



European Union

European
Social Fund



Document No:	SS011
Issue No.	5
Issue Date:	2021-05-17
Renewal Date:	2024-05-17
Originator:	Student Services
Responsibility:	Deputy Principal Finance

ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY FOR STUDENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Bullying or harassment of any kind is unacceptable at Leicester College.

We seek to provide a safe and secure environment in which all students can work together harmoniously, and in which they can learn effectively and secure the qualifications they are seeking. This document sets out the College’s policy and procedures for reporting and dealing with bullying and harassment. It covers:

- The aims and objectives of the policy
- A definition of bullying and harassment and its effects on students
- Creating a safe environment for all students
- The procedures that should be followed by all staff when they become aware that a student is being bullied
- Guidance for students and further sources of help (Appendix 1)

1.2 This Policy applies to all College activity including ESF funded activity.

2. THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COLLEGE’S ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

2.1 The Policy is written with the following aims and objectives:

- To raise awareness amongst staff, students and other stakeholders of the nature of bullying and harassment and its harmful effect

- To establish anti-bullying work as an integral part of the College's strategy on creating a safe and healthy environment for all students to thrive, rather than just dealing with incidents once they occur
- To establish a clear and consistent procedure for the reporting, monitoring and follow up of all bullying and harassment incidents
- To establish a monitoring procedure for bullying and harassment incidents, which will inform any future review of the policy
- To ensure that all students are aware of their entitlement to support. The reporting procedures and what they should expect in terms of follow up action.

3. WHAT CONSTITUTES BULLYING OR HARASSMENT?

3.1 There is no legal definition of bullying.

However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger).

3.2 **Bullying** may take place over a long period or may consist of single acts of physical, verbal or non verbal conduct which the recipient finds unwelcome, offensive, upsetting or threatening.

3.3 **Harassment** is defined within the law as "engaging in unlawful conduct which has the purpose of violating other person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for that person". **Harassment may be intentional or unintentional; the main consideration is the impact that it has on the person or group targeted.**

3.4 Bullying is present behind many forms of harassment. When bullying has a focus (e.g. race or gender) it is sometimes expressed - for example - as racial or sexual harassment. Through the introduction of recent equalities legislation, harassment or bullying on particular grounds (age, race/ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity and religion/belief) is illegal, and the College has specific duties to record, monitor and follow up such incidents. It must also report them to external agencies (e.g. police), as appropriate. These actions may also amount to

unlawful discrimination or hate crime, for which the perpetrator and college could be held liable.

- 3.5 As a result of the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry, a racist incident was defined as:
“Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or by any other person.”

This definition has been extended to cover all other equalities areas of harassment such as homophobia.

This means that if the victim of an incident of bullying or harassment, (or any third party), perceives an incident to be racist, homophobic, disablist etc., it should be recorded and investigated as such, even if the outcome shows that this was not the case.

- 3.6 Bullying or harassment can take many forms, including:

- **Unwanted physical contact** ranging from touching to serious assault, including pushing, hitting, kicking, slapping, pulling hair, deliberately tripping, taking and hiding belongings, damaging belongings etc.
- **Unwanted verbal or written contact** including name-calling, insults, public humiliation, inappropriate banter, suggestive remarks, innuendoes, offensive jokes or language. All of the above can also be sent by email, text or multimedia messages from mobile phones or posted on social media sites
- **Non verbal harassment** e.g. staring or gestures
- **Indirect harassment** such as spreading malicious gossip and rumours, ostracisation, ignoring and withdrawal of friendship, isolation and exclusion from activities. It also includes unwanted visual display of posters, graffiti, screensavers etc. This behaviour may involve the use of social media.
- **Unwanted coercion** such as pressure to join a particular “gang”, political group etc.
- **Unwelcome sexual advances** or pressure for sexual activity where this is unwelcome
- **Victimisation** e.g. singling out an individual for particular treatment or criticism
- **Intimidation** by, for example, aggressive or threatening behaviour
- **Any other actions or incidents which the individual or group of individuals believe amounts to harassment or bullying, be this direct or indirect, or face to face or via social media.**

- 3.7 The College’s Student Disciplinary Procedure states that certain behaviours are unacceptable, including:

- Offensive language and/or behaviour including contravention of Equal Opportunities Policy
- Any bullying, taunting, or harassment of others whether directly or by email, mobile phone or social media.

