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TITLE: Bullying/Harassment Procedure - Students		SAF02P	

- 1 **Introduction.** The College aims to promote respect for others, intolerance of bullying and harassment, the importance of self-discipline and the right to be treated with dignity and respect. All staff have a duty to establish and maintain a learning environment free from bullying. Bullying is defined as any unsolicited or unwelcome act that humiliates, intimidates or undermines the individual involved. There is no justification whatsoever for bullying behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form. Differences in race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and ability never give grounds for bullying behaviour.

2. **Scope.** This procedure applies to all students whilst on College premises. The College is not directly responsible for bullying/harassment off their premises although each case will be dealt with individually to see if there is any way the college can support or should intervene if the incident is particularly serious or violent.

3. **Requirements - General considerations**
 - 3.1 Bullying is a subjective experience and can take many forms, making it extremely difficult to define. Children, young people and adults can instigate bullying. The nature of bullying is changing and evolving as technology develops. Bullying via the internet or through the use of mobile phones and other devices (cyberbullying) is now common. This is also a very serious form of bullying because the bullying can follow the victim home.

 - 3.2 The student must decide whether to ask for confidential counselling, and whether to proceed with a formal complaint. Examples of bullying behaviour include but are not limited to:
 - Derogatory remarks inc name calling, taunting, mocking
 - Insensitive jokes or pranks
 - Insulting or aggressive behaviour inc kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings
 - Ignoring or excluding the individual, gossiping and spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours
 - Sexual aggression of any kind
 - Intimidation by, for example, aggressive or threatening behaviour, inciting someone to violence, extremism or terrorism
 - Inappropriate text messaging, emails, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet
 - Any other action or incident which the individual or group of individuals believes constitutes harassment or bullying
 - Although sometimes occurring between two individuals in isolation, it can also take place in the presence of others

 - 3.3 The actions listed above must be viewed in terms of distress they cause the individual. It is the perceptions of the recipient that determine whether any action or statement can be viewed as bullying.

 - 3.4 A member of staff who receives a complaint of bullying, or is witness to bullying, must refer the complaint or incident for investigation to the relevant Programme

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Leader/Curriculum Manager to ensure that the problem is resolved as quickly as possible and then complete an online Incident Report Form, identifying bullying. A copy of this will be sent to the curriculum staff and the Student Services and Safeguarding Manager who will log the details under Safeguarding and will monitor the progress of the complaint.

3.5 Confidentiality of the student must be observed where practical.

4 Requirements – Procedures for Staff

4.1 Complaints raised by students or a member of staff on behalf of a student will be reviewed seriously and investigated confidentially by the relevant a Programme Leader and/or Curriculum Manager.

4.2 In the first instance this may take the form of mediation between the parties so that the matter can be resolved quickly. The Student Services and Safeguarding Manager, Safeguarding and Transitions Officer and Student Support Advisers will support in this mediation process if it is felt the situation is appropriate for mediation ie there has been no physical assault and the incident is of a nature where mediation could be helpful.

4.3 If the nature of the incident is deemed to be of a more serious nature then the college student discipline procedure must be instigated by the curriculum area in order to investigate the incident and then take the appropriate action

4.4 The aim of the investigation is to gather all the facts pertinent to the case to inform a decision as to whether the allegations have been upheld.

4.5 Separate interviews shall take place with the complainant, alleged perpetrator and any witness(es). All parties to these proceedings may be accompanied by a parent, friend or Student Support Adviser.

4.6 Notes will be taken and the interviewees will be asked to sign these to indicate that they are an accurate reflection of the interview. Strict confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation and the importance of this will be emphasised to those interviewed as part of the process.

4.7 The investigation should be concluded within four weeks of the complaint being received. On completion of the investigation, the Curriculum Manager will assess the evidence gathered and make a decision as to whether the complaint is upheld.

4.8 The situation must be monitored to ensure that harassment does not recur and the investigation should include a recommendation as to the person(s) who will be responsible for monitoring the situation and the relevant timescale.

4.9 The investigating Curriculum Manager must keep a detailed written record of the investigation and findings. All parties must be advised of the findings, which must also

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be given in writing. A report must then be sent to the Student Services and Safeguarding Manager who will update CPOMs.

- 4.10 If disciplinary action is justified, the appropriate action will be arranged in line with the College Disciplinary Procedure. All records to be entered on ProMonitor.
- 4.11 Where a complaint is not upheld, it is advisable to consider the action that might be taken and the support that could be provided to both parties. Should this be deemed necessary the Student Services and Manager should be asked to advise on appropriate support.
- 4.12 If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, or with the way in which the complaint was handled, then a written request for the case to be reconsidered should be made to the Deputy Principal within 5 working days of receiving the investigating Curriculum Manager's decision.
- 4.13 The Deputy Principal will then carry out an independent hearing. If this outcome is still deemed unsatisfactory by any of the parties, an appeal can be made, within a further 5 working days, to the Principal and Chief Executive.

This procedure should be read in conjunction to the Safeguarding Procedure and Social Networking Policy.

End of Procedure

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