Title: Student Support and Disciplinary Procedure

Type:	Procedure
Purpose:	To ensure that good standards of behaviour are upheld while being sensitive to the needs of students who may have experienced trauma. To be used where the College Code of Conduct has been breached and supportive interventions have been exhausted. It includes guidelines for dealing with cases of gross misconduct and clarification of suspension.
Scope:	This procedure applies to learners.
Responsibility:	The Vice Principal HR & Student Services is responsible for this policy. The Director Student Services is responsible for the monitoring of the policy.
Associated policies:	Student Code of Conduct Student ID Policy Student Wellbeing and Participation Policy

Purpose
The College is committed to promoting a positive culture of readiness, respect and responsibility. Students will be supported to develop positive behaviours through early intervention, restorative approaches and appropriate support. The Head of Campus Life will work alongside curriculum and support teams to promote high standards of conduct, inclusion and student belonging.

The purpose of the Student Support and Disciplinary Procedure is to ensure that good standards of behaviour are upheld while being sensitive to the needs of students who may have experienced trauma. It seeks to provide a supportive and understanding environment for all students.

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 to all students.

Representation
Students are entitled to representation at Support Pathway stage 2 and 3. Students should be informed of this right by the person initiating the Support Pathway. Representation can be a student representative, parent/carer, advocate or other appropriate supporter. The College may refuse a representative only where there is a clear conflict of interest, safeguarding concern, unreasonable behaviour or other exceptional circumstance. Any decision to refuse a representative must be recorded with reasons. Parents/Carers are expected to attend meetings from stage 2 for students under 18. In the event of a non-attendance without prior notification at stages 2 and 3 the College reserves the right to conduct the meeting in their absence. The outcome of the meeting will be communicated via letter.

Informal Procedure
Every effort will be made to avoid the use of formal action where problems can be remedied through supportive action. All staff carry the responsibility in supporting students to maintain positive behaviour and for ensuring that misconduct or poor academic performance is consistently dealt with in accordance with this procedure.

Staff must act immediately when a student's actions compromise safety, wellbeing, or security. There is no requirement for prior intervention, these incidents must be recorded at the time they occur. Staff should report serious incidents to their line manager/security team or safeguarding team if necessary.

Areas For Improvement (AFIs)
To ensure a consistent, fair, and supportive approach to behaviour management, staff will record AFIs using the Ready, Respect, Safe framework.

AFIs under Ready (prepared for learning), Respect (behaviour towards others and the environment) and Safe (creating a safe and positive environment) will be recorded on ProMonitor after:

- A verbal conversation with the student to explain expectations and provide an opportunity to improve.
- Other reasonable interventions have been attempted (e.g., reminders, support strategies, seating adjustments).
- Repeated failure to meet expectations despite support and feedback.

AFIs will be monitored by the person issuing the AFI and/or a member of Personal Development Team

If there is no improvement, then three formal supportive stages detailed below may be invoked.

Stages of the Student Support and Disciplinary Procedure
Please note - any action taken under this procedure, including AFIs must be logged electronically on the Student Database.

In all cases before progressing formal action, consideration should be given to whether the behaviour may be linked to a disability, learning difficulty, mental health need or other vulnerability, and whether reasonable adjustments or additional support are required.

Students can be placed on any stage of formal procedure without having undergone the previous stage.

Consideration of Context
When considering outcomes of Support Pathways, individual circumstances of the student should be taken into account.

Relevant information may include:

- Additional learning support needs, SEND or disabilities.
- Mental health, wellbeing or safeguarding concerns.
- Care experienced status, child in care status, young carer responsibilities or other identified vulnerabilities.
- Previous support offered and the student's engagement with that support.
- Attendance, punctuality and overall commitment to studies.
- Completion of coursework and engagement in learning.
- Positive contributions to classes and the wider college community.
- Previous behavioural record and any history of disciplinary concerns.

Decisions should be based on the seriousness of the misconduct alongside all available contextual information, ensuring outcomes remain fair, proportionate, consistent and focused on supporting positive change wherever possible.

Procedures

Support Pathway Stage 1
A Support Pathway stage 1 meeting will be used to formally intervene when informal approaches by staff including AFIs have not resulted in the required improvement in student conduct. Or when more formal supportive interventions are deemed necessary. It can be implemented at the discretion of a Course Coordinator, Personal Tutor, Personal Development Coach or when directed by the relevant Course Leader, Programme Manager or Head of School.

