



# **Learner Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Procedure**

## **Quick Guide**

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### Positive behaviour management

- The college has a policy of positive behaviour management with our student body. Rather than responding to poor behaviour we will establish a culture of mutual respect through strategies that recognise and reward good behaviour.
- Schools of learning will establish their own mechanisms for the reward of positive behaviour, mechanisms may include, participation in trips, visits and enrichment activity, awarding vouchers or points for good behaviour that can be used in the college's catering outlets, encouraging peer behaviour management so that poor behaviour is picked up by peers rather than by tutors and other staff.
- We have cross college expectations when it comes to behaviour, these expectations are set out clearly in the student handbook and all students are expected to meet them.
- In addition to this cross college code, all tutors should agree a contract for behaviour within the classroom at the start of the academic year, this contract should be agreed and signed by all students and reviewed and refreshed as necessary throughout the year.
- Behaviour from students that falls short of our expectations will be dealt with quickly through the learner disciplinary procedure.

### What are our expectations of student behaviour?

Students will:

- Attend college regularly and be on time for their classes.
- Help us keep the college clean and tidy, they will not drop litter.
- Act safely and sensibly and take responsibility for the safety of themselves and others when in college.
- Act respectfully towards staff, other students, visitors and college property, this means not using offensive language whilst in college.
- Take an active part in their lessons and not disrupt the learning of others in any way.
- Wear their lanyards and ID cards when on any college site.
- Follow reasonable instruction from any member of staff.
- Take an active part in college life.
- Complete their work to the best of their ability and hand it in on time.
- Meet the requirements of their learning agreement.
- Abide by all college policies and procedures as relevant to them including the policy on the acceptable use of IT.
- Only smoke in designated college areas.

**We operate a zero tolerance policy in relation to the following forms of poor behaviour. We will take immediate action against any student found to have engaged in any of these actions and in the most serious cases this could lead to the exclusion of the student permanently from college:**

- **Bullying and harassment whether this is in person or over the internet, text messages or telephone**
- **Any form of discrimination, this includes making racist, sexist or homophobic comments or offensive comments about students or staff with a disability.**
- **Bringing illegal drugs, alcohol or offensive weapons into college or coming into college under the influence of either.**
- **Putting young people or vulnerable adults at risk, whether this is physically, sexually or emotionally**

### What can I do if I witness poor student behaviour?

It is everyone's responsibility to make sure that our expectations of student behaviour are consistently and fairly applied across all aspects of college life. It is our hope that through this constant positive reinforcement we will maintain a culture of mutual respect and at the same time avoid the necessity for students to go through formal disciplinary processes.

It is therefore important to thank students for picking up litter, holding doors open or being an active member of our community whether this behaviour is in the classroom or in the corridors. We should all show our students the respect that we expect from them. Therefore all members of staff are expected to reinforce good behaviour when we see it and challenge inappropriate behaviour when we encounter it. This means that we all have a responsibility to challenge a student if:

- we see them drop litter
- we hear them use inappropriate or offensive language
- we see them smoking outside of a designated college area

Call a duty head if we feel that we are unable to deal with a more serious situation on our own.

When we challenge students we will do so in a way that is polite and continues to be respectful to them, often the way we challenge someone will be the deciding factor in the response that we then get. If a student does not follow our reasonable instruction, then we can call the Duty Head to take the matter further or inform the student's tutor so that they can deal with the incident.

### What happens for more serious behavioural incidents?

If a student is in serious breach of the code of conduct, the contract agreed at the start of the year or continually engages in low level disruptive activity then we can instigate our formal disciplinary process this has three stages as indicated overleaf. In the event of a serious incident, parents of learners aged under 18 will be informed immediately.

**It is important that we keep accurate and up to date records of both informal and formal stages of the disciplinary process. Should we have to take a case to stage three of the process this will help an independent panel make a sound judgement about the proposed next steps. Many cases have been overturned by the panel or at appeal due to the lack of evidence and lack of accurate records.**

### Informal Process

- This stage in the process is about the management of behaviour.
- Minor incidents of poor behaviour will be picked up informally and immediately by the tutor or member of staff.
- In most cases this will involve challenging the student about their behaviour and asking them to modify it.
- Informal incidents within the classroom will be recorded on form 1 by the tutor as this may be used as part of the formal process.

