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Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

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Introduction

This document sets out the College's policy and procedure that aims to promote the good discipline of students (learners, trainees and other users of College services).

1. Policy Statement

We are committed to a policy of high expectations of our students as learners and as members of the College community. We expect and encourage good behaviour from all students.

To support this expectation and ensure that the College remains an effective learning environment for others, allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with through this procedure.

2. Scope

This document sets out the code of conduct to which students are expected to adhere in return for being part of the College and being provided with educational and other services or facilities. It also sets out the procedure that should be followed where there is an allegation of a breach of discipline.

A breach of discipline may lead to action being taken against a student in line with the procedure. Repeated breaches, or a single serious breach, may result in a student being suspended or permanently excluded from the College.

Pupils from local schools attending school link programmes will be subject to the disciplinary procedure of their own school. This policy and procedure applies to all other students, regardless of mode of attendance or study, site or venue.

3. Students' Code of Conduct

The College expects each student to act in a manner that supports their learning and the learning of others.

Specific policy statements exist for areas such as:

- Equality of opportunity and diversity
- Harassment & Bullying
- Health & Safety

4. College Strategy to promote good discipline

The expectation of students' good discipline needs to be actively supported by a range of approaches from staff, supported by our environment and facilities.

The approaches include:

- Accommodation and facilities strategy promoting a safe and pleasant learning environment
- Code of conduct for students
- 'Ground Rules' setting within learning groups led by course teams
- Student Forum to promote good communication between student representatives staff
- Our policy of equality of opportunity

Procedure

1 Informal Stage

In most cases it is most effective to deal quickly and at an informal level with incidents of minor misconduct.

The member of staff dealing with the incident needs to be satisfied that the student or students involved are responsible for the inappropriate action.

Many such incidences will occur from time to time in an organisation of this size. The manner in which they are dealt with may influence future behaviour. Staff will be expected to take action and bring the inappropriate behaviour to the attention of the student. A clear indication of future expectation needs to be made to the student.

In some circumstances this conversation may be recorded as a note in the students tutorial records.

The member of staff may inform the student's course co-ordinator or their own line manager. The purpose of this is to provide supportive information to colleagues to help monitor future behaviour in line with expectations.

2. Formal Verbal Stage (ref Form FVS2)

Where a student is alleged to have demonstrated persistent or re-occurring behaviour of an inappropriate but minor nature an interview will be set up and chaired by the course tutor (or Head of School or other appropriate line manager). If the student fails to attend, without good reason, the process may continue in their absence or be referred to the next stage of this procedure.

Before the interview the chair will apply the procedure's 'Informing or Involving Parents/Employers' matrix to the circumstance. If a third party (parent, carer or employer) is to be informed appropriate time will need to be allocated to arrange this. The third party may be included in the interview.

At the start of the interview the chair will

- Ensure everyone present is introduced
- Confirm the policy and procedure within which the interview is taking place
- Outline the nature of the conduct complained of and the summary of evidence.

The student will have an opportunity to respond to the complaint and state their case.

After hearing any response, or case the Chair will consider the situation. If the allegation is upheld they may decide to issue a formal verbal warning. This warning will include clear expectation of future conduct. It may include practical actions to support this expectation.

A written note to record the formal verbal warning is required (and if possible signed by the student) and placed on the student's central file.

3. Formal Written Stage 1 (ref Form FWS1)

Further examples of continued misconduct or allegations of a more serious misconduct may be investigated and dealt with at this formal written stage 1.

The interview is arranged and chaired by an appropriate Head of School (or member of the Senior Management Team, although not a member of the Executive). Arrangements need to be in place to ensure that another member of staff accompanies the chair during the interview.

Before the interview the chair will apply the procedure's "Informing or Involving Parents/Employers" matrix to the circumstance. If a third party (parent, carer or employer) is to be informed appropriate time will need to be allocated to arrange this. The third party may be included in the interview.

At the start of the interview the Chair will

- Ensure everyone present is introduced
- Confirm the policy and procedure within which the interview is taking place
- Outline the nature of the conduct complained of and the summary of evidence, which may include statements or contributions from other witnesses.

