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## Student Support Policy

### 1. Policy Overview

This policy aims to outline how the College will support and care for students' academic, pastoral, and general needs during their studies at the College.

### 2. Policy Statement

The College aims to comply with QQI requirements<sup>1</sup> as a provider that teaches an entirely international student cohort as follows:

- Providers shall offer orientation information before students' arrival (e.g., transport and accommodation services).
- Providers shall ensure that inductions offered to students also meet the particular needs of international students (including intercultural awareness).
- The induction programme shall be provided to all cohorts of international students that register or enrol at various times of the year, including students that access programmes through advanced entry.
- Providers shall provide information on all integration opportunities available to international students and encourage students to avail themselves of those opportunities.
- Providers shall ensure that international students are aware of opportunities to participate in, and be represented at, engagements between the provider and the student body.
- Providers shall have mechanisms in place to support international students financially in instances of personal or other emergency or hardship.

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<sup>1</sup> Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners (2015), section 3.4



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- Providers shall facilitate and encourage feedback from international students on the delivery of any supports and services. This includes informing students about complaints processes for these services.

The College believes that student care and not just support is an integral part of the student experience. It wants to provide students with academic and non-academic services to support the development of their knowledge, skills, and academic progression but in a way that never loses sight of the need to treat them as people first and students second. The College wants students to feel like the staff have their best personal interests at heart by making sure they have the information they need pre-arrival, that they can settle in quickly and easily to their accommodation, that they can succeed in their studies from participating in a style of learning that empowers them academically, and that they are provided with the necessary pastoral, mental health, medical and other supports that they may need to deliver to avail to experience an exceptional study abroad experience. This is especially important for international students whose visit to study in Ireland may be their first time that they will have left their family home, not to talk of leaving their home country. All staff must be sensitive to the needs of students in this context.

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are asked to support the pastoral ethos of the College, bringing together College services and teaching in a structured and coordinated way for the benefit of the students in its care and ensuring a positive learning experience for all. The Academic Director is responsible for ensuring that policies are developed and maintained, that they remain fit for purpose, that they remain in compliance with QQI guidelines, that they are updated as per agreed schedules, and that they are being implemented as intended. In the latter context, the Academic Director will inspect a sample of policies each year to check for the correct implementation and bring the findings to AC as part of the annual QA/QQI review and reporting process.



#### 4. Policy

This policy is split into what the College offers students before they arrive in Ireland, what it offers while they are studying at the College and what it offers them after they leave.

##### **Pre-Arrival**

The College recruits students worldwide but especially from Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Before students arrive in Ireland, they will be provided with information via the website (see UPOL026 UniHaven Communications Policy Rev 1) and via the Recruitment and Admissions Officer who manages admissions and enrolments under UPOL007 UniHaven Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy Rev 2 concerning:

- The College as a provider and the benefits of studying with the College.
- The pathway programmes so that students know what pathway stream modules they will be studying including the College teaching approaches.
- As per QQI requirements, Protection of Enrolled Students (PEL) and Medical Insurance policies will be put in place for all students on an individual basis...see UPOL002 UniHaven Learner Protection Policy Rev 1.
- Fees and refund policies relevant to UniHaven programmes...see UPOL008 UniHaven Fees and Refund Policy Rev 1.
- The Higher Education Institution (HEI) partner that the students will progress to once they complete the programme including the range of degree programmes that they may enter, the grades they must attain to meet the HEI partner's entry criteria, career progression post-degree, relevant visa requirements and what is expected of them as Irish HEI student generally.
- Ireland as a country but in particular travel to get here, visa and inoculation requirements, the national culture, transport, accommodation options, food/meal options, services specific to the College location and so on.
- The College application, enrolment, and admissions requirements such that they know what information they must provide for the College to be able to admit them to the programmes.



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- Guardian nominee requirements for students aged 17 or younger, i.e., minors, must be in place pre-enrolment and until the student reaches the age of 18. The College will nominate a third-party guardian nominee company to provide a guardian nominee service to minors on the College's behalf, but the students' families/parents will enter a direct contract with this company – they will not sign a contract for such services with the College.
  - Banking such that students can open a bank account as soon as possible after arrival for lodging cash, paying deposits etc.
  - UDOC002 UniHaven Student Handbook Rev 2 and the Pre-Arrival information on the College website outline the above information in detail.



