



Consumer Protection Statement

2021 -22

ESL's overall approach to ensuring compliance with consumer protection law

Elizabeth School of London (ESL), as an Alternative Provider of higher education in the UK, complies with the Consumer Rights Act (2015) and Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) requirements and carries out its statutory duties to protect the rights of students and all stakeholders who benefit from our service. Information made available to students when considering studying at ESL is clear, confirming that they familiarise themselves with the terms and conditions before submitting an application.

ESL ensures that students are given full and comprehensive information about the educational opportunities on offer including course content, structure and duration, the location of study and the award given on successfully completing the course.

Detailed information includes:

- Entry requirements (both academic and non-academic) and an indication of the standard/typical offer level criteria;
- Core modules for the course and an indication of likely optional modules, including whether there are any optional modules that are generally provided each year;
- Information about the composition of the course and how it will be delivered, and the balance between the various elements. This will include the number and type of contact hours expected – for example, lectures, seminars, work placements, and feedback on assignments. It will also include expected workload, such as the expected self-study time,

and details about the general level of experience or status of the staff involved in delivering the different elements of the course;

- Overall method(s) of assessment for the course, for example by exams, coursework or practical assessments, or a combination of these;

In addition, wider information on fees and additional study costs as well as our Refunds and Compensation Policy and Complaints Policy are available on the website.

Our current approach to compliance with consumer protection law involves the following mechanisms of assurance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/competition-and-markets-authority>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-guide-to-consumer-rights-for-students>

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en>

<https://www.aoc.co.uk/>

<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

Collaborative Meetings

ESL has close links with a number of HE & FE organisations and shares good practice across the sector in relation to consumer rights. In addition, ESL enjoys support and guidance from a number of senior university practitioners who provide advice and guidance on key aspects of consumer law.

ESL's Senior Management Team provides oversight for consumer protection law issues and the handling of student complaints, giving a strategic lead on all quality issues relating to HE provisions and make recommendations to the Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Board to ensure that all internal and external quality standards are adhered to.

Training and Dissemination of staff

Information is shared with all academic and support staff and where appropriate, training sessions for relevant staff involved in the delivery and quality monitoring are implemented. Monitoring of compliance is carried out by the Director of Operations who reports to the Senior Management Team. ESL holds an Annual Quality Assurance Conference, supported by key external professionals, where a range of external issues, including consumer rights are discussed. In addition, ESL reviews and audits its policies over a formal three-year cycle.

Student Engagement & Awareness

ESL ensures that students are engaged with, and made aware of, their consumer rights at induction and via printed and web-based material as confirmed above. Engagement is also achieved via Student Representative involvement in policy making and review and the student-staff committee meetings. Key student representatives also attend formal management and quality assurance meetings. A developmental programme is in place to support the continuing professional development of student representatives to enable effective engagement and interaction with both peer groups and management.

ESL's approach to providing information to applicants and students: research and application stage, offer stage and enrolment stage

ESL's Admissions policy and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission and is underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. ESL has a history of working closely with awarding partners to ensure that processes align with their requirements and that admissions decisions are based on agreed entry requirements.

Admissions staff are aware of the admissions policies and procedures and are supported to fulfil their role through internal training, workshops with external experts, access to resources including webinars and guidance on judging new or non-traditional qualifications.

Students are informed that they are required to undertake language and maths tests where appropriate and undertake an interview to confirm both academic suitability and motivation to their course.

At enrolment stage, applicants are fully informed of the requirements of enrolment prior to their actual enrolment day, ie. payment of fees, and the ESL Tuition Fees and Refunds and Compensation Policy. This is achieved through the sending of standardised letters to all applicants which is overseen by the Director of Operations and Admissions Officer.

Enrolment is undertaken in ESL, overseen by the Head of Student Services where further information relating to programme such as finalised timetables may be given.

Where previously unforeseen changes in course information occur (for example, an increase in cost of an external visit), these changes are communicated to students via letter, email and in person to ensure the message is received. Responsibility for this process lies with the Course Leaders and is overseen by their relevant line manager.

Contract terms and conditions

Terms and conditions are held on the ESL website and as with all policies, terms and conditions are subject to review and audit to ensure information is clear and accessible to all stakeholders.

Complaint handling processes and practice

ESL has a defined internal complaints and appeals procedures which students must follow in the first instance. Subsequently, ESL manages referrals of formal complaints and appeals within the procedures determined by its formal agreements with relevant awarding partner/s.

All students are required to engage with ESL's complaints procedure if a formal issue is raised. If there is no satisfactory resolution at local level, the student has the right to engage with the procedures of the appropriate awarding body/organisation.

When delivering university-accredited programmes, ESL may refer all formal complaints from students enrolled on these programmes to the university, after undergoing an internal process. If the issue remains unresolved, the complainant retains the right to pursue the matter further directly with the OIA.

Before bringing a complaint to the OIA, a complainant must complete the ESL's internal complaints or appeals procedures. If the complainant is not satisfied with the ESL's final decision and would like the OIA to review their complaint, they should complete an OIA Complaint Form and submit this, along with the Completion of Procedures letter. The OIA must receive the signed OIA Complaint Form within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter; otherwise, they will consider the complaint to be out of time.

The complaints and appeals procedures are clear and accessible to students via handbooks and the VLE, and explained during induction. Students are made aware of how official complaints can be made during their initial induction session with their tutors.

In addition, they are informed that they can raise issues informally with staff at any time. Student Services provide advice and support for any students making a complaint or appeal within ESL's processes.

External Source	Reference Points
UKQC- Core Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.
UKQC- Advice and Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern, Complaints and Appeals
Awarding Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Refund and Compensation Policy of BSU
Other reference Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESL Quality Assurance Manuals • Complaints and Appeal Policies. • Student Handbooks/ Course Handbooks <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPRs). • Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 (CCRs). • Unfair terms legislation (at the date of publication, the relevant legislation is the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999 (UTCCRs). • ESL Student Protection Plan