

I. Introduction

Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College is committed to providing a positive environment for all learners to learn, work and socialise. To achieve this, the College encourages a culture that values all individuals and treats them with respect and integrity, embraces diversity and expects all learners to accept accountability and responsibility for their actions.

The Learner Code of Conduct (see Appendix 1) is designed to ensure that learners contribute to a safe and successful learning environment by defining the behaviour and conduct expected of them, both socially and academically and with regard to Health and Safety. Learners' attention is drawn to this code at induction and through the Learner Handbook. By signing the Learning Agreement the learner agrees to comply with this code.

Behaviour which fails to meet the Code of Conduct will be dealt with through the Disciplinary Procedure.

II. Aims of the Policy

- To ensure learners and staff work in a supporting, caring and safe environment.
- To set standards of performance and behaviour.
- To make College expectations clear to learners and to encourage learners to adopt successful learning practices.
- To ensure a robust learner disciplinary procedure which staff can apply in all instances of alleged learner misconduct.
- To ensure that all instances of learner misconduct are dealt with fairly and consistently, whilst taking into account the individual circumstances of each learner.
- To raise awareness of the policy and procedures and ensure that staff understand the processes involved.
- To provide a systematic means of recording and monitoring disciplinary cases.
- To define responsibilities and allocate duties to individual members of the College staff.

III. Scope

This document applies to all enrolled or prospective learners or users of facilities throughout the time they are at the College, including when on College outings, placements and events. It also applies when behaviour outside the College has a detrimental effect on other members of the College (staff or learners) or to the College reputation.

The Policy also applies to the behaviour of children of learners on the College site, including when in the care of the College crèche or in the care of childminders.

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IV. Definitions

Unacceptable Conduct: Any academic or non-academic conduct which adversely interferes with teaching and learning, is disrespectful of other members of the College community or property, brings the College into disrepute or breaches the Learner Code of Conduct (See Appendix 2 for examples of misconduct).

V. Roles and Responsibilities

- **The Board:** will ensure that the College has a Policy in place for dealing with cases of alleged misconduct.
- **The Principal:** is responsible for ensuring that the Learner Disciplinary Policy and Procedures are fully implemented and followed by all staff. The Principal will normally delegate responsibility for disciplinary matters to the appropriate senior or middle manager depending on the severity of the case.
- **The Vice Principal:** has the power to suspend or exclude a learner in cases of repeated or extreme misconduct, or where there is a safety consideration.
- **Curriculum managers:** are responsible for investigating, interviewing/ hearing cases, reporting and reviewing cases at Stage 1, 2 and 3 as appropriate. They are responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed and consistently and fairly applied. They are also responsible for maintaining records of incidents of misconduct and monitoring progress against actions. Summary evidence of misconduct is to be shared with the learner during the investigation(s) and leading up to the interviewing/ hearing case(s).
- **The Quality Team** are responsible for keeping a central record of all cases of misconduct and will assist with any related administrative duties.
- **All staff:** are responsible for reporting incidents of unacceptable behaviour.
- **Tutors:** are expected to manage the classroom environment, ensuring that every effort has been made to meet individual needs, including those relating to mental health or learning disabilities, so that learners can learn and work in safe and positive surroundings. They are expected to give regular feedback to learners on their behaviour, attendance and punctuality, and to inform them of the consequences of failing to comply with the College Code of Conduct. They are responsible for making learners aware of the Code at induction and for ensuring that they have received a copy of the Learner Handbook.
- **Learners:** are expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour and are made fully aware of the College's expectations as stated in the Learner Code of Conduct (Appendix One). Learners also have a responsibility to report incidents of disruption, violence, bullying and any form of harassment, and to exemplify and promote British Values.

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- **Learners (continued):** are responsible for the behaviour of their children whilst on College premises, including when in the care of the College crèche or childminders arranged by the College. Whilst the College uses Registered Childminders and qualified crèche staff, they cannot deal with serious misbehaviour, persistently distressed children or behaviour, which challenges. The childminder/ crèche manager will advise the parent of the child, and the Learner Services Manager, of any behaviour, which is unacceptable, or causing concern. Depending on the nature of the behaviour, staff will work with the parent to try to find strategies to manage this, but if this is not possible, the Learner Services Manager or senior staff member may ask the parent to find alternative external childcare.

In some cases, where the parent is unable to find alternative childcare, this may mean that the learner is not able to continue their course of study. The College will make every effort to work with parents to avoid this eventuality, but reserves the right to withdraw the learner on the basis that their child's behaviour is not manageable.

VI. Confidentiality

Learner disciplinary cases will be handled sensitively and with discretion. However, the College may disclose information to the relevant authorities when it is considered necessary, including to relevant external authorities.

Appendix 1

The Learner Code of Conduct is designed to ensure that learners contribute to a safe and successful learning environment for all (by defining the behaviour and conduct expected from learners)

Behaviour: all learners must:

- Treat everyone with respect, regardless of culture, race, nationality, religion, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or social class.
- The College will not tolerate discrimination, harassment or bullying, including cyber bullying, and expects learners to report any such incidences to their tutor as soon as possible. This includes behaviour towards transgender women on women-only provision, where all learners must respect the individual's right to identify as a woman, and must not ask questions or behave in any way that makes the individual feel uncomfortable.
- Comply with and promote the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Take care not to glamorize or normalize violence or extremist beliefs, and challenge any behaviour in others which appears to do this.
- Respect contributions made in class by other learners.
- Adopt behaviour and use language that is appropriate and does not upset others.
- Follow tutors' instructions and established etiquette regarding answering questions in class, for example, raising the hand to answer a question, turn-taking, not interrupting other learners when they are contributing to the class.