### Stage 1 Warning

- Warning (1) issued by tutor for consistent or fairly serious breaches of the student code of conduct. This triggers an immediate and informal discussion with the student. The tutor records the discussion and what is expected of them with the student and provides them with a copy (form 2)
- Warning (2) issued if behaviour does not improve. This triggers a formal meeting with CM and Tutor, students told that they can be accompanied. Formal behaviour management plan agreed and signed by all parties (form 3 and 4) - parents are notified if appropriate at this stage.

### Stage 1 Warning Review

- Formal behaviour management plan reviewed on a weekly basis with the student and the tutor, both have the opportunity to make comment on the form and indicate how well behaviour is improving or further room for improvement (form 4).
- If after 4 weeks behaviour has improved, behaviour management plan is signed off by tutor and placed on the student's file.
- If, as part of any weekly reviews, behaviour has not improved the student can be taken to stage two of the disciplinary process.

### Stage 2

- If the student's behaviour has not improved under the behaviour management plan then a stage two meeting with the Head of School is called.
- The meeting is attended by the CM and/or Tutor and the student has the right to be accompanied to the meeting.
- The student will be given five working days notice of the stage two meeting. The meeting will be recorded.
- A further action plan will be agreed and signed by all parties

### Stage 2 review

- The action plan agreed in the stage 2 meeting is reviewed on a weekly basis by the tutor in liaison with the CM.
- The review lasts for two weeks
- If behaviour has not improved or further offences have been committed then the student will be taken to stage 3 disciplinary process.

### Stage 3

- A formal disciplinary panel, chaired by a member of the college management group not connected to the school of learning.
- A stage 3 panel meeting will be called if the student fails to meet their obligations as agreed under stage two or commits an offence of gross mis-conduct
- The student has the right to make their own representations and for students under the age of 18 their parents will be informed
- The student will be given five working days notice of the panel hearing

## What is misconduct and gross misconduct?

The following are examples of misconduct and gross misconduct which may result in disciplinary action being taken against learners. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the types of behaviour and consideration should be given when allegations of gross misconduct are made.

- Failure to comply with Stage 1 and Stage 2 Action Plans.
- Any breach of the learner's obligations including any breach of health and safety or any other regulations, rules or policies or guidelines of the College.
- Smoking except in designated areas.
- Bullying, intimidation, taunting, verbal abuse or the use of any violence towards any person\*.
- Deliberately or by negligence causing damage to any College buildings, equipment, books or furnishings or any property of others.
- Theft – from College, other learners or staff.
- Fraud – including forging signatures for claims/work placement records.
- Any other criminal or dishonest acts.
- Refusal to obey reasonable, lawful instructions.
- Any behaviour which has an adverse effect on the work of the College, including damaging or interfering with buildings or equipment.
- Any form of racially offensive behaviour, eg. language, literature, slogans or enticing others to act in a racially offensive way.\*
- Any behaviour which is sexually offensive or homophobic or which is offensive to those with learning and/or physical disabilities or impediments.\*
- Use of offensive behaviour or language.
- Any dangerous or inconsiderate driving, including speeding, on College premises.
- Any behaviour which could bring the College into disrepute.
- Any unauthorised interference with software or data belonging to or used by the College.
- Accessing, downloading or distributing offensive material from the Internet (or elsewhere)
- Persistent lateness for, or absence from, classes.
- Disrupting any classes or any other College activity, whether or not involving staff or other learners.
- Putting a young person or vulnerable adult at risk, whether this is physically, sexually or emotionally\*
- Being under the influence of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs or solvents.\*
- Plagiarism.\*\*

\* We operate a zero tolerance policy in relation to these actions and as such it is likely that all actions falling within these categories will be considered to be gross misconduct.

\*\* Plagiarism is defined as "Passing off someone else's work as your own". It happens if you copy somebody else's work instead of doing your own. Most people at school level call this 'cheating' or 'copying'.

### Examples of plagiarism:

- Copying directly from a text, word-for-word.
- Using an attractive phrase or sentence you have found somewhere.
- Using text downloaded from the Internet.
- Paraphrasing the words of a text very closely.
- Borrowing statistics from another source or person.
- Copying from the essays or the notes of another student.
- Downloading or copying pictures, photographs, or diagrams without acknowledging your sources.

## Where can I go for support in managing student behaviour?

The college can offer a range of development sessions to help you manage student behaviour more effectively. In the first instance you might want to:

- Talk to your head of school or curriculum manager about some of the issues you are trying to deal with.
- Ask them about any training opportunities that there might be for you and your colleagues.
- Ask them about what other schools of learning are doing and if they know about any areas of good practice.