

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

2025/26

**Respect yourself
Respect others
Respect the college**

What are we about?

The college's mission and vision are about equipping all of our students with the skills that they need for success in life and success in the workplace. We believe that all staff and students are important and valued and deserve to be treated with respect. We will work hard to develop strong positive professional relationships with students and their parents and carers where appropriate.

We passionately believe that people work and learn best when they feel safe, welcome, wanted and cared for and we will work hard to create an environment that achieves that for our staff and students. We recognise that past experiences may affect how we behave and we will work hard to support students where this may be the case. Our standards and expectations are very high but we also recognise that meeting them is a journey that often requires support.

Our way of working.

1. We set very high standards and expectations, but we will support you to meet them.
2. We want the college to feel safe and welcoming for all. Respect for our college and staff, students and visitors in it, whether in person or online, helps us achieve this. Behaviour not in line with our value of respect will be dealt with swiftly and fairly.
3. 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.
4. 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, support coaches or the safeguarding team.

The college values

The college has a set of values 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

Our college 'rules are centred around the value of respect – respect yourself, respect others and respect the college.

Ambition

We want our students to be ambitious for their futures and for their achievement at college, this links back to respecting yourself by working hard, taking yourself out of your comfort zone and giving your best every day.

Integrity

This also links to respecting yourself, be honest with us when you might be struggling we are here to help, own up and own your mistakes and learn from them.

Compassion

This links to respecting others, be kind and considerate to others around you, staff and students. If you see another student struggling report it to a member of staff.

Collaboration

A lot of the time your course will involve you working as part of a team. Be a good team player, take part in classroom activity and help others if they need it. This also links to respecting others.

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 and on time; wearing the appropriate clothing for your curriculum area; handing work in to deadline; engaging in lessons; taking yourself out of your comfort zone; learning from things that have gone wrong; keep on trying until you get it right; 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, we still need to work alongside people that we might not agree with. 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; by being kind and considerate to others; responding positively to respectful challenge from staff and other students; and understanding that we all have a right to be ourselves; recognising that some students and that may include you may need a little extra help so different arrangements may be in place for them. **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 (even if you didn't drop it); 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 or vape 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 all the college values and what they mean 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 and therefore help resolve things.
- 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, 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 values and expectations. **All** our staff are expected to model the behaviour we expect from you.

Our promise is really simple – you can expect:

- a) To be rewarded and praised when you do well.
- b) To be listened to, respected and have your opinions taken seriously.
- 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 am struggling?

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 try to understand why you are struggling and support you as much as we can before anything more formal is done.

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 an 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. At each stage of our process we will try and understand the context as much as possible and look at supportive ways to help you remain in college and in learning.

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 being affected significantly. The panel hearing will consider a recommendation for exclusion from a 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 will 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 be 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, often this is to give you time to calm down and reflect on the incident that led to a cooling off period. We sometimes use cooling off periods for us to reflect on an incident and decide whether it is serious enough to take to a stage three panel, this means that you may be suspended after your cooling off period.

You will 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.

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.

Where can I get more information?

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

Diane Booth – 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

Kirsty Walsh – Assistant Principal – Engineering and construction building service

Ella Brookes – Assistant Principal - Inclusion

Geoff Vincent – Head of Service – Welfare, Intervention and Wellbeing

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.
3. What to expect from a stage 3 panel hearing.

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 several of these causes for concern may lead to more formal action. | 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. A report is provided by an independent head of department. | In a formal panel meeting. The panel is convened on a recommendation for exclusion from an independent 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 help us understand the 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 are your past experiences and how these may have affected your behaviour?
- What is happening at college or outside of college that may have led to the incident?
- Have you thought about the impact that your behaviour has had on others?
- How can you make amends to the others that might have been affected?
- 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 the inclusion service).

Appendix 3

What to expect in your stage 3 panel.

Who will be there?

- The panel will be chaired by one of the Vice Principals, either Louise Knott or Diane Booth.
- They will have two other panel members with them who are not related to your curriculum area
- There will also be the investigating manager
- There is also a note taker
- We may call on your head of department to help provide some background.
- **That means there will be 5 people in the room for your panel. Please try not to be scared by this.**

What will happen?

- The chair will ask the investigating manager to summarise the report that you have been provided with. They may read this out or may pick out main points.
- The chair will then ask the panel if they have any questions for the manager.
- **You will then be asked if you have any questions. Read the report you have been sent carefully, are there things you don't agree with or that are wrong, this is your time to raise them.**
- You will then be asked to respond to the report. **It may be worth you writing down what you want to say beforehand and it is ok to read this out if you are nervous. Use your own words and be honest.** The more you say here the better chance you have of a positive outcome. It might be helpful to think about some of the points in appendix two above.
- **Showing that you are sorry, that you understand the impact on others and that you have learned a lesson is really important.**
- **You can be accompanied by a parent or a friend and they can also speak on your behalf to support you.**
- The panel may ask you questions – answer them as honestly as you can.
- You will be given a final opportunity to make your case.
- You and whoever is with you will be asked to leave the room whilst the panel think about next steps.
- You will be called back in and normally the decision of the panel is reported to you.

What can the outcome be?

- A stage 3 panel is a recommendation for exclusion – it is the most serious stage of our disciplinary process.
- The panel is there to decide whether to uphold that recommendation.
- The outcome will either be to uphold the recommendation and exclude you, to take no further action and allow you to return to college or to allow you to return with conditions.

What will it feel like?

- This is a formal process and it will feel a little strange. **Try not to get too anxious, relax, have what you want to say prepared and ask for a break if you need it.**
- The chair will try and make the process as friendly as they can and will try and help you relax.

Can I get some support to prepare?

Yes, the support coaches can help you prepare and even help you write down what you want to say, they can even attend the panel with you if that would help.