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- Follow Health and Safety instructions given out by any staff member (i.e. tutor, technician, enrolment staff, fire warden)
- Switch off mobile phones, personal communication devices and personal stereos in classrooms and in all working areas except if they are being used to assist learning.
- Contribute to the College's continuous improvement systems by providing constructive feedback about the courses and services, and by using the College's Complaints Procedures if you need to make a complaint.
- Be responsible for the behaviour of their children whilst on the premises, in the College crèche or in the care of childminders.
- Meet financial commitments relating to their course (if applicable) promptly and in full.
- Act at all times in a manner that does not cause offence nor bring the College into disrepute.

Online protocols

- If your learning session is online, remember to select an appropriate space, so that you can engage without interruption. Use a neutral background wherever possible, or blur your background. Children or other members of your household should not appear and personal effects should not be in view.
- The learner code of conduct applies online, as in a face-to-face learning situation. Your tutor will agree ground rules with your class, e.g. keep phones on silent / how to indicate you would like to speak.
- Calls/ videos may be recorded - this is to safeguard both parties and will not routinely be shared. Your tutor will advise you if a recording is being made. Remember that you may not record a call yourself without agreeing with participants.
- In the event of any inappropriate behaviour during an online session, a learner may be removed from the session and disciplinary procedures may be followed.
- If you wish to speak to the tutor to raise concerns about your safety or wellbeing, or the safety or wellbeing of someone else, do not raise this in front of the online group, but tell the tutor that you have a concern that you would like to discuss privately. S/he will arrange to speak to you after the session. You can also contact a Safeguarding Officer by emailing safeguarding@rhacc.ac.uk

Academic: all learners must:

- Attend classes regularly and punctually and inform their teacher by email of unavoidable absence.
- Take responsibility for contacting the tutor and arranging to catch up on the work which has been missed.
- Complete all work set to agreed deadlines. Late work will be marked and submitted to the awarding organisation at the tutor's discretion, or according to the awarding organisation guidelines, if applicable.
- Successfully complete all internal and external examinations and assessment, where appropriate, in order to progress on the course.
- Ensure all work produced for assignments and exams is your own work. Where information is used from another source this must be referenced appropriately. Plagiarism and/or cheating may lead to disciplinary action by the College and/or awarding organisation/examinations board.
- Comply with the 'Acceptable use of IT' policy (to be found in the Learning Resource Centres).
- Use IT facilities to support your learning and not to access any website that is against College policy.

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Health & Safety: all learners must:

- Show regard for the well-being and safety of other learners, staff, community groups and visitors at all times. Reports of alleged incidences of violence towards fellow learners, staff or visitors will be investigated under the Learner Disciplinary procedures and may result in immediate temporary suspension or in permanent exclusion from classes.
- Understand the College Health & Safety regulations and follow the proper college evacuation procedure in an emergency.
- Follow Health & Safety guidelines for specific areas of the college (e.g. Art studios, teaching kitchen).
- Inform the College of any disability that might result in help being needed in the case of an emergency evacuation.
- Not smoke, bring illegal drugs, alcohol or offensive weapons onto the premises or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst on college premises.
- Notify a member of staff if you have an accident at College.
- Keep the College clean, free from litter and graffiti and only eat or drink in designated areas.

Personal and College property: all learners must:

- Show respect for the premises and property of the College and the possessions of other learners.
- Return all borrowed books and items of equipment by the due date. You will be responsible for the cost of any damage or loss of College property.
- Be responsible for their own property. All articles of value left on the college premises, including cars, bikes and motorbikes, are left at the owner's risk.

On signing the enrolment form / learning agreement, each learner agrees to the College's terms and conditions and to follow the Learner Code of Conduct. Failure to comply with the Code may lead to disciplinary action being taken, in accordance with the Learner Disciplinary procedures.

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Appendix 2

Examples of Disciplinary Behaviour

The examples below cover the main areas for concern that may lead to application of the Learner Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. This is not an exhaustive list of examples and each incident will be reviewed individually.

Examples of Stage 1 disciplinary behaviour

- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Late or non-submission of course related work/assignments
- Disrupting the learning of others
- Minor cases of academic misconduct (refer to Assessment Policy for examples of learner malpractice)
- Failure to follow instructions of a member of staff
- Disrespectful behaviour to other learners, staff or visitors
- Minor breaches of Health and Safety rules
- Minor damage to College property
- Misuse of the internet/IT equipment
- Unauthorised use of mobile phones, personal communication devices and personal stereos
- Smoking on College premises

Examples of Stage 2 disciplinary behaviour

- Failure to comply with a Stage 1 action plan
- Repeating a Stage 1 disciplinary incident
- Moderate cases of academic misconduct e.g. cheating or plagiarism (refer to Assessment Policy for examples of learner malpractice)
- Threatening behaviour or verbal threats to another learner or member of staff
- Acts of discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation towards other learners or staff or visitors to the College (including by text or email/ cyber-bullying)
- Actions or communications that bring the College into disrepute
- Threats to Health & Safety (e.g. misuse of fire alarms and fire extinguishers)
- Damage to College resources and property

Examples of Stage 3 disciplinary behaviour

- Failure to comply with a Stage 2 action plan
- Repeating a Stage 2 disciplinary incident
- Serious cases of academic misconduct (refer to Assessment Policy for examples of learner malpractice)
- Actual violence to another learner or member of staff
- Endangering the health and safety of others
- Significant damage to College resources and property
- Being in possession or under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances
- Any potentially criminal activities affecting the College or other learners
- Racial or sexual abuse
- Non-payment of fees

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