

**Student Code of Conduct  
&  
Disciplinary Procedure  
Information for students**

**2021/22**

**Respect yourself  
Respect others  
Respect the college**

## Our Values

1. Treat the college like a place of work.
2. Like any place of employment there needs to be a code of conduct and expectations around behaviour. Our standards are very high but we will support you to meet them. Our job is to prepare you for your next steps and that may be the workplace.
3. We aim to establish a culture where positive behaviour is the norm. Respect for our college and staff, students and visitors in it, whether in person or online, is the expectation. Behaviour not in line with our value of respect will be dealt with swiftly and fairly.
4. Everyone within the college is expected to uphold our values and this code of conduct has been drafted with that in mind.
5. If you are an apprentice you will follow our code of conduct whilst you are studying but you will also need to follow your employer's expectations in the workplace. Should you fail to meet the standards expected by your employer, you may be taken through their own disciplinary procedures. You may also complete a work placement and we would expect you to uphold our values whilst on work placement.
6. The college will seek to understand the reasons for behaviour that does not meet our expectations and will provide support for improvement before any formal action is taken. Support will come from teachers, learning support assistants, attendance and support coaches or the safeguarding team.

## The college values

The college has a set of values (RICHER) and our code of conduct has a real focus on one of them, however, we expect everyone in the college (staff and students) to act in a way that is in line with **all** values:

**Respect**

**Integrity**

**Collaboration**

**High Expectations**

**Responsibility**

## Our code of conduct

Our code of conduct is based upon one of our values, **respect** - respect yourself, respect others and respect the college. This means:

### **Respect yourself**

*Make yourself proud every day.* This means doing your best every day and leaving the best possible impression of yourself on others. Some of the ways that you can do this are: by attending all your lessons, on time; handing work in to deadline; engaging in lessons; learning from things that have gone wrong; and asking for help when you need it. **Talk to us if you are struggling, we want you to succeed and are here to help you do that.**

## Respect others

We are a big college and we don't expect you to get on with everyone. However, being professional means that we still need to work alongside them. The ways in which you can show respect to others are: by turning up to class or work placement when you should and on time; by not swearing; remembering that not everyone will share your sense of humour and may be hurt or upset by your comments; remembering that not everyone shares your taste in music and may not want to listen to it through your phone or speakers; responding positively to respectful challenge from staff and other students; and understanding that we all have a right to be ourselves. **Try not to take matters into your own hands if you're not getting on with someone or someone is disrespecting you – talk to a member of staff.**

## Respect the college

We have amazing facilities and equipment and they only stay that way if we treat them well. We all need to play our part in keeping the college clean, tidy and safe. Some of the ways that you can respect the college are: tidy up after yourself and put litter in the bin; wear your lanyard around your neck; don't let none students into college; respect our smoking policy and on sites where you can't smoke make sure you are off site before you do; and don't deliberately damage college property.

**There are probably other ways that you can think of to show respect and your teachers will talk to you about what respect means in your curriculum area at the start of the year.**

**Everyone** in the college (including other students) has the right to challenge **anyone** who is not following our code of conduct.

## What else can I do?

The above sets out our basic expectations, there are other things that you might want to think about:

- a) Your voice matters and we will listen to concerns that you raise, however, we all need to raise concerns in a constructive way. If we shout and swear it is really hard to **hear** what is being said.
- b) Being prepared means **planning** our time properly and planning what we need for the day – if you do this and meet deadlines for assignments, it will mean that you will feel less stressed later on – if you are struggling we can help you.
- c) Everyone likes to have a laugh, but it stops being funny when we are the subject of the joke or when it goes too far and people get hurt. By all means enjoy your time at college, make new friends and try new experiences, but also think about the impact you are having on others around you.

Our code of conduct applies inside the college, online, on college buses and in the areas directly outside the college (bus stops).

## Ok that's what I have to do - what about the college?

Staff who work at the college are also bound by our code of conduct. **All** our staff are expected to model the behaviour we expect from you.

Our promise is really simple – you can expect:

- a) To have your positive behaviour rewarded.
- b) To be listened to, respected and have your opinions taken seriously. We expect you to behave like a professional we will treat you like one.
- c) To be supported to meet our expectations.
- d) To be provided with appropriate resources to enable effective learning.
- e) To be provided with regular, constructive feedback to help you improve.
- f) To have our own individual needs taken into account and things changed where necessary.

## What happens if I don't stick to the code of conduct?

Minor or less serious issues (cause for concern) will be dealt with by your tutor or any other member of staff. This may be an informal chat or targets agreed as part of your regular reviews. We will support you as much as possible to meet our expectations before we take any more formal action.

More serious issues or a significant repetition of minor issues could mean that you go through a more formal process. This could mean that you are given a verbal or formal written warning or as a last resort are asked to leave the college (excluded/expelled).

Our approach is to always be supportive and work with you to improve behaviour, this may mean that you are provided with an action plan with small milestones that help you learn lessons and make improvement. We recognise that not everyone is perfect and therefore accept that meeting expectations may take time and support.

There are three stages to our formal process, the first stage is a verbal warning, the second involves a more formal meeting with the head of department or assistant principal and this will be supported by an action plan which might detail the support you will receive to meet our expectations.

