Student Positive Engagement & Behaviour Policy

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This policy has been reviewed in line with the Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following categories of individual as Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (gender), Sexual orientation and Disability. We will continue to monitor this policy and to ensure that it has equal access and does not discriminate against anyone, especially any person/s listed under any protected characteristic.

Purpose

This policy aims to provide clear guidance on the Bedford College Group's approach to student engagement and positive behaviour. It outlines our high expectations for student conduct and details the steps to take when these standards are not met, ensuring a safe and productive learning environment for everyone at The Bedford College Group (TBCG).

- The scope of this policy includes the whole college community including staff, students, parents, carers, employers, volunteers, and partners.
- This policy applies when students are on college premises, on college transport or on college related activities off site. The college will also act where behaviour, including online behaviour, can be linked to the college and could bring the college into disrepute and/or endanger its staff and/or students.
- The policy does not cover academic misconduct, which is investigated as part of the requirements of the awarding body.
- Students on subcontracted provision will be subject to the subcontracted providers own behaviour and disciplinary procedures.

Scope

This policy concerns the engagement, behaviour support and follow up of students and apprentices (for the purposes of this policy students and apprentices will be referred to as students).

Principles

The aims of this policy are to support students in achieving their full potential and limit forms of inappropriate behaviour by:

- Setting clear high behavioural expectations for students.
- Providing guidance about how to understand what causes certain behaviours and support students who give cause for concern without instigating undue sanctions.
- Recognising the difference between the need for support and the need for sanctions.
- Providing a clear framework for behaviour management in a supportive, firm, transparent and fair way.
- Raising awareness of what constitutes inappropriate behaviour, peer on peer abuse including bullying, discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Promoting a respectful environment where students feel safe, supported, and able to raise concerns about another person's behaviour.
- Challenging inappropriate or unwanted behaviour, ensuring that positive action is taken to establish an acceptable working relationship, where possible.
- Ensuring that in cases where behaviour constitutes a disciplinary or is illegal, appropriate action is taken through this process and in line with safeguarding guidelines as appropriate.

This policy is built on the use of trauma informed approaches and restorative practice whereby there is an understanding that trauma exposure can impact an individual's neurological, biological, psychological, and social development. A trauma informed approach to behaviour requires staff to aim to understand what a student is trying to communicate through their behaviour. When implementing a trauma informed approach to behaviour support, staff try to understand what Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are leading to certain behaviours and intervene appropriately.

Similarly, this policy also references the use of neurodiversity-informed approaches and inclusive practices, recognising that neurological differences of students. A neurodiversity-informed approach to behaviour requires staff to understand and respect the unique ways in which neurodiverse individuals perceive and interact with the world. When implementing this approach, staff aim to identify and accommodate the specific needs and strengths of neurodiverse students, fostering an environment where all students can thrive. This involves creating supportive strategies that acknowledge sensory sensitivities, communication preferences, and learning styles, ensuring that interventions are respectful and empowering.

Exclusion or withdrawal from college should be considered only as a last resort, after all reasonable efforts to encourage behavioural change have been exhausted. However, exceptions may be made in cases where a student's behaviour presents a significant risk to their own safety or the safety of others, and where no other effective management strategies are available.

To ensure a consistent and coordinated approach, all behaviour management actions will be overseen by the relevant curriculum area. Initially, responsibility lies with the student's curriculum, with escalation to the Head of School, if necessary. Student Services and Additional Learning Support teams are also available to offer support or additional assistance as required

The Code of Conduct (Appendix A) sets out the college requirements for student behaviours and positive engagements whilst on college premises or taking part in college activities, so that all students know what is expected of them.