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## While Studying with UniHaven

There are several areas in which the College will support students while they study in Ireland to include:

- On Arrival.
- Induction and Registration.
- Student Charter.
- Teaching and Learning.
- Academic Support.
- Student Facilities.
- Information Technology and Computer Services.
- Student Representation.
- Student Interaction.
- Student Attendance.
- Students with Disabilities.
- Students who are Minors/Children.
- Academic Misconduct Prevention.
- Student Complaints and Grievances.
- Student Discipline.
- Student Data.
- Social Programmes.
- Pastoral Care.
- Student Retention.

### On Arrival

As students arrive in Ireland, the College will ask them for their flight and travel details and, where necessary, help to arrange travel or transport on their behalf. Similarly, for accommodation, the College offer to help arrange students to first transition into their accommodation provider – homestay, corporate accommodation or other – such that when



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they first arrive at their destination in Ireland, the College will make sure that they seamlessly access their provider and get settled in as soon as possible. All providers will have been carefully selected and vetted, including Garda vetting. Minor students will also be introduced to their guardian nominee company which they will have been in contact with pre-arrival also. Further pre-arrival information can be found in the UDOC002 UniHaven Student Handbook Rev 2.

### Induction and Registration

Once semester 1 starts, students will go through a formal registration and induction week where they will be informed about all aspects of the study and student support in the College. Students will have information sessions during their induction on how they can access and use the technology learning tools at the College and the necessary hardware and software required as part of their general briefing about how teaching and learning will be run in the College. They will also be given information on the campus, its facilities, the local area regarding safety, amenities and so on. UPRO002 UniHaven Student Registration and Induction Procedure Rev 1 goes through these processes in more detail.

### Student Charter

The Student Charter details the level of service the College endeavours to provide to students from the start of their application process, through to life studying at the College including the academic, social, and cultural environments. The College seeks to foster a collaborative approach working together to achieve an inclusive learning environment and response to the diverse needs of students. UDOC008 UniHaven Student Charter Rev 1 helps students to understand the expectations the College has of them as students regarding their academic and general behaviours in describing the two-way relationship that exists between them and the College. This information is also provided in UDOC002 UniHaven Student Handbook Rev 2.



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## Teaching and Learning

Staff are actively engaged in supporting students throughout their programme of study. UPOL013 UniHaven Teaching and Learning Policy Rev 1 outlines the approach to inclusive and supportive teaching and learning and UPOL014 UniHaven Blended Learning Policy Rev 1 addresses the remote and online learning aspects. Blended learning refers to teaching, learning and assessments for programmes with an online delivery component and is designed to preserve and enhance the academic standards associated with the programme. Online learning will be facilitated through the use of the learning management system (LMS), Office 365 and other appropriate technologies that support learning that takes place through the use of both in-class and online formats.

All students will be aware of the workload associated with the modules that need to be completed in terms of total learning hours and the degree to which they will be taught in class versus online before their study starts as described in UDOC001 UniHaven Programme Handbook Rev 2. Should students have any issues with the learning methodologies or any other aspects of teaching and learning in the college, they are encouraged to speak with their Teacher or Programme Manager. All such information will also be provided at student induction.

## Academic Support

The College will provide additional tutor hours, tutorials and 1:1 tutor support as necessary to help students to succeed in the programme and to progress to the College's HEI partners. Formative assessment will be accompanied by timely Teacher feedback to students to help them to understand how they are progressing academically and what actions are needed for improvement. Students are actively encouraged to provide feedback through the different fora available to them as described in later sections of this policy.



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### Student Facilities

Student facilities will include a student common room, kitchen facilities, a room with IT/laptop access and a library. The College will also secure access to students for one or more of the HEI partners' online library facilities. For more details, see the College website.

### Information Technology and Computer Service

Students will have full access to the LMS, Office365 and all relevant IT infrastructure to support their learning, whether in-class or remote/online and will receive guidance and training on these systems during induction.

### Student Representation

A Student Representative is a student chosen for each programme pathway stream to facilitate interaction between staff and students regarding programme-related matters and student-support-related matters. Initially, there will be one student representative per programme but as class numbers increase, a student representative will be selected for each pathway stream. Essentially, the student representative is the point of contact for a particular programme or class/module on behalf of peer students. Two student representatives nominated from the student stream/class representative group will sit on each Academic Council and Programme Board.

