

Policy Name	BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY
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Part of Telford College’s commitment to safe learning.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Telford College recognises that the safety and well being of its staff and learners is central to successful learning.

Telford College is therefore committed to creating and maintaining a working and learning environment that is safe and secure, free from any form of harassment or bullying, for all learners and staff.

Telford College recognises that without such a commitment, any individual, through no fault of their own, could