Academic Guidance

The Further and Higher Education Charter for Scotland (1993) sets out a framework of standards that students, employers and the wider community should be able to expect from colleges and higher education institutions. It covers access for students, information about courses, and guidance and counselling - both in relation to their studies and to careers and further study.

Higher education institutions have arrangements to advise students on courses and to deal with their difficulties, including personal and emotional issues that impact on academic work and enjoyment of university life. The exact form of these differs according to the institution and often the faculty/school within the institution.

The university tradition in Scotland was for students to start their course with a more general range of subjects and to proceed to specialised studies. They could thus delay their decisions about specialisation or change initial intentions. Such decision making was supported by a member of university staff in a pastoral role, such as Director of Studies or a similar title. However, some institutions are now offering courses which do not conform to this structure.

All colleges are signatories to the agreement among higher education institutions concerning credit accumulation and transfer. This is because they offer higher education courses at Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma levels. Students taking these courses receive information about possible transfer to a higher education institution for further study.

Psychological Counselling

Students in higher education institutions can access individual psychological support as part of the institution’s general counselling and advisory services. These services may provide particular types of psychological support such as self-help materials, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, and Assertiveness Training Courses.

Career Guidance

Higher education institutions have relationships with industry, commerce and the professions on several different levels. The directors of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) meet regularly with the Scottish Government to co-ordinate planning and share information over a range of learning and training issues. SFC is also actively engaged in the National Scottish Stakeholders Group and informs higher education institutions about industry issues through this involvement.

Higher education institutions provide courses (for example in management), tailored to the needs of particular types of business. They have contacts with firms to help students to obtain placements.
when that is a requirement of their course. Higher education institution staff carry out work for firms as consultants or on secondments. The higher education institution careers services have close contacts with the major employers of graduates.

**Legislative references**