The student will have an opportunity to respond to the complaint and state their case.

After hearing any response, or case the Chair will consider the situation. If the allegation is upheld they may decide to issue a formal written warning (stage 1).

This warning will include clear expectation of future conduct. It may include practical actions to support this expectation. It will include potential consequences of future incidences of inappropriate behaviour, as set out in this policy & procedure, including possible suspension or permanent exclusion from the College.

A written record will be placed in the student's central file following the interview, and a copy sent to the student.

The student has the right to appeal against such a decision. This appeal must be made in writing and addressed to the Principal within 5 College days of the interview meeting.

4. Formal Written Stage 2

Following an allegation of serious misconduct or further examples of continued misconduct subsequent to the Stage 1 warning an investigation will be undertaken and dealt with at this formal written stage 2.

If the allegation is upheld the consequences may be permanent exclusion from the College; suspension for a set period of time; a final written warning; or other appropriate action.

The interview is arranged and chaired by the Principal (or an appointee of the Principal). Arrangements need to be in place to ensure that another member of staff accompanies the chair during the interview.

Before the interview the chair will apply the procedure's 'Informing or Involving Parents/Employers' matrix to the circumstance. If a third party (parent, guardians, carer or employer) is to be informed appropriate time will need to be allocated to arrange this. The third party may be included in the interview.

At the start of the interview the chair will

- Ensure everyone present is introduced
- Confirm the policy and procedure within which the interview is taking place
- Outline the nature of the conduct complained of and the summary of evidence, which may include statements or contributions from other witnesses.

The student will have an opportunity to respond to the complaint and state their case.

Outcomes

After hearing any response, or case the chair will consider the situation. If the allegation is upheld they may decide upon one or more of the following:

- Permanently exclude the student from the College
- Suspend the student from attending for a fixed period of time
- Issue a formal written warning at Stage 2
- Apply other appropriate actions

A written record of the interview and decision must be placed on the student's central file within 3 College days of the interview, and a copy being sent to the student.

Final Appeal

The student has the right to appeal against such a decision. This appeal must be made in writing and addressed to: "*The Principal for the attention of the Governing Body*" within 5 College days of the interview meeting.

The Governing Body will appoint a panel of at least two Governors to hear the appeal. The appeal meeting needs to be held within 10 College days of the appeal being received, with the Governors' decision be confirmed in writing within 3 College days of their meeting.

At the start of the Appeal Meeting one Governor, acting as chair, will

- Ensure everyone present is introduced
- Confirm the policy and procedure within which the interview is taking place
- Listen to the appeal from the student. Clarify the basis upon which the appeal is being made.

After hearing the appeal the Governors' will consider the situation. They may decide upon one or more of the following:

- Uphold the decision of the Principal
- Make a new decision, based upon those set out in above (Procedure section 4).
- Uphold the appeal with no further action

