

# **EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE: CONFIDENTIALITY PROTOCOL**

## Related policies and supporting protocols

- 1 This protocol should be read in conjunction with the related Employability Service policy and protocols and The University of Law Privacy Policy.

## Definitions

- 2 **Accepted students** Students who have accepted their place at The University of Law to study a postgraduate course and paid their deposit. Undergraduate students are considered 'Accepted students', for the purposes of the Employability Service, from mid-August (Post-UCAS results release date) until they start their course.
  - 3 **Clients** Members of the public making use of the Pro Bono services offered by The University of Law and provided through the Employability Service.
  - 4 **Employability Service** The Employability Service refers to the combined Careers and Pro Bono departments, as well as the resources and materials the Services makes available online.
  - 5 **External Organisations** Organisations with which placements, shadowing and other opportunities are arranged.
  - 6 **Recruiters** Employers and recruiters seeking to promote vacancy opportunities and/or raise their profile with students via the Employability Service.
  - 7 **Users** Anyone making use of any aspect of the service – whether as a student, client or member of the public.
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## Introduction

8 The Employability Confidentiality Protocol of The University of Law (the University) has been informed by the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education, specifically the Advice and Guidance for Enabling Student Achievement, as well as relevant professional standards for Careers (Matrix and AGCAS) and Pro Bono (eg the SRA Code of Conduct for practicing solicitors). The QAA's Quality Code is the definitive reference point for all UK higher education institutions and sets out how academic standards are established and maintained and how the quality of learning opportunities are assured and enhanced. This policy sits within the University's Quality and Standards Code which provides a suite of policies designed to safeguard the academic standards of the University and to assure the quality of learning opportunities offered; this policy should therefore be read in conjunction with other relevant policies within the Code.

## Responsibility for implementing this protocol

9 Ultimate responsibility for the development of clear and effective processes and procedures associated with the quality assurance and maintenance of standards of academic provision and overseeing their application lies with the Academic Board.

## Scope of this protocol

10 This protocol covers the Employability Service's professional and legal responsibility to ensure the confidentiality of information provided by students and accepted students. However, the professional standards, to which members of the service adhere, mean that the commitment to confidentiality extends to all users of the service.

11 In addition, those who work with the service, such as external organisations, have a duty of confidentiality towards students as do student volunteers towards clients and external organisations. These obligations are detailed in the documentation accompanying the specific schemes; they are beyond the scope of this protocol but are informed by it.

12 Where external systems, such as the Employability Portal, are used reasonable checks will be undertaken to ensure they meet current requirements in relation to data protection and confidentiality. However, these systems will be governed by their own privacy policies.

## Employability Service: Confidentiality Protocol

13 The Employability Service takes the confidentiality of the information provided by users of the Employability Service very seriously and has a professional and legal duty to do so. This protocol outlines how, within the Service, this information is handled by each department (Careers and Pro Bono) and the circumstances in which

the Employability Service does and does not share this information with others.

### Careers

14 During the course of working with students, members of the Careers department are likely to be provided with detailed information by users of the service:

14.1 in all cases, personal information is kept confidential and is not shared with anyone outside the Employability Service (except in very specific circumstances detailed below). In order to provide the high level of service expected, it may be necessary to share information with other Careers Consultants, for example to ensure consistency of advice or seek further opinion. If students wish to keep the information they provide private, they must inform the Careers Consultant at the time the information is given;

14.2 in order to maintain the confidentiality of students, Careers interviews are held in private, unless the consent of the student is given;

14.3 notes of careers advice interviews are stored electronically, and are only accessible by members of the Employability Service. Students may request to see a copy of their notes at any time;

14.4 the Careers department may collect applications or undertake other work on behalf of organisations who wish to recruit through the department. In these circumstances:

14.4.1 this would be explained in any advertisement;

14.4.2 by sending the application to the Employability Service, students are agreeing to their application being read by members of the service, and passed to the recruiter.

### Pro Bono

15 The Pro Bono department works to provide opportunities for students to gain practical experience of the law, and students are free to talk to a member of the Pro Bono department about the opportunities available. Except in specific circumstances, information provided to a member of the Pro Bono department is kept confidential.

16 It may be necessary to share this information with other members of the Pro Bono department in order to provide the level of service students require. If a student does not want this information shared they must make it clear at the time.

17 Where opportunities occur with external organisations, by accepting a place students agree for certain information such as contact details to be passed to the organiser and any other member of staff at the external organisation who may have need to use this information in order to manage the opportunity.

18 There are certain circumstances where information may be passed to others without a student's agreement:

- 18.1 if a student fails to meet the standards reasonably expected, such as repeatedly failing to attend events for which they have signed up, the matter may be referred to their personal tutor or another appropriate member of University staff;
- 18.2 if the Employability Service believes significant harm may come to the student or there may be a significant risk of harm to others.

### Use of University data by the Employability Service

19 The Employability Service may use information students have provided to the University to undertake research and analysis in order to target resources and improve the services provided. All data is handled in accordance with the University's Privacy Policy.

20 In order to ensure that the above principles are upheld, the University issues guidance to all staff covering Confidentiality and Data Protection.

### Version history:

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
V1.0	Learning Support Officer	Initial drafting	24/07/13
V1.1	Head of Careers Service	QA review	30/07/13
V1.2	External Consultant	Coherence activity amendments	28/08/13
V1.3	VP – AGQS	Review	23/09/13
V1.4	Academic Registrar	Review	24/09/13
V1.5	Academic Board	Approval	03/10/13
V1.6	VP-AGQS	Sign-Off	19/12/13
V2.0	Head of Employability	Full Review	05/10/15
V2.1	Head of Employability	Full Review	13/1/20

V2.2	Registry Officer	Change to coding convention	23/03/20
V2.3	Senior Quality Officer	Further naming convention clarifications	26/03/20