- The Course Co-ordinator (or nominated member of the curriculum team) will conduct a one-to-one support meeting with the student to explore potential causes and identify additional support. Where relevant, students will be referred to Student Services or other support services.
- The Support Pathway Agreement Stage One is completed on ProMonitor and appropriate actions/support for the student to take are outlined.
- The student may be issued with a report card to have completed and signed in all of their sessions for a minimum of two weeks.
- After two weeks on report, the student will return the report card to their Personal Tutor or Personal Development Coach for review.
- An email/letter will be sent to parents/carers of students under 18 years of age to inform them that this meeting has taken place and to notify them of the agreed actions and support.

Resolution of Support Pathway Stage 1 – End of Process

No change in student conduct – Progress to Support Pathway Stage 2

Support Pathway Stage 2
A Support Pathway Stage 2 meeting will be used to intervene when actions and/or support from a Support Pathway Stage 1 meeting have either not affected the required change in student conduct or when they are deemed insufficient to affect the required change in student conduct. It can be implemented by the relevant Head of School or Programme Manager.

- The Head of School or Programme Manager will conduct a meeting with the student and will maintain a written account of the meeting on ProMonitor
- Parents/Carers are expected to attend for students under 18 years of age. In exceptional circumstances, a suitable adult can attend on behalf of the Parents/Carers if agreed by the Head of School or Programme Manager and the Parents/Carers.
- The Head of School or Programme Manager will explore the reason(s) for the meeting, and discuss the possible reasons why the student code of conduct has been broken along with the consequences of any further breaches of the student code of conduct.
- The Head of School or Programme Manager will discuss the support pathway strategies with the student to resolve the issues raised and to develop an agreed action plan.
- The Head of School or Programme Manager will ensure the Stage 2 meeting outcome, agreed actions and any amendments to the student's risk rating are recorded on ProMonitor.
- Students are reminded of their right to be accompanied by a representative, parent/carer or other supporter during the meeting.

Resolution of Support Pathway Stage 2 – End of Process

No change in student conduct – Progress to Support Pathway Stage 3

Support Pathway Stage 3
A Support Pathway Stage 3 meeting will take place with the student when the agreed actions from a Support Pathway Stage 2 meeting are not met. A student's conduct is considered sufficiently serious to warrant a Support Pathway Stage 3 meeting.

Where there is an alleged case of gross misconduct, exclusion may be an outcome. Gross misconduct cases will be investigated and heard by a Gross Misconduct Panel chaired by the Head of Campus Life. See section - Cases of Gross Misconduct or Criminal Acts

All other stage 3 meetings can be chaired by a Senior Manager or the relevant Head of School.

The chair will conduct a meeting with the student in the presence of an Administration Partner, who will maintain a written account of the meeting. Parents/Carers are expected to attend for students under 18 years of age. In exceptional circumstances, a suitable adult can attend on behalf of the parents/carers if agreed by the chair and the parents/carers. Students over 18 years of age will be reminded of their right to be accompanied by a representative, parent/carer or other supporter during the meeting. The chair will outline the reason(s) for the meeting, how the student code of conduct has been broken and consider responses from the student and/or parent/carer.

In cases other than gross misconduct the chair will discuss the support pathway strategies with the student to resolve the issues raised and develop an agreed action plan. The student will be made aware of the consequences of any further breaches of the student code of conduct. Where appropriate the student will be informed of timescales as to how long the stage 3 'action plan' will remain in place.

The Support Pathway stage 3 agreement is completed on ProMonitor by an Administration Partner and the agreed actions recorded.

Resolution of Problem – End of Process

No improvement

Where there is no improvement or a further act of misconduct takes place that warrants escalation from stage 3, the student (and parent/carer if the student is under 18 years of age) will be notified of the decision to withdraw the student and this will subsequently be confirmed in writing, together with details of the right to appeal against the decision. We understand this may be a difficult outcome, and support will be available to help the student understand the decision and next steps.

A record of the withdrawal/exclusion will be kept on Pro-Monitor.

Cases of Gross Misconduct or Criminal Acts
Cases of gross misconduct will be considered through a Gross Misconduct Panel Hearing chaired by the Head of Campus Life. The panel will consist of relevant members of staff selected according to the nature of the case and may include Assistant Principals, Heads of School, Additional Support staff, Personal Development Coaches, Safeguarding staff and other appropriate managers. Where the Head of Campus Life is unavailable, an appropriate Senior Manager may act as Chair.