Summary of Expectations

- Wear their lanyard and ID badge at all times, ensuring it is visible while on college premises (except where a risk assessment has identified removal is required and is directed by tutors or lecturers for health and safety reasons).
- Foster a safe and peaceful environment by refraining from any act of violence or threat of violence and follow the college's health and safety guidance.
- Smoke and vape only in designated smoking shelters or off-site.
- Keep the college and our local community safe, clean, and healthy for everyone.
- Dress in a manner appropriate to the workplace and/or their college working environment.
- Maintain a drug-free and alcohol-free environment on college premises.
- Attend college in a sober state, free from the influence of any controlled substances.
- Record, create, share, or distribute images or videos responsibly, ensuring they do not cause offense, are illegal or bring the college into disrepute.
- Keep the college premises free from weapons or any items intended to cause injury.
- Follow the arrangements for parking cars, motorcycles, and bicycles on college premises and observe speed regulations on the college site.
- Be respectful to residents and businesses who live and work near the college at all times.
- Use language that is respectful and non-offensive on the college campus and while representing the college off-site.
- Promote an inclusive environment by refraining from discrimination, harassment, or victimisation of others.
- Understand that the college reserves the right to investigate incidents that occur off-site if they involve students or staff.

This is not an exhaustive list.

These behaviours should be adhered to whether students are on college premises, on trips, work experience, industry placement, or residential activities, travelling to and from college or representing the college at any event.

Parental Involvement

TBCG believes that a partnership approach between students, staff and, where appropriate, parents or carers is key to student success. We value the engagement and support of parents and carers, particularly those of students under 18 years (or under 25 years for students with additional learning needs).

A student's parent or carer may be contacted on matters relating to attendance, behaviour, academic progress or any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of the student; consent will be sought in most situations before such contact is made. However, TBCG reserves the right to contact parents or carers without consent if significant concern arises, if there is notable risk to the student or others, or if there is a formal disciplinary process.

Our aim is to balance the involvement of parents or carers with an appreciation on the importance of empowering students. Students will be notified of the College's information sharing and parental involvement protocol at their enrolment and/or during the induction process. Parents or Carers will only be contacted in relation to behavioural issues if it is in the student's best interests. Apprentices' attendance, behaviour and progression will be discussed with employers due to their contract of employment and apprenticeship agreement.

Higher Skills students are adults and follow the College Higher Skills polices including attendance, disciplinary, complaints and where required the fitness to practise policy. Students on professional programmes have specific attendance and personal development standards to adhere to.

Care Experienced Students

TBCG will always give due care and attention are given to the lived experiences and individual needs of any care experienced students (Child in Care, Care Leaver and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child). Any interventions will be discussed with and include input from the relevant local authorities including Social Workers, PA's and Virtual School, and carers, ensuring that responses are supportive, proportionate, and trauma-informed. This approach aligns with NICE guidance on supporting positive relationships and behaviour in looked-after children

Annex A – Student Code of Conduct

All students are asked to sign and agree to the student code of conduct as part of their induction.

The Bedford College Group - Student Code of Conduct



The Student Code of Conduct applies to all students at The Bedford College Group.
It applies to:

- Any activities you take part in while a student at the College, this includes college trips, work experience and enrichment clubs
- Services or facilities you use while a student at college
- Your presence on any premises owned, leased or managed by The Bedford College Group.

As a member of The Bedford College Group community, you agree to:

- Show commitment to your learning

Positive behaviour:
Behaviours we will promote:

- Good punctuality and attendance
- Respect for yourself and others
- Respect for the college environment
- High aspirations for yourself

Behaviours we will challenge:

- Not wearing your College ID badge
- Disrespect for College property
- Smoking or vaping outside of designated areas
- Being under the influence and/or possession of drugs or alcohol
- Disrespect for others
- Poor punctuality and attendance
- Swearing and use of abusive or derogatory language
- Bullying and discrimination – in college, out of college or online
- Lack of commitment to your studies
- Not wearing the correct uniform or PPE

Our approach to positive behaviour recognises that positive working relationships are key to success. Where members of our College community get things wrong, we aim to support them to get it right. One of the ways we do this could be through restorative practice. This way of working together focuses on repairing the harm that some behaviour may have caused and aims to resolve conflict so that students can continue to learn and tutors can continue to teach.

