

Student Disciplinary Procedure

The following procedure will be used when The College Code of Conduct is broken. It includes guidelines for dealing with cases of gross misconduct and clarification of suspension.

Purpose

The purpose of the Disciplinary Procedure is to ensure that good standards of behaviour are upheld. Formal disciplinary action should be seen as the last resort when other supportive action has been exhausted or when an offence is serious enough to necessitate immediate, formal action.

In using this procedure we will aim to ensure fair and equal treatment.

Representation

Students are entitled to representation at stages 2, 3 and 4 of the disciplinary procedure. Students should be informed of this right by the person initiating the disciplinary action. Representation can be a student representative, parents/guardian or other. Parents are expected to attend disciplinary meetings from stage 2 for students under 18.

Records

All recorded upheld disciplinary action will remain on the student's file for 3 years unless the nature of the misconduct warrants a shorter period. If the allegation is not upheld this will be recorded. At no time will the disciplinary record of the student be divulged without prior written consent of the Principal.

The Six Week Probationary Period

For full-time students the first 6 weeks of the course is a probationary period. During this period if a student's progress, attendance or behaviour is of serious concern, the Head of School & Assistant Principal reserve the right to withdraw the student. Any decision to withdraw will follow a documented meeting with the student and notification to parents.

Stages of the Disciplinary Procedure

Stage 1

- Behaviour which contravenes the code of conduct occurs which may be dealt with by any member of staff, (if gross misconduct see below)
- The Personal Tutor is informed, and discusses the problem with the student and the opportunities for support from Student Services and other support services within the college are outlined and the student is encouraged to use them.
- The Disciplinary Agreement Stage One is completed on Pro- Monitor and targets set
- Parents/guardian are informed

Resolution of Problem – End of Process

No improvement – Progress to Stage 2

Stage 2

- Any continued problems are identified
- The Personal Tutor and Student meet with Head of School
- The Disciplinary Agreement Stage Two is completed on Pro- Monitor and targets set
- Parents/guardian are informed and invited to attend
- The student is informed that he/she can be accompanied by a representative or friend (over 18)

Resolution of Problem – End of Process

No improvement – Progress to Stage 3

Stage 3

- Interview with Senior Manager accompanied by written statement/details to date
- Parents/guardian are informed and invited to attend

- The student is informed that he/she can be accompanied by a representative or friend (over 18)
- The Senior Manager may seek improvement within a contracted period of time
- If appropriate a verbal and/or written warning can be given, and the student is informed, where appropriate, that further suspension or exclusion could follow
- The Disciplinary Agreement Stage Three is completed on Pro- Monitor and targets set
- A record is placed on the college disciplinary file

Resolution of Problem – End of Process

No improvement – Progress to Stage 4

Stage 4

- Exclusion from college by senior manager
- The student is informed verbally and in writing of the outcome, and of the appeal procedure.
- Disciplinary Agreement Stage 4 completed on Pro-Monitor

Appeal

The right to appeal is not automatic. Students wishing to appeal must do so in writing to the Vice Principal HR and Student Services within 10 working days.

- All relevant information is passed to the Vice Principal HR & Student Services who will conduct an interview to consider the appeal
- Parents/guardian of a student under 18 are informed and invited to attend
- The student (if over 18) will be informed that he/she can be accompanied by a representative or friend
- The student is informed verbally and in writing of the outcome

Cases of Gross Misconduct or Criminal Act

Gross misconduct is defined as behaviour which is so serious that it is prejudicial to the well being of other students in the college. In this definition we include acts of violence against other students, acts of vandalism against property – including computer hacking – theft from college premises, incidents of racial or sexual abuse, any drug or alcohol abuse.

- 1 The Student is suspended (i.e. excluded from college premises) (refer to note of suspension) by a Senior Manager or Head of School, while the incident is being investigated
- 2 The Student is informed verbally at the time of the incident. The Notification of Suspension Form is completed. If it is necessary a letter follows from a Senior Manager within 2 working days advising the student of the procedure
- 3 The student will attend an interview with a Senior Manager.
- 4 The student will be notified of the outcome.

Clarification of Suspension

There are 3 ways in which suspension may be applied i) cooling off period ii) investigation and iii) disciplinary action. In every case it is very important that staff:

- a) Explain the grounds of suspension to students
- b) Tell students when they should return and to whom they should report
- c) Complete the Notification of Student Suspension

1. Cooling off period

- A cooling off period is used to:
 - i) Provide a safeguard for people if necessary
 - ii) Enable incidents to be handled rationally and effectively

- Staff with authority to suspend students on these grounds are Assistant Principals, Heads of School, Senior Managers, Security Staff and the Head of Student Services. **All suspensions** must be notified to the Vice Principal HR & Student Services.

2. Investigation

Suspension for investigation is used to:

- Provide a safeguard where necessary
- Enable circumstances to be investigated quickly.

3 Disciplinary action

- Suspension is used as a form of disciplinary action or penalty only when incidents have been investigated and or alternative courses of action have been ineffective.
- Suspension in cases of gross misconduct will be immediate and will be carried out before an investigation has taken place.
- As in Guidelines for Dealing with Cases of Gross Misconduct/Criminal Act.