Gross misconduct is defined as behaviour which is so serious that it is prejudicial to the wellbeing, safety or security of students, staff or the College community. In this definition we include:

- physical assault;
- serious threats or intimidation;
- possession of an offensive weapon;

- serious safeguarding breaches;
- serious discriminatory behaviour including racism, homophobia, transphobia, sexism or disability-related harassment.
- serious bullying or harassment;
- possession, use or supply of illegal drugs;
- being under the influence of drugs or alcohol where safety is compromised;
- serious damage to property;
- theft;
- serious misuse of IT systems;
- conduct that places others at significant risk

Where there is an alleged act of gross misconduct:

1. All students involved are suspended (i.e. temporarily excluded from college premises - see note of suspension below) by a Senior Manager, Duty Manager, Head of Security, Head of School or Head of Campus Life while the incident is being investigated.

2. The Student(s) is informed verbally at the time of the incident. The Notification of Suspension Form is completed. Parents/Carers of students under the age of 18 should be informed.

3. The Head of Campus Life, or a nominated investigating manager, will gather evidence as required, eg from staff, students, security personnel, safeguarding colleagues and external agencies where appropriate prior to the hearing.

4. The student(s) will attend a Gross Misconduct Panel Hearing at the earliest reasonable opportunity and will be informed of their right to be accompanied by a representative, parent/carer or other supporter. Parents/carers of students who are under 18 will be contacted and informed of the disciplinary hearing.

5. The findings of the investigation will be presented to the hearing and discussed, and the student will be given the opportunity to respond.

6. Following consideration of all evidence, the Chair and panel members will consult to determine the outcome, taking account of the seriousness of the incident, any safeguarding information, identified vulnerabilities, any mitigating circumstances and the student's previous conduct record before determining an outcome.

7. Possible outcomes may include a final Support Pathway agreement, additional support measures, a behavioural contract, suspension for a defined period, or exclusion from the College.

8. If a student fails to attend without good reason, the hearing may proceed in their absence and a decision may be made based on the available evidence.

9. The student(s) will be notified of the outcome in writing.

Appeals

Students wishing to appeal a Stage 3 outcome must do so via the studentappeals@solihull.ac.uk email address or in writing within 10 working days of receiving written confirmation of the decision. Appeals submitted outside this timescale will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Appeals against Stage 3 outcomes that do not result in exclusion will be considered by an Assistant Principal who has had no prior involvement in the case.

Appeals against a decision to exclude a student will be considered by the Deputy Principal Education

An appeal may be submitted on one or more of the following grounds:

• New evidence has become available which was not available at the time of the hearing.
• The procedure was not followed correctly.
• The decision reached was unreasonable in light of the evidence presented.

The College may review the documentation, request further information and, where appropriate, invite the student to attend an appeal meeting. Students submitting an appeal may be accompanied by a representative, parent/carer or other supporter.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed in writing.

The decision will be final and there will be no further internal right of appeal.

Clarification of Suspension

Suspension of a student has 2 main purposes.

1. To provide a cooling off period

A cooling off period is used to:

- Provide a safeguard for people if necessary
- Enable incidents to be handled rationally and effectively

Staff with authority to suspend students on these grounds are Assistant Principals, Heads of School, Heads of Campus Life, Programme Managers, Senior Managers, Duty Managers and Senior Security Staff.

2. To enable an Investigation to take place

Suspension for investigation is used to:

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

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

Police Involvement

Where any member of staff has reason to believe that a student may have committed a criminal offence, the College may refer the matter to the police and may continue disciplinary proceedings under this procedure or suspend the student pending the outcome of police enquiries and any charges which may be brought against the student.

A member of the Colleges Safeguarding team will liaise with the police to confirm whether there is any reason why the disciplinary proceedings should not continue.

Where the student has been suspended under this provision, when the results of those enquiries and any criminal proceedings are known, the College reserves the right to commence proceedings under this procedure in relation to the matter.

It is emphasised that in relation to the application of this procedure, the College is not bound by the results of any criminal proceedings against students.

Fairness and Consistency

The College will monitor the application of this procedure to ensure it is applied equitably across all student groups, with particular attention to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Staff applying this procedure will seek to make fair, consistent and evidence-based decisions and will be mindful of the potential impact of unconscious bias.

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Adam Thomas	2018	Sept 2026	August 2028	7