



BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect students and staff from any bullying and harassment

POLICY STATEMENT

The College is committed to supporting the principle of equal opportunities and opposes all forms of discrimination. Bullying and Harassment are forms of unlawful discrimination.

All employees and students of the College have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. All employees and students of the College are required to behave in a way that does not cause offence to others, in accordance with the Equality and Diversity Policy.

This policy applies not only to interaction whilst in the College, but extends to time spent travelling whilst on business, on training courses, conferences and work-related social events with colleagues and on college trips. It also applies to contact individuals have through social networking sites.

All employees and students must ensure that the College's Bullying and Harassment Policy is adhered to at all times. Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee or student who acts in breach of this Policy.

Employees, students, clients, individuals working within the College or other people in connection with the College's activities are assured that they will not be victimised for bringing a complaint. It is recognised that harassment and bullying can occur at any level within the organisation.

DEFINITION

Bullying is any persistent behaviour, directed against an individual, which is intimidating, offensive, malicious or insulting and which undermines the confidence and self-esteem of the recipient.

Harassment is any unwanted conduct (verbal, non-verbal or physical) which has the purpose of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

The following types of behaviour may amount to harassment or bullying. The list below gives examples only and is not exhaustive.

- Suggestive or offensive language, comments, gossip or jokes;
- Unwanted physical contact, whether or not of a sexual nature;
- Suggestive or offensive gestures;

Isolation or ostracism;
Insults, ridicule or teasing;
Humiliating, demeaning, threatening or persistently criticising an individual directly or indirectly;
Unfair allocation of work or responsibilities;
Spreading malicious rumours;
Electronic harassment, eg. text messaging, e-mails, chat rooms, chat lines, social media such as Facebook and Twitter etc.
Making unfounded threats or comments about job security.

In determining whether harassment or bullying has occurred, an investigation shall take due account of whether the alleged actions or behaviour are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable.

Legitimate and constructive and fair criticism of a student's or an employee's performance or behaviour at college is not bullying/harassment. An occasional raised voice or argument is not bullying/harassment.

A student who reports bullying outside the College premises must be supported and action taken, as far as is possible, to safeguard the student from the bullying. For instance, if other College students are involved, this must be investigated and appropriate action taken, even though the bullying did not take place during College time or on our premises. If the bullies are not members of the College, the student should receive advice and support from the guidance support tutor and other agencies (such as the College Counsellor) as appropriate. In some cases, it is relevant to involve the police.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of all employees and students to comply with this policy and to treat all others with respect and dignity.

Anyone found to have committed bullying or harassment will be dealt with under the College's disciplinary procedures and in some cases this may result in summary dismissal or exclusion as appropriate.

PROCEDURES

Staff

If you believe you are or another member of staff is being harassed or bullied it is important that it is not tolerated. If possible try to resolve the matter informally yourself. If you believe that it cannot be resolved satisfactorily between the parties involved, refer the situation to your line manager, Head of Department or Director of Curriculum. They will usually try to resolve the situation informally but if it is sufficiently serious they or a member of the College Management Team will decide to employ the Grievance or Disciplinary procedures.

Students

If you believe you are or another student is being harassed or bullied it is important that it is not tolerated. If possible try to resolve the matter informally yourself. If you believe that it cannot be resolved satisfactorily between the parties involved, refer the situation to a Guidance Support Tutor or other member of staff. They will usually try to resolve the situation informally but if it is sufficiently serious you may decide to make a complaint or they may decide to employ the Disciplinary Policy and procedures.

Member of staff responsible for policy: Rowan Johnson

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PROCEDURES

What to do if you believe you are being harassed or bullied