General Notes on implementation of the procedure

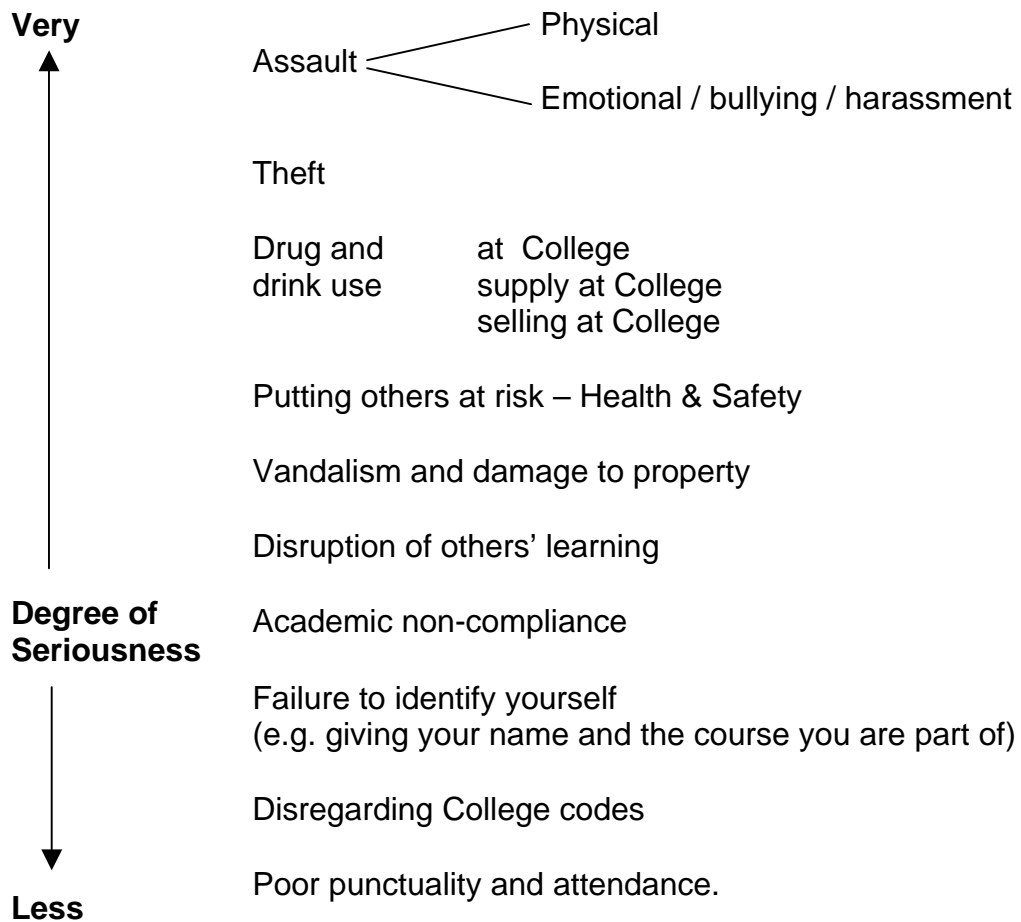
Upon the delegated authority of the Principal, a Senior Manager may temporarily suspend a student to enable an investigation to be carried out. No implied outcome of the investigation should be drawn from this.

Formal written warnings and records of informal verbal warnings will remain on the student's file for the duration of their programme with the College. After 12 months these warnings will be treated as 'spent' and may or may not be included in any reference provided by the College (subject to the legal responsibilities of the College).

Student Disciplinary Procedure

Guidance to Staff

This continuum should be used as guidance only. It is not intended to be used as a rigid framework. You should discuss specifics of a situation with your line manager (or other appropriate manager).



Guidance Matrix to Staff about the Involvement of Parents, Guardians or Carers, or Employers

Age Stage	13 - 16	16 - 19	19+ adults	SLDD 16 - 24	WBL	
					<19	19+
Informal	Parents may be informed / involved in some circumstances	Parents may be informed / involved in some circumstances	Employers may be informed / involved in some circumstances.	Parents may be informed / involved in some circumstances	Employers & parents may be informed / involved in some circumstances.	Employers may be informed/ involved in some circumstances.
Formal Verbal	Parents Informed / involved in usual circumstances	Parents Informed / involved in usual circumstances	Student may request a “supportive friend” to be involved.	Parents / Carers informed in usual circumstances.	Employer & parents involved / informed in usual circumstances.	Employer informed in usual circumstances.
Formal Written Stage 1	Parents Informed / involved in usual circumstances	Parents Informed / involved in usual circumstances	Student may request a “supportive friend” to be involved	Parents / Carers informed in usual circumstances	Employer & parents involved / informed in usual circumstances	Employer informed in usual circumstances.
Formal Written Stage 2	Parents Informed / involved in usual circumstances	Parents Informed / involved in usual circumstances	Student may request a “supportive friend” to be involved	Parents / Carers informed in usual circumstances	Employer & parents involved / informed in usual circumstances	Employer informed in usual circumstances.

In some circumstances the College is obliged to contact outside agencies such as the Child Protection Teams or other Social Services Officers, Police, Outside Managing Agents, or other Employers.

A Flowchart for Guidance to Staff on appropriate stage and key features

