

Student Bullying and Harassment Policy

Procedures

Reporting Bullying and Harassment

Any student subjected to harassment or bullying can report it to their tutor, support staff or Head of Faculty who will take appropriate action. They will listen to the allegation and support the student in deciding what they would like to happen next. The discussion will be confidential and no further action will be taken without the student's permission unless the member of staff believes that significant health and safety, criminal, safeguarding or other risks are present. In such cases, the member of staff will inform the student of their need to take action against the alleged bully / harasser and follow safeguarding and / or disciplinary procedures.

Students can also report bullying and harassment by contacting the Safeguarding team:

safeguarding@peterborough.ac.uk (Peterborough) or
Safeguarding@stamford.ac.uk (Stamford)

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment must be dealt with by the Safeguarding Team whose response will be on a case by case basis. Actions may result in internal management of the allegation, referral for Early Help or Children's / Adult Services and or to the police. Support will be tailored appropriately to the victim and alleged bully / harasser, engaging with multi agency support e.g. Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC's), Children and Young Peoples Sexual Violence Advisors (Chivas), Rape Crisis, The Survivors Trust.

All prejudiced language or behaviour should be challenged and how that challenge is made will depend on the circumstances and severity of the incident, and on any previous similar incidents involving either parties.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) provide a dedicated helpline for young people and adults who have experienced sexual harassment or abuse at school or college and are also available to provide advice and guidance for concerned adults and professionals. Contact details are: [0800 136 663](tel:0800136663) or email help@nspcc.org.uk

When dealing with any incident, members of staff will:

- Treat every issue seriously – remembering that someone's perception is their reality at the time and that incidents should never be dismissed or ignored

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Responsibility: Assistant Principal Student Experience and Support

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Approved By: The Policies Approvals Group

Review Date: September 2023

Site: Staff Intranet, IEG, Peterborough, Stamford

- Respond immediately – acknowledging that the incident has happened and offering support to the victim of the incident
- Reinforce the Group position on discrimination and prejudice
- Focus on the bully or harasser's behaviour, rather than the person – making sure that they know that the behaviour is not acceptable
- Ensure that witnesses know what behaviour was not acceptable and why

The person investigating will:

- Offer immediate support to the alleged victim, acknowledging their feelings, reassuring them that the matter will be treated seriously and ascertaining whether there have been incidents on previous occasions
- Ensure that both parties have a fair hearing and are given the opportunity separately to fully explain the incident
- Approach witnesses to gain their accounts of the incident (in writing if appropriate)
- Where appropriate, bring both parties together to give them a chance to be involved in resolving the situation
- Determine whether the incident was prejudice-related, considered bullying and or harassment or not, and ensure that the reasons why are explained to all parties involved
- Give the alleged bully/harasser the opportunity to take responsibility for their actions and to try to repair the harm that they have caused
- Address underlying issues
- Ensure that all parties, including the witnesses, understand what is being done to address the incident and the reasons behind this
- Inform relevant members of the senior leadership team and parents/carers where this is deemed appropriate
- Follow up with both parties after an agreed time period to decide whether any further action is needed

Possible courses of action:

- Review impact on the student and possible support pathways required
- Take no further action and record the incident, keeping the situation under review, recommending the student advises if further incidents occur
- If the alleged bully / harasser has not already been approached, request they stop the offending behaviour and again keep the situation under review
- Begin formal investigations into the allegations
- See Appendix 3 for a flowchart related to harassment incidents

Initial Meeting and Investigation

The member of staff dealing with the allegation of bullying / harassment should set up an initial interview with both parties separately and explain the Student Code of Conduct and expectations around bullying / harassment. The student

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should be supported to make a written statement as part of this fact-finding.

The facts for both parties relating to the allegations should be identified along with discussions around options to resolve or potential disciplinary action.

Once the facts have been considered a decision will be made either to:

- Take no action, because the allegation has not been substantiated
- Initiate the Student Disciplinary procedure
- Take action to resolve issues between both parties.

Actions to resolve could include:

- Both parties agreeing that they will stay away from each other, advising that they will be monitored to ensure that bullying / harassment does not reoccur
- Both parties agree to meet together with representatives if required as part of mediation or restorative justice. This may be facilitated by the Duty Principal / Duty Manager, Safer Schools Police Officer or appropriate member of the Safeguarding / Student Service Team
- Making arrangements for both parties to study as separately as possible.

If the student is a victim of a hate crime, they should be offered the opportunity to report this to the Safer Schools Officer / police (Peterborough) or the police (Stamford)

Where Cyber Bullying has taken place evidence should be shared with the Safeguarding Team along with the member of staff confirming in writing, what they have seen. At this stage, it is important to advise the student to block the alleged bully / harasser from being able to contact them via social media / phone. Failure to do so could impact the investigation.

Any reports of abuse involving students with SEND will require close liaison with a safeguarding officer and the Additional Learning Support team.

Mediation / Restorative Justice

The mediator can help participants to resolve their dispute and to co-exist at the College, through using the following procedure:

- All parties define the problem as they see it, individually with the mediator who records this
- At the end of the individual session with the mediator, the mediator ascertains the parties are willing to meet together, along with the mediator. This is the point when real mediation can take place, if all parties are willing to try, to move towards reconciliation

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- At the joint meeting, led by the mediator, all parties should be encouraged to speak one at a time. The mediator needs to firmly control the meeting.
- The mediator sets up a plan of action that will satisfy each party and obtains agreement on these
- A follow-up meeting is agreed and the situation monitored at agreed intervals
- Restorative justice is something with which the Safer Schools Officer / police and or Duty Principal / Duty Manager can assist.

Student Disciplinary Procedure

The Student Disciplinary Procedure may be invoked in the case of particularly serious incidents of bullying / harassment or, following mediation where no satisfactory plan of action can be formulated or if the perpetrator continues his / her behaviour.

Recording

All incidents of reported bullying / harassment must be recorded on pro monitor along with student statements, actions and outcomes.

Formal complaints and disciplinary action will be monitored and reported through the Student and / or Staff Disciplinary Procedures and Complaints monitoring processes.