At times it may be necessary to issue disciplinary warnings when your conduct does not meet the high expectations, we have of you. Our Positive Engagement & Behaviours Policy gives guidance on how we use warnings. You will always be offered support to meet and exceed our expectations. By signing this form, you are agreeing that you understand your responsibilities, will follow and uphold them.

Name: Signature:

Course: Date:

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Annex B – Student Disciplinary Process

Most minor infringements of the Student Code of Conduct will be dealt with informally by members of college staff. The main aim of such informal warnings is to draw to the attention of the student that the conduct in question is not acceptable in a college community environment due to the detrimental implications for the student or others.

Under these circumstances, college staff will offer support to the student via an action plan and will log details on ProMonitor so that teaching staff are aware of any sanctions put in place.

Exploration & Support (Stage '0')

Stage 0 represents an explorative and supportive stage and in most incidences must be undertaken before starting the disciplinary process. It is not a formal stage of the process but acts as a reminder in line with the Positive Engagement and Behaviours Policy. Support at Stage 0 can be offered by a tutor or Learning Mentor following a referral or an initial conversation / meeting with a student and recorded on ProMonitor/Onefile.

It is important at this stage that reasons for behaviour / concerns are fully explored and identified to ensure effective support is put in place.

Reasons for Stage 0 exploration and support could include:

- Persistent / sporadic unauthorised attendance
- Persistent / sporadic lateness and lack of punctuality
- Persistent failure to meet set deadlines
- Repeated classroom disruption which impacts on the learning environment for others
- Repeated requirement for a replacement ID badge
- Failure to adhere to professional standards in salons, workshops or other practical learning spaces
- Refusal to comply with instructions given by a member of staff
- Persistent failure to display a student ID card on college premises
- Dropping litter
- Smoking/vaping outside of designated areas
- Rowdy or inconsiderate behaviour

On average Stage 0 support should not exceed a 6week duration without seeing improvements or impact.

Stage 1

It is not possible to provide a comprehensive definition of what constitutes misconduct. However, examples leading to a stage 1 meeting would include, but are not limited to:

- Not engaging with Stage 0 support
- Consistently not meeting SMART targets set within Stage 0 support

Stage 2

- Not engaging with Stage 1 support
- Consistently not meeting SMART targets set within Stage 1 action plan
- Breach of college safety rules
- Plagiarism, collusion or cheating, including use of artificial intelligence (AI) to produce assessed material

Stage 3

Examples of where a student may complete a Stage would include, but are not limited to:

- Violence or threat of violence, including intent to harm, maim or kill others
- Conduct or language which breaches the college policies on equality and diversity, safeguarding and professional conduct
- discrimination
- harassment or victimisation of another member of the college community (including sexual harassment and child on child abuse)
- possession or use of alcohol on college premises
- possession or use of drugs or other illegal substances
- possession of drug paraphernalia, including grinders
- theft
- possession or use of an offensive weapon or other items which might be regarded as offensive weapons, or any article made or adapted for causing injury, or intended to cause injury
- wilful damage to college property
- wilful damage to the property of a member of the college community
- sharing inappropriate images, including sharing on smart devices
- sharing any image of a member of the college community without their consent
- up-skirting or downblousing
- criminal activity
- refusal to leave a lesson when requested to by a member of staff, resulting in the class being terminated or evacuated
- knowingly inviting or aiding non-students to access college premises
- not meeting targets set as part of the action plan at a stage 2 Warning

This list is not exhaustive.

Note: Acts of gross misconduct, particularly those involving violence or threat of violence to any member of the college community, sexual harassment, sexual violence, possession of drugs or possession of offensive weapons will lead to permanent dismissal unless significant mitigating circumstances are present.