All such behaviours should be dealt with in line with the Disciplinary Procedure and may even constitute a Gross Breach.

- 3.8 There is a significant amount of evidence that shows that bullying has a destructive and harmful long-term impact on the lives of young people, not only on those being bullied, but also on those who bully, and those who stand by. It can lead to feelings of self-doubt, lack of confidence, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression and sometimes even suicide. It can also affect the ability of a young person to enjoy and achieve.

4. CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS

- 4.1 Leicester College is committed to creating a safe, caring and supportive environment for all students so that they can succeed. This policy recognises that the reduction of bullying will not be achieved through sanctions alone but requires a wide range of preventative measures that are educational, and address the needs of the perpetrators as well as the victims.
- 4.2 Teachers, and particularly Learning Coaches, can do much to create an environment and ethos in which students are encouraged to show respect to each other. In public places too (refectories, libraries and learning resource centres and corridors), all staff can also help create a similar environment. Everyone should be vigilant for signs of bullying or harassment and where it occurs, take active steps to address it, either directly or indirectly.

In addition, at a College wide level, we will:

- Produce on-going publicity about students' entitlements to support and reporting procedures
- Publicise a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment
- Provide training for all staff so that they are all aware of the policy and procedures
- Ensure that the policy and procedures are included in all key student publications and on Moodle
- Ensure that Anti-Bullying issues are covered in induction and PSD sessions
- Use a range of opportunities to promote anti-bullying work e.g. Anti-Bullying Week
- Develop a range of enrichment activities to encourage students from different backgrounds to mix and appreciate diversity, and to encourage better co-operation and teamwork
- Ensure that positive behaviour is encouraged and expected at all times
- Actively promote the range of support for victims of bullying e.g. Learning Mentors, Counsellors, Student Union Executive
- Provide students with information about cyber safety and using social media responsibly
- Developing multi-agency approaches to bullying and harassment e.g. liaison with Police, schools, Children and Young People's Services etc.

5. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

Reporting

- 5.1 If any member of staff sees bullying taking place or suspects it is happening, or is told that it is happening, they should take action to safeguard the victim and the report the incident to the Director for the relevant area or the Campus Wardens.
- 5.2 Bullying and harassment incidents should be recorded on ProMonitor under the 'meetings' tab. Further clarification of the incident and the action taken is possible by selecting the appropriate type of meeting. Details should be recorded on the victim and perpetrator's profile. If disciplinary action is taken against the perpetrator, then this should be recorded as a separate meeting, in addition to the entry as a bullying and harassment incident. The ProMonitor report PM6007 is available to identify incidents of bullying and harassment, at curriculum, programme, course code and student level. A similar process for apprentices should be followed using SharePoint.

Investigation and Follow up Action

- 5.3 Good practice in dealing with bullying and harassment includes:
- never ignoring suspected bullying or harassment
 - not making premature assumptions about what has happened or who has done what
 - listening carefully to all accounts – the person who is being bullied or harassed, the alleged perpetrator, and others who may have seen or know about what is going on
 - adopting a problem-solving approach which seeks to find out what is happening and who is doing what to whom
 - following up repeatedly, checking that bullying or harassment has not resumed
- 5.4 If the bullying or harassment has any Child Protection or Vulnerable Adult Protection implications, or if the safety of a student is at risk, the staff member must refer the case to a member of the Safeguarding Team, following that agreed policy and procedure. If it is considered that the harassment may constitute a hate crime, it will be referred to the Director of Student Services and Marketing to liaise with the Police.
- 5.5 If the bullying involves a member of staff as a victim or perpetrator, advice should be sought from HR and the Employee Bullying and Harassment Policy followed.

Support for the Victim

- 5.6 The College recommends a victim-centred approach to tackling bullying and harassment, and so the victim should be involved in discussions about appropriate action and should always be informed of what has been done to resolve the situation.

- 5.7 The nature of support and actions taken for the victim may differ according to their age and ability (e.g. whether or not to involve parents/carers). The Student Services Managers or Student Engagement Team (SET) may be able to advise on procedures and follow up actions. The Campus Wardens may be able to advise on personal safety and security. If the student would benefit from peer support, the Student Union could be involved.