### Student Interaction

Separate from the student representative approach, the College will gain feedback from students through informal week-to-week discussions with Teachers, Programme Manager etc. and engagement surveys. Surveys will be generated each semester to find out more about the student's experience at the College in the following areas:





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- Academic survey: feedback on teaching methods, modules and content, assessments, and homework, including the blended learning and technology aspects.
  - Student Life: looking for an insight into students' opinions on College facilities, student support services and social programme activities, as well as local services and amenities.

An overall experience survey will be conducted at the end of the programme to enable students to give feedback and recommendations based on their overall experience and to allow for any change in their experience from the start of their programme through to their exit. Such surveys will be refined on an ongoing basis but samples of the types of questions that may be asked are included in the Appendix.

### Student Attendance

To comply with the Irish Department of Justice (INIS) regulations, students from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) are required to attend a minimum of 85% of all classes to maintain visa compliance. Attendance is recorded for every class by Teachers and is monitored regularly by the Programme Manager supported by the Student Support Officer. Poor attendance is a serious issue and will be followed up on immediately. If not addressed, it can lead to warnings up to and including dismissal from the programme. UPRO011 UniHaven Attendance Monitoring Procedure Rev 1 outlines the steps involved in this process and is available on our website and is outlined in UDOC002 UniHaven Student Handbook Rev 2.

### Students with Disabilities

In the case of specific needs or an ongoing issue for students that may affect performance, the issue must be declared to Student Support Office as soon as practicable if it has not already been declared at the enrolment stage. The Student Support Officer will liaise with the student and the Academic Director. Appropriate mitigation will be considered in consultation with the Academic



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Director to investigate what supports can be made available as per the College Learner Disability policy. The Student Support Officer is responsible for liaising with academic staff to ensure that any agreed support in respect of teaching, learning and assessment are made available. Adaptations of assessment for a student may be implemented and may include the following and/or other reasonable adaptations as outlined in UPOL015 UniHaven Assessment and Awards Policy Rev 2:

- Modified presentation of assignments/examination papers e.g., enlargements.
- Scribes/readers.
- Use of sign language.
- Practical assistants.
- Rest periods.
- Adaptive equipment/software.
- Use of assistive technology.
- Extra time.

### Students Who Are Minors/Children

The College will put facilitate specific arrangements for students who are classified under Irish law as children, i.e., aged under 18 years. The College will nominate a third-party guardian nominee company to provide a guardian nominee service to minors on the College's behalf, but the student's family/parents will enter into a direct contract with this company – they will not sign a contract for such services with the College. The written agreement signed by the guardian nominee company and the College will outline the separation of responsibilities each party has when it comes to taking care of college students. The Academic Director will be responsible for monitoring compliance with this agreement's terms and for capturing any associated risks in UFORM012 UniHaven Risk Register Rev 1 as per UPOL003 UniHaven Risk



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Management Policy Rev 1. The College will work closely with the provider to make sure the student's care is at the required and agreed standard.

Typical services include accompanying minors to medical and visa appointments, being a 24-hour contact, seven days a week, for emergency support and care, and general external student welfare support. Such students will be partnered with the College's appointed guardian nominee company and, while in College care, any suspicions any staff or student has about any child protection issue will be dealt with as per UPOL019 UniHaven Child Protection Policy Rev 1.

#### Academic Misconduct Prevention

The College will provide teaching and tutor support to clarify exactly what is and what is not acceptable regarding referencing, gathering, and presenting information for assessments on the programme to prevent any form of academic misconduct, all forms of which are unacceptable...see more information in UPOL015 UniHaven Assessment and Awards Policy Rev 2 about what constitutes academic misconduct and in UPRO008 UniHaven Academic Misconduct Procedure Rev 1 regarding the academic misconduct disciplinary process.

#### Students Complaints and Grievances

Despite the best efforts of the College, students may have real cause for complaint about any aspect of college life. Such complaints and grievances can be aired directly to any staff, via the student representative channel of communication, via student survey forms or through UPRO010 UniHaven Student Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure Rev 1. Such complaint channels will be publicised on the website and LMS. All complaints and subsequent actions will be recorded and stored on the College IT Systems/Servers under the control of the Programme Manager.