Note: Any student who has caused damage to college property, or another member of the college community's property, may be expected to supporting in the repair or replacement of the article(s) unless significant mitigating circumstances are present.

Note: Any student whose gross misconduct relates to an act of violence, sexual harassment or serious act(s) of discriminatory behaviour or speech or child on child abuse must be recorded on CPOMs and followed up once an outcome has been determined. All incidents of student on student (child on child KCSiE 2025) must be recorded against both the alleged victim(s) and perpetrator(s), labelled appropriately and linked.

Students with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP)

Students with Educational Health Care Plans must not receive a Behaviour warning until a discussion has taken place with the Group Director of Access and Inclusion.

At all stages, staff may wish to:

- Involve a student's parents / carer professionals involved in their care at an earlier stage in the process, whatever the age of the student
- Have an additional discussion with the student at the informal stage, before further action is taken, and allow enough time for the student to demonstrate appropriate behaviour before moving on to the next stage
- Following an incident, monitor the situation closely for a period of up to 2 weeks
- Where students involved in an incident come from different programme areas, arrange a meeting between the relevant tutors to discuss an appropriate way forward for all parties. This may need to be overseen by an appropriate manager
- Take account of a student's learning difficulties and/or disabilities as mitigating circumstances when determining the outcome
- Reasonable adjustments must be made, for instance, allowing the student to be accompanied by more than one person in a Behaviour meeting if they wish (e.g. Autism Coordinator etc).

Looked After Children

Students whom are looked after or leaving care must not receive a disciplinary / warning until the Group Director of Safeguarding & Wellbeing (Designated Teacher for Looked After Children) has been informed. The Social Worker / Personal Advisor should be informed of any concerns, at the earliest opportunity.

Levels and arrangements for Disciplinary meetings (on campus students)

Meeting	Outcome(s)	Actioned by:	Appeal to:	Appeal heard by:
Stage 1	**Either:** Stage 1 warning & action plan **or** no disciplinary action	Tutor/ Course Lead		
Stage 2 Failure to adhere to conditions of action plan set at Stage 1 meeting, incidents of a Stage 2 nature	**Either:** Stage 2 warning & action plan* **or** no disciplinary action	Programme Manager (or equivalent)	Appeal in writing to Head of School (or equivalent) within 5 working days	Head of School (or equivalent)
Stage 3 Failure to adhere to conditions of action plan set at	**Either:** Stage 3 (final) warning & action	At least Head of School (or equivalent) and one other	Stage 3 (final warning) – Appeal in writing to the	Stage 3 - Vice Principal and impartial Head

Stage 2 meeting or an instance of Stage 3 nature (student may be suspended/ given a cooling off period' pending investigation)	plan* **or** dismissal* **or** no disciplinary action see below. Any decision to dismiss must be discussed and approved with a Vice Principal prior to dismissal.	impartial manager	Vice Principal (or equivalent) within 5 working days. Dismissal – Appeal in writing to the Principal within 5 working days.	of School / Department Dismissal – Principal with another member of Senior Leadership Team
Any decision not to dismiss a student whose gross misconduct relates to an act of violence, sexual harassment or serious act(s) of discriminatory behaviour or speech, or student on student abuse must be sanctioned by either the Principal or Group Director of Safeguarding & Wellbeing (DSL). Any alleged act of sexual violence must be reported immediately to safeguarding and no further action taken by the curriculum team until advised.				

If a student fails to attend their Disciplinary Meeting without good cause or reason, it will be re-arranged at a date convenient to the other college attendees. If a student fails to attend the rescheduled meeting, evidence will be reviewed, and a decision made in their absence and confirmed in writing.

If a student has an EHCP the EHCP team must be notified that placement is in danger of breaking down. An emergency EHCP meeting may need to be requested with the Local Authority team, that will need to take place prior to the serious misconduct meeting. An agreed action plan to support the student should be agreed with the student, next of kin, professionals to ensure that there is a continuation of learning or transition plan in place, to ensure the student does not become NEET.