Dealing with the perpetrator

- 5.8 In terms of action against the perpetrator, if it seems that bullying or harassment has taken place, then the College's Student Disciplinary Procedure shows several possible courses of action, depending on the severity of the case, and must be followed. Curriculum Area Managers should use their experience and judgement as to the most appropriate stage to implement, and any actions to take. The incident should be recorded as one of bullying and harassment.

Monitoring and Review

- 5.9 As indicated above, it is very important to keep incidents of bullying or harassment under review after they have apparently been dealt with. It is not uncommon for them to resume.

Appendix 1: GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS

Bullying and Harassment – Information for Students

If you are being bullied, this situation is wrong and can be stopped.

You must:

- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- Tell a member of staff what has happened straight away

If you have been bullied:

- Tell a member of college staff. This can be:
 - ✓ Your Learning Coach or any of your teachers
 - ✓ Reception/ Information Centre Staff
 - ✓ Student Services' staff (e.g. a Learning Mentor)
 - ✓ A Campus Warden or any other member of staff (all college staff wear badges)
 - ✓ The safeguarding team on 07825175729 or 07917370304
- If you are scared to tell a member of staff by yourself, you can ask a friend to come with you
- You can also speak to a member of the Student Union Executive, if you would rather talk to another student
- You can tell your family and ask them to contact the College

Though sometimes it may seem difficult to be heard, it is important to keep speaking up until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying.

It is easy to blame yourself for what has happened but being bullied is not your fault.

When you are talking to a member of staff about bullying or harassment, it is sometimes difficult to be clear about what happened as you may be upset, but try to say:-

- what has happened to you?
- how often it has happened?
- who was involved?
- who saw what was happening?
- where it happened and when?
- what you have already done about it?1

What is considered to be bullying?

- **Unwanted physical contact** ranging from touching to serious assault, including pushing, hitting, kicking, slapping, pulling hair, deliberately tripping, taking and hiding belongings, damaging belongings etc.
- **Unwanted verbal or written contact** including name-calling, insults, public humiliation, inappropriate banter, suggestive remarks, innuendoes, offensive jokes or

language. All of the above can also be sent by email, text or multi media messages from mobile phones or posted on internet sites

- **Non verbal harassment** e.g. staring or gestures
- **Indirect harassment** such as spreading malicious gossip and rumours, ostracisation, ignoring and withdrawal of friendship, isolation and exclusion from activities. It also includes unwanted visual display of posters, graffiti, screensavers etc.
- **Unwanted coercion** such as pressure to join a particular “gang”, political group etc.
- **Unwelcome sexual advances** or pressure for sexual activity where this is unwelcome
- **Victimisation** e.g. singling out an individual for particular treatment or criticism
- **Intimidation** by, for example, aggressive or threatening behaviour
- **Any other actions or incidents which the individual or group of individuals believe amounts to harassment or bullying.**

What will happen after I have reported bullying?

- You are entitled to get feedback about what has happened as a result of your report and what actions have been taken to prevent it happening again.
- If the incident is a serious assault, or is harassment on grounds of race, religion, gender, disability, ethnicity or sexuality, it may constitute a hate crime, and this may be reported to the Police who will investigate and provide support. Your tutor will discuss this with Student Services.

Where can I go for support?

Within the College, you can ask for support from any member of staff, and your Learning Coach should be able to provide this on an on-going basis. However, specific support is available from the Learning Mentors, the Counsellors and the Student Engagement Team. You can also go to the Student Union if you want support from other students.

There are a wide range of external organisations which can also provide advice and support:

Childline:

Phone: **Freephone 0800 1111** www.childline.org.uk

Or write to: **FREEPOST NATN 1111 London E1 6BR**

The phone call or letter is free. The helpline is confidential.

NSPCC

www.nspcc.org.uk Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

EACH (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia)

Helpline: 0808 1000 143 (10am - 4pm Mon-Fri)

www.eachaction.org.uk Email: info@eachaction.org.uk

Police:

Hate crime reporting (racism, homophobia, disablism) Tel: 0116 222 2222

Other useful websites:

www.stonewall.org.uk/
(information and facts about homophobic bullying)

www.beyondbullying.com (Leicestershire Children and Young People's Services anti-bullying site)

www.bullying.co.uk provides an email advice service and a range of information and guidance