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## Student Discipline

Student-related policies are communicated to students publicly on the website, on the College learning management system (LMS), and through UDOC002 Student Handbook. The College's expectations of students concerning their general, academic and personal conduct and behaviour will have been communicated in UDOC008 UniHaven Student Charter Rev 1. Both Handbook and Charter documents will be provided to students at their induction. Academic Misconduct suspicions or allegations are dealt with under UPRO008 UniHaven Academic Misconduct Procedure Rev 1 with repeat offences being covered by this procedure. Attendance-related disciplinary issues are covered under UPRO011 UniHaven Attendance Monitoring Procedure Rev 1.

All students must comply with all College policies and with the expectations set out for them in UDOC008 UniHaven Student Charter Rev 1. This is to ensure that a friendly and safe environment exists for all staff and students and one in which mutual respect is promoted for all. The student disciplinary procedure outlined in UPRO010 UniHaven Student Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure Rev 1 exists to cover areas where students are in breach of their commitments under this charter or breach of College student policies generally and to cover any other issue that warrants investigation and action, including gross misconduct. The College reserves the right to suspend a student who is suspected of gross misconduct whilst the investigation into the incident is being carried out. Investigations will be conducted promptly to limit the academic impact on the student as much as possible. The College will inform the student in writing of their suspension in such situations.

## Student Data

Students will be informed in advance of programme commencement on how their personal data will be used and stored when engaging with online platforms and while students at the



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College generally. Students will be issued their own unique student identification number that will be used to identify the student for all College assessments, exams, and awards. Their individual email address will be identified for formal College communication purposes. They will be assigned their logins for LMS access. UPOL020 UniHaven Data Protection Policy Rev 1, UPOL023 UniHaven Data Retention Policy Rev 1, UPOL024 UniHaven Data Security Policy Rev 1 outline how student data is collected, secured and retained while UPOL025 UniHaven Learning Analytics Policy Rev 1 refers specifically to student learning-related data and how it is used.

### Social Programmes

To enhance the student study abroad experience of living and studying in Ireland, the College will organise an appropriate range of local and national cultural, sporting, historical and entertainment activities that expose students to life in Ireland, past and present. These activities will be supervised by a staff member who will be Garda vetted as per UPOL012 UniHaven Garda Vetting Policy Rev 1. As student numbers grow, the College may arrange a more formal 'clubs and societies' approach to student activities.

### Pastoral Care

The College will provide many types of pastoral care to students from banking accounts and general queries about living in Ireland to a referral service that will refer them to specific mental health, medical and well-being providers, including hospitals and dentists where necessary, such that they are and feel truly taken care of during their time in Ireland. Students will be provided with 6 free counselling sessions by the College. The College will also have an emergency student fund in case students need emergency financial assistance. Should students suffer a serious illness, injury or death, the guardian nominee provider (only if the student is a minor) and/or a member of the College staff will accompany the student to doctor and hospital appointments and provide general support to the student. The Academic Director will be the College liaison person to deal with the student's family, to be the point of contact



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for any medical or other investigation or calls for information that is essential to help the situation and as agreed with the student and his/her family. Any child protection issues, if relevant, will be dealt with as per UPOL019 UniHaven Child Protection Policy Rev 1.

### Student Retention

Through a mixture of the full range of supports, the College hope that students will complete their programmes successfully. However, issues do arise from time to time. Where appropriate, it will support and encourage students to stay engaged with their programme and learning. If students decide that staying on their programme or in Ireland is not in their best interest, we will facilitate such decisions through the implementation of UPOL007 UniHaven Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy Rev 2 where procedures for deferrals, leave of absence and withdrawals are described.

## **After Students Leave UniHaven**

### Alumni

Once students move on to the College's HEI partners, the College aims to, with students' express permission, stay in contact with them. The College wishes to continue remote contact as a reflection of its commitment to caring for students while at the College and its desire to ensure that its students continue to achieve their education and career goals after they have left the College. It will seek to use a sample of past students as student ambassadors and for future marketing purposes subject to complying with data protection policies and legislation.



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## 5. Procedures and Forms

Procedures, including forms and documents, that are relevant to the implementation of this policy include the below list with survey form examples included in the Appendix.

