*</p> <p>Take responsibility for submitting assessments on time and use feedback to enhance your learning</p> <p>Take the initiative to keep in contact with your tutor, including during any placement, and seek advice when you need it</p> <p>Use the Aston email and MAP systems regularly to keep yourself and us informed</p> <p>Inform your tutor or School Office as soon as possible of anything which might affect your studies such as absence and obtain advance agreement for any expected essential absence*</p> <p>Seek help quickly - from your School Office, the Hub or the Students' Union's Advice & Representation Centre - if you encounter difficulties</p> <p>Take appropriate steps to familiarise yourself with processes, regulations and codes of conduct</p>	<p>Take advantage of paid and unpaid, short-term and one-year placement opportunities relevant to your course*</p> <p>Engage with Careers+Placements and participate in employability activities relevant to your programme and/or related to your career aspirations and interests</p> <p>Seek contacts and opportunities with people and organisations, including the Aston alumni network, that might help your employability and global citizenship</p> <p>Utilise opportunities available from relevant organisations, such as professional bodies and learned societies, to broaden your skills and experience</p> <p>Comply with the requirements of the professional bodies appropriate to your degree, including standards of conduct and behaviour and fitness to practise</p> <p>Engage with relevant student peer mentoring opportunities</p> <p>Undertake extra-curricular activities that enhance your skill set such as participating in Students' Union sports clubs and societies and/or through volunteering, work experience and fundraising*</p> <p>Log on to Aston Futures, the Careers+Placements online system, to set up a profile, so you can access placement, vacation and graduates roles, in the UK and overseas and to view and sign up for Careers+Placements and employer events</p>	<p>Create and take opportunities to work with and learn from people with different cultures</p> <p>Treat everyone equally regardless of gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief</p> <p>Develop your awareness of the perspectives and needs of others and your skills in working successfully with them</p> <p>Show respect, courtesy and professionalism to all other members of Aston University and the wider community in all interactions, including those via social media</p> <p>Develop critical awareness and respect the world around you</p> <p>Protect the physical environment by active participation in recycling schemes and other environment-friendly initiatives, such as Aston's Carbon Week*</p> <p>Take opportunities to engage with, and develop awareness of, sustainability issues</p> <p>Support the University in delivering its services by ensuring timely payment of your tuition fees and other charges</p>	<p>Take part in induction, including International Orientation and Welcome Week *</p> <p>Take advantage of sporting, cultural, community and social activities*</p> <p>Ask for help to resolve issues affecting your experience at Aston</p> <p>Give feedback on your experience when requested, including completing national and University surveys and questionnaires</p> <p>Consider volunteering to become a student representative on University or School committees</p> <p>Support your student representatives and actively communicate with them</p> <p>Engage with the Students' Union Council*</p>

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04 You can expect the Students' Union to:

Quality learning	Employability and entrepreneurship	Global citizenship	A great student experience
<p>Inform you of University plans and proposals with which the Students' Union is involved</p> <p>Represent the views of the student community to the University and the locality</p> <p>Advise you on any issues you may have with the University, and on following procedures and regulations</p> <p>Represent you at reconvened exam boards, academic appeals and disciplinary hearings</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for personal development through clubs and societies, volunteering, work experience and fundraising*</p> <p>Allocate available funding or sponsorship for clubs and societies that will encourage student involvement</p> <p>Support student proposals that positively benefit the larger student body</p> <p>Host or support careers events, creating face to face contact with placement and graduate employers</p>	<p>Support societies that provide opportunities for inter-cultural development</p> <p>Host or support events aimed at building inter-cultural understanding</p> <p>Support active student community engagement</p> <p>Develop networks with other Students' Unions in order to create increased opportunities for knowledge sharing</p> <p>Promote the annual One World Week, a celebration of Aston's multicultural community</p>	<p>Ensure you receive equal treatment and are aware of your rights and responsibilities</p> <p>Encourage you to join student societies*</p> <p>Promote wellbeing including through sport, exercise and social opportunities*</p> <p>Support student participation by encouraging you to take part in their elections and decision making</p> <p>Develop and train course representatives and Students' Union Councillors</p> <p>Provide confidential advice on academic, financial and personal matters</p> <p>Invite you to give comments on your experiences and use student feedback to create improvements</p> <p>Campaign actively for constructive development of the student experience</p>



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Please Note



The Student Charter is a summary of the aspirations and expectations of the University, its Students' Union and its students. It is not intended to be a legally-binding document and it does not set out to define or limit the legal obligations and/or rights of the University, its Students' Union or its students

Full details of the legal obligations and/or rights are set out in other documents including all regulations, policies, programme regulations, codes of practice, student handbooks and procedures issued by the University, as well as the University's Royal Charter and Statutes. Rights and obligations regarding the Students' Union are set out in the Bye-Laws of Aston Students' Union

The University has a statutory duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that the Students' Union operates in a fair and democratic manner and is held accountable for its finances and the Students' Union works alongside the University to ensure that its affairs are properly conducted, that the educational and welfare needs of

members of the Students' Union are met and that it complies with all law and particularly charity law. A legally binding memorandum of understanding between the University and the Students' Union documents these arrangements and the compliance requirements of the University and the Students' Union.

For more information about any aspect of your student experience see 'Supporting you' and 'Quick links' at [www.aston.ac.uk/current-students](http://www aston.ac.uk/current-students) or email comments to: registry_feedback@aston.ac.uk

Annual Review

The Student Charter is reviewed annually for the forthcoming academic year. Last reviewed in June 2016



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If you would like to make
any comments or
suggestions on the Charter,
please email
studentcharter@aston.ac.uk



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astonuniversity

Aston University is
committed to operating in
full compliance with all
applicable laws, regulations
and guidance.

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