



**ANTI-BULLYING  
AND  
HARASSMENT  
(STUDENT) POLICY  
AND  
PROCEDURES**

**2022/23**

## **ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT (STUDENT) POLICY and PROCEDURES**

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### **Responsibility**

**SMT member:** Director of Safeguarding, Inclusion and Development  
**Together with:** Directors of Studies, in collaboration with all other members of the College Community and the governing body.

### **Aim**

The College has a firm commitment to equality and diversity and will not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment of any member of the College community by another.

The College recognises its obligations under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to provide measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying/harassment amongst students. This includes times when the student is not at college or under college supervision. This could relate to bullying incidences occurring anywhere off the College premises such as on public transport, or through cyberbullying.

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is the duty of the College to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act within the College community.

The aim of this policy is to assist all members of the College to develop a working environment whereby bullying and harassment are known to be unacceptable and where individuals have the confidence to come forward and speak out about harassment and bullying, should they arise, in the knowledge that their concerns will be dealt with in a confident, appropriate and fair manner.

### **What is personal harassment?**

Personal harassment can be defined as any behaviour, either direct or indirect, which is felt by the recipient to be unwanted and unreasonable, and which causes distress or discomfort.

Any conduct as REGARDS Race, Economic or social background, Gender, Sex transgender, pregnancy, parenting, marital status, Age, Religion or belief, Disability, Sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic which is unwanted, unreasonable or offensive to the recipient, or any conduct which affects the dignity of any individual or group of individuals, is harassment.

“Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can take many forms for instance, cyberbullying via text messages, social media or gaming which can include the use of images and video is often

motivated by prejudice against particular groups for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or special educational needs or disability or because a child is adopted or in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between students, or perceived differences.”

*(DFE Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, Preventing and tackling bullying July 2017 page 8)*

Bullying/harassment as stated may take many forms including:

- Unwelcome physical or verbal advances.
- Physical or verbal abuse.
- Unwanted sexual advances/conduct.
- Inappropriate jokes, graffiti, or banter.
- Remarks which are threatening, intimidating or humiliating.
- Intimidation, humiliation, ridicule or offence.
- Excessive supervision.
- Setting a person up to fail.
- Isolation (e.g., by-passing information, leaving out of meetings).
- Inappropriate gestures.
- Offensive clothing or badge-wearing.
- Offensive pictures including screen savers.
- Unfair treatment/victimisation.
- abusive e-mails; text messages, instant messenger posts or posts/material placed on websites including personal blogs and on social networking sites.

It must be noted that the above list of examples is not exhaustive but gives some indication of behaviours which may be included under the umbrella term of bullying/harassment.

Harassment and bullying may consist of a single incident or a series of incidents. Behaviour that may appear trivial as a single incident, can constitute harassment or bullying when repeated. Harassment and bullying behaviour may not always be intentional, but is always unacceptable, whether intentional or not.

### **Policy statement**

Personal harassment or bullying in the College or between members of the College community is unacceptable. The College believes that every student has the right to study in an environment which encourages harmonious relationships. All members of the College community should respect and tolerate each other.

The College recognises that personal harassment or bullying can be a form of peer on peer abuse.

Any allegations of bullying and harassment will be treated very seriously by the College and could result in disciplinary action being taken against the perpetrator.

## **Whose responsibility?**

It is the responsibility of all members of this College, its management and governing body, to ensure that the College is harassment-free.

## **What to do**

If you feel that you or others are being bullied, harassed or discriminated against within College or whilst taking part in College activities you could:

- talk to the person concerned if they feel confident enough to do so – it may be that he/she does not realise that he/she is causing offence or discomfort;
- talk to your Personal Tutor ;
- talk to your Lead Tutor ;
- talk to a Subject Tutor, Head of Department;
- talk to any other member of the College community with whom you feel comfortable which may be for example the College Counsellor, Student Well-being advisor, Student Support Advisors, the College Chaplain or the Director of Safeguarding, Inclusion and Development
- email: [equality@hereford.ac.uk](mailto:equality@hereford.ac.uk)

If you approach any of the above persons wishing to discuss a potential harassment issue they should:

- consider Safeguarding and Child Protection issues and if in doubt speak with the students Director of Safeguarding, Inclusion and Development or the College's designated Safeguarding Lead;
- find a quiet place to discuss the issue confidentially without interruption;
- listen carefully to what they are being told and ensure that they understand the full facts of the situation;
- make brief notes as a summary and explain what action will be taken next. The agreement of the person who has confided in them should be sought and a course of action agreed prior to consultation with the students Lead Tutor

**In all cases staff and students who are aware of any incidence of bullying or harassment should pass on evidence/information of this to the relevant Lead Tutor or in their absence to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

## **How will allegations of harassment be dealt with?**

Whoever you decide to talk to about a concern regarding bullying or harassment, it is important that you decide between you during the first meeting whether the talk is confidential or not, and whether it is formal or informal. The person you talk to will listen to what you have to say and talk over the situation with you. Nothing will happen without your consent.

Confidentiality regarding the situation is very important in dealing with cases of alleged harassment as if information becomes common knowledge then it is often the case that resolution through conciliation becomes less effective.

Having heard the facts about the incident and the context of the actions or behaviour causing concern there are a number of options available to help to facilitate resolution of the matter. For example:

- The student who has experienced harassment may be encouraged to talk with the alleged harasser, if they feel confident enough to do so, on their own or with a friend who should be a member of the College Community, accompanying them. Alternatively, they may be able to or wish to write to him/her to express their concerns and the opportunity to request that the harassing behaviour stop immediately.
- The Lead Tutor may talk to the alleged harasser directly to try and resolve the conflict. The purpose of the conversation would be to make the respondent aware of the way his/her behaviour has been perceived and ask him/her not to repeat it.
- A meeting could be facilitated by the students Lead Tutor between both parties to give the student the opportunity to talk to the alleged harasser and explain their view of the offending behaviour.

In most cases, if you agree, the person you talk to will try to resolve the matter informally and this will probably mean someone talking to the person(s) concerned, and trying to end the situation as quickly as possible.

The action outlined above will be appropriate in many cases and will often be sufficient to resolve the matter. If however, a conciliatory approach does not achieve a satisfactory result or the nature of the incident being reported prompts the person feeling harassed to take a more formal approach, a formal complaint can be made. Once this has been done, the person you tell is obliged to do something to try and end the situation. In this case, it is also important for one of you to make a confidential record of what is said between you on which you are both agreed and which is dated. This could be important for future reference. Other people may have to get involved and disciplinary action may be taken.

The full explanation of expectations with regards to appropriate student behaviour for students is set out in the College Charter. Students may also refer to the Complaints Procedures if they feel appropriate if they wish to challenge the way in which an incident may have been handled.

Whatever approach or action is taken it will always be taken following discussion with, agreement and consent of the individual concerned. Action to be taken will be decided in collaboration with the individual student reporting the incident which may include a full investigation and parents/guardians may be informed if deemed appropriate. The Police and other external agencies, including Local Authority Children's Services, may also be informed depending on the severity of the incident reported and if it is felt that the student is at risk of significant harm.

*Related documents:*

- *Peer on Peer Abuse Policy*
- *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures*
- *Student Behaviour, Absence and Review Policy and Procedures*
- *Complaints Policy*
- *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy*
- *Exclusion Policy and Procedures*

*Useful links:*

*[www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school](http://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school)*