- UPOL002 UniHaven Lerner Protection Policy Rev 1
- UPOL008 UniHaven Fees and Refund Policy Rev 1
- UPOL012 UniHaven Garda Vetting Policy Rev 1
- UPOL013 UniHaven Teaching and Learning Policy Rev 1
- UPOL014 UniHaven Blended Learning Policy Rev 1
- UPOL018 UniHaven Learner Disability Policy Rev 2
- UPOL019 Child Protection Policy Rev 1
- UPOL020 UniHaven Data Protection Policy Rev 1
- UPOL023 UniHaven Data Retention Policy Rev 1
- UPOL024 UniHaven Data Security Policy Rev 1
- UPOL025 UniHaven Learning Analytics Policy Rev 1
- UPOL026 UniHaven Communications Policy Rev 1
- UDOC001 UniHaven Programme Handbook Rev 2
- UDOC002 UniHaven Student Handbook Rev 2
- UDOC008 UniHaven Student Charter Rev 1



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## Appendix

### Sample Student Teaching Survey

Please rank your modules from easiest to hardest.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

What classroom activities do you learn from the most and why?

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What three things do you believe could improve your classes further?

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How would you rate your teaching experience? Please give detail on what you like and how you think teachers could improve your learning.

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What are you most proud of accomplishing in your study so far?





### Sample Student Engagement Survey

On a scale of 1 – 5 with 1 being very unhappy, 5 being really happy, and 2, 3 or 4 being somewhere in between, how would you rate your experience in UniHaven under each of the following headings?

Heading	Specific Questions	1	2	3	4	5
Recruitment and Induction	How happy are you with the accuracy of the information provided to you by the College while you were searching for a programme to study?					
	How happy are you with the way we outline our expectations of you when studying in the College after you had completed your induction with us?					
Teaching and Learning	How happy are you with the level of teaching and learning at the College?					
	How happy are you with the online materials and supports to include online tutorials, resources, formative assessments and feedback/responsiveness of staff?					
Student Support	How happy are you with the level of service you get from our staff about the advice that we provide concerning accommodation, transport, finance, medical needs, mental health needs and so on?					
	How happy are you with the academic and pastoral support we give you to help you to achieve your academic aims and ambitions?					
	How happy are you with the availability of the supports made available by the College?					
	How happy are you that the supports made available by the College are adequate for your needs?					
Social Programme	How happy are you with our social programme and the activities we have arranged for you?					
Comments and Suggestions	Please feel free to suggest any improvement above not identified confidentially and anonymously or to better explain a rating from the above list...					
Summary	What stands out as the 3 best things about studying at the College? 1.	What reasons for your answers? _____				



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	2. 3.	_____ _____
	What stands out as the worst thing about studying at the College and why?	
Overall	How likely are you to recommend the College to a friend? Between 0-100%:	



**Quality Assurance Manual (QAM) Chapter 8**

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<b>References/ Supporting Documentation</b>	<p><b>UDOC000 UniHaven Quality Assurance Manual Rev 2</b>  <b>Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers (2016)</b>  <b>Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Independent/Private Providers coming to QQI on a Voluntary Basis (2016)</b>  <b>Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Students (2015)</b>  <b>UPOL007 UniHaven Recruitment and Admissions Policy Rev 2</b>  <b>UPOL002 UniHaven Lerner Protection Policy Rev 1</b>  <b>UPOL008 UniHaven Fees and Refund Policy Rev 1</b>  <b>UPOL012 UniHaven Garda Vetting Policy Rev 1</b>  <b>UPOL013 UniHaven Teaching and Learning Policy Rev 1</b>  <b>UPOL014 UniHaven Blended Learning Policy Rev 1</b>  <b>UPOL018 UniHaven Learner Disability Policy Rev 2</b>  <b>UPOL019 Child Protection Policy Rev 1</b>  <b>UPOL020 UniHaven Data Protection Policy Rev 1</b>  <b>UPOL023 UniHaven Data Retention Policy Rev 1</b>  <b>UPOL024 UniHaven Data Security Policy Rev 1</b>  <b>UPOL025 UniHaven Learning Analytics Policy Rev 1</b>  <b>UPOL026 UniHaven Communications Policy Rev 1</b>  <b>UDOC001 UniHaven Programme Handbook Rev 2</b>  <b>UDOC002 UniHaven Student Handbook Rev 2</b>  <b>UDOC008 UniHaven Student Charter Rev 1</b></p>