Outcomes of Meetings

Prior to and during the meeting the person chairing will review all available evidence and consider the student's explanation of their behaviour and will then determine the outcome.

The outcome can be:

- Stage 1 Warning & action plan
- Stage 2 Warning & action plan
- Stage 3 warning and action plan
- Fixed term exclusion/dismissal (usually for the duration of one academic year)
- Permanent exclusion
- No disciplinary action taken

Where no disciplinary action is taken there may be the need to refer the student to further support either within the department or from the student support services team.

A decision may not be taken in the meeting, but will be communicated to the student, and their parent if under 18 and consent has not been withdrawn, or over 18 with consent, and their employer if they are an apprentice, in writing within five working days. This may be longer where the period spans a planned college holiday period.

Any dismissal / exclusion must be authorised by the Vice Principal prior to any communication on outcome taking place.

Suspension

Where appropriate a precautionary suspension may be imposed on a student by a member of the College Management Team – Programme Manager and above. Suspension is a neutral action designed as a cooling off period and allowing for investigation into any and all allegations made against a student. It is imperative that the Next of Kin is informed by telephone of any suspension, whether that is for a day or longer.

When suspending a student, the appropriate member of staff must:

- Ensure the parents/guardians of students under 18 are informed of the suspension (tutor) and those over 18 with consent to share information with parents (tutor); where the student is an apprentice ensure the employer is informed (assessor/coach).
- Record on ProMonitor under 'Suspension' for the attention of the appropriate staff so all registers can be marked appropriately.
- Take the Student ID card from the student for the period of the suspension
- Inform the student (and parent if under 18 years old or over 18 with consent to share) in writing of the reason(s) for suspension.
- Provide the student with short-term targets and college work to complete from home for the duration of the suspension to ensure that they do not fall behind and are able to continue with their studies in the event of their return to the College course (tutor).

Any such suspension will be confirmed in writing within 2 days of its occurrence and the student will be invited to attend the appropriate disciplinary meeting.

Letters will be sent to the student, parent/carer (if student is 18 or under), the and Head of School (or equivalent).

Students on Subcontracted Provisions

Students on subcontracted provision will be subject to the subcontracted providers own behaviour and disciplinary procedures. The appeals process for any permanent exclusions will be conducted by two senior managers of The Bedford College Group.

Variations and Amendments

In some cases, it will be desirable or necessary that variations should be made to procedural aspects of this policy. The College may make such variations as it sees fit, subject to informing the student concerned and always subject to considerations of fairness and equity of outcome. Without limitation such variations may include different persons conducting elements of the policy should a conflict of interest or authority arise or cover of interviews by another person of authority.

Annex C - Higher Skills Academic Misconduct Process

All students studying a level 4 or above at the Bedford College Group are expected to follow the Positive Engagement and Behaviours Policy and Student Code of Conduct.

Students who fail to meet the standards of behaviour as outlined in the **Student Code of Conduct** and the **Positive Engagement and Behaviours Policy** should go through the stages of disciplinary as outlined in the disciplinary process and guidelines.

If a students' behaviour is deemed such that they would not be fit to practise in their chosen career, then the **Fitness to Practise Policy** should be followed.

Linked Policies Include

- Positive Engagement & Behaviours Policy
- Disciplinary Process and Guidelines
- Fitness to Practise Policy
- Student code of conduct

HS Academic Misconduct Code of Practice

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure the college upholds the academic integrity of the degrees and qualifications that it oversees and awards.

1) Academic Integrity refers to the values and practices of the academic community. Students should commit to undertaking assessments honestly, in a responsible manner and respecting the work of others.

2) This code applies to all students studying Level 4 and above programmes of study at The Bedford College Group. Students on Higher Education programmes that are franchised should follow the processes of their awarding university.

3) Academic misconduct is defined as an attempt by a student, either exam or coursework based, where they seek to attempt to gain unfair advantage in the assessment methods or to assist another student to do so.