The last stage of our process, stage 3 is a formal panel hearing, chaired by one of the Vice Principals. We would only escalate behaviour to this level in very exceptional circumstances. Anyone asked to attend a stage 3 panel hearing will have reached the final stage of our processes or will have behaved in such a way that others around them are in danger. The panel hearing will consider a recommendation for exclusion from the manager. A recommendation for exclusion will only be made for extremely serious breaches of our code of conduct, this might include but not be limited to:

1. Persistently poor behaviour that has not improved despite warnings and support being in place.
2. Bullying.
3. Harassment on the grounds of sex, race, disability, sexuality or other personal characteristics.
4. Possession, use in college or dealing drugs.
5. Violent and significantly aggressive behaviour.
6. Theft.
7. Vandalism.
8. Possession of a knife or any other item that could be used as a weapon.
9. Putting the safety of others at significant risk of harm.

If it is felt necessary to move to stage 3 of the process you may be suspended from the college until your disciplinary panel. You will have the opportunity to attend the panel meeting with a friend or family member to explain why things may have got to this stage. The panel will either uphold the recommendation for exclusion or will provide a final and last chance for improvement. If you do not attend and do not let us know that you can't attend, the panel will go ahead and make a decision without you.

## Cooling off periods and suspensions

You can be asked to leave college for up to two days to 'cool off'. A head of department, assistant principal, service manager or duty head can ask you to leave college for this amount of time, this is to give you time to calm down and reflect on the incident that led to a cooling off period.

You may be suspended if a recommendation for exclusion is made and a stage 3 panel arranged. A suspension is not an assumption of the final outcome. A head of department or a duty head can do this with the authorisation of a member of the Executive Team.

We will support you to catch up if you have missed a day or two of college as a result of this.

## What does exclusion mean?

Exclusion means that you will be asked to leave the college and will not be allowed to return **for at least** two academic years.

In certain cases we might allow you to complete your course but not allow you on to a college campus.

## What if I don't agree with the disciplinary?

At the verbal warning stage you can raise concerns with a head of department or assistant principal. At stage 2 you need to raise your concerns with the assistant principal and at stage 3 you need to raise your concerns with the Principal or Vice Principal who did not chair the panel. Further information is provided within appendix 1.

## For Higher Education Students Only

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) runs an independent scheme to review student complaints. West Nottinghamshire College is a member of this scheme. If you are unhappy with the outcome you may be able to ask the OIA to review your appeal. You can find more information about making a complaint to the OIA, what it can and can't look at and what it can do to put things right here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>.

You normally need to have gone through our procedures, including appeal, before you complain to the OIA. We will send you a letter called a "Completion of Procedures Letter" when you have reached the end of our processes and there are no further steps you can take internally. If your appeal is upheld or partly upheld you can ask for a Completion of Procedures Letter if you want one. You can find more information about Completion of Procedures Letters and when you should expect to receive one here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers/completion-of-procedures-letters>.

## Where can I get more information?

Louise Knott – Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement and Student Experience

Matthew Vaughan – Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality

Nikki Slack – Assistant Principal – Health, Education and Service Industries

Jane Fishwick – Assistant Principal – HE, Academic, Digital, Creative and Professional Studies

Ian Frear – Assistant Principal - Engineering

Phil Clark – Assistant Principal - Construction

Geoff Vincent – Welfare Manager

Your Head of Department

The duty head on site for that day – reception will be able to point you in the right direction.

## Appendices

1. Disciplinary process
2. Preparing for a stage 2 or 3 meeting.

## Appendix 1 – the disciplinary process

Stage	Who deals with it?	How is it dealt with?	How am I notified?	What can happen?	What if I'm not happy?
Cause for concern	Any member of staff	Wherever the incident is seen by a member of staff.	As and when issues arise	A note may be logged on your record and if you receive 5 or more causes for concern a verbal warning or progress to formal stage of the process.	Speak to your tutor or duty head for the day.
Verbal warning	Any of your teachers or Head of Department	In your 1:1 reviews or in a meeting specifically called to address your behaviour.	In person	Verbal warning you will be clear of the improvement expected of you. A note will be placed on your record and improvement will be logged.	Speak to or contact the Head of Department
Written Warning	Head of Department/Assistant Principal	In a formal meeting - you can bring a parent/carer or friend to the meeting	By letter – you will be given 5 working days' notice	Formal written warning and in some cases a final written warning - a behaviour management plan will be put in place and will be monitored for a period agreed at the meeting.	Speak to or write to the Assistant Principal or Vice Principal.
Stage 3	A disciplinary panel not related to your school. The panel is chaired by one of the vice principals	In a formal panel meeting. The panel is convened on a recommendation for exclusion from a head of department or assistant principal.  You can bring a parent/carer or friend to the meeting	By letter – you will be given 5 working days' notice.	Exclusion OR final chance to improve.	Write to the Vice Principal who did not chair your panel or the Principal within 10 working days.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Preparing for your disciplinary meeting**

Being asked to attend a disciplinary meeting or a panel can be quite frightening. You will be asked to say something to either explain or defend your behaviour. It would be worth thinking about what you want to say in advance. You might want to consider:

- What has your attendance and effort been like on your course to date?
- What is happening at college or outside of college that may have led to the incident?
- What have you learned from the incident?
- What could you have done differently?
- How can the issue be resolved?
- What support do you need to help you improve?

What you say at a disciplinary meeting could make a real difference to the outcome so please do take the opportunity to put your side of events forward.

If someone does come to the meeting with you they will also be able to ask questions and put forward information to support you.

If you need support preparing, contact the central support teams (welfare, safeguarding or additional learning support).