4) This Code of Practice relates to all assessed academic work (assessments) required for academic progress or award (e.g., summative assessments) which include:

- 'Coursework', such as written assignments, data interpretation and calculations, essays, reports, dissertations, theses, portfolios, projects, presentations;
- 'Practical Examinations', such as practical assessments, laboratory assessments, oral examinations;
- 'Class Tests' such as timed assignments, including data interpretation and calculations, and timed essays;
- 'Written Examinations', such as Centrally Coordinated Written Examinations or in class-controlled assessments
- or any other Assessment type not covered by the categories mentioned above.

5) Examples of academic misconduct may include but are not limited to the following:

- Cheating behaviour– acting in a dishonest way to gain academic advantage.
- Collusion - creating or being part of an agreement to act together to cheat to gain academic advantage.
- Fabrication - making up evidence data to aid your research discussions or providing misleading references within your work.

- Impersonation – using another student's piece of work with the intent of using this as your own work to gain academic advantage.
- Plagiarism – Using documents or other students work and intentionally submitting this as your own work.
- Duplication – submitting prior work that has already been used within an assessment. In addition, examples of academic misconduct in examinations includes the following:
    - Attempting to use notes or unauthorised exam materials within an Exam.
    - Obtaining a copy of an unseen examination paper.
    - Attempting to remove examination documentation from an exam room.
- Unauthorised use of a calculator

Academic Misconduct Process

Identifying Concerns

Where a concern is identified regarding a possible case of academic misconduct, the tutor will need to make a decision as to whether this is a low-level concern or one that requires a formal investigation.

A low-level concern can be addressed in feedback to the learner through guidance and is not significant enough to warrant a change in grade. For information on specific qualifications please refer to the guidance from the relevant awarding body.

More substantial cases of academic misconduct may require a full investigation to take place.

Examples of low-level concerns that do not require a formal investigation

Where the marker identifies minor issues in a student's work, (e.g. missing quotation marks, minor missing references or an incomplete bibliography), provided the marking scheme allows it, the student's mark would not normally be affected. The marker should normally provide comments on the concerns in the assessment feedback.

Academic Misconduct

Where a marker suspects academic misconduct has taken place the following steps should be followed**:**

- The staff member who suspects misconduct must collect initial documentary evidence for their suspicions (i.e., Turnitin report). The documentary evidence should be supported with a commentary/context from the staff member and be submitted to the HEoffice@bedford.ac.uk for the attention of The Group Director of Higher Skills, titled 'Academic Misconduct', indicating and confirming an investigation is to take place.

- The student should be notified by the investigating staff member (unit tutor) that they are suspected of academic misconduct and that a formal investigation has now begun. The student should be notified and supplied with the evidence that has been gathered so far and the rationale for the investigation. Evidence can include Turnitin reports or other material deemed relevant by the unit tutor. All evidence/commentary should be recorded on Promonitor as a stage 2 disciplinary in line with the Disciplinary Process and Guidelines.

- Once all investigations are complete and it is deemed by the unit tutor/investigating staff member that academic misconduct has taken place a meeting should be held with the student, the investigating staff member, the Group Director of Higher Skills and The Group Head of Higher Skills. The Group Director for Quality should be notified of the investigation by the HEOffice. The meeting would usually occur within 3 weeks of the suspected misconduct being identified by the staff member.

- An advocate can also attend the academic misconduct meeting to support the student. A minimum of 1 weeks' notice should be provided including the date, time and location of the meeting.

- All gathered evidence should be reviewed during this meeting and potential outcomes made clear. The meeting will consider any other relevant instances of academic misconduct by the student raised during their course of study. Potential outcomes will align to awarding body regulations and recommendations.

- Meetings notes and all actions should be recorded on Promonitor (Proportal) and outcomes shared in writing with the Group Director of Higher Skills and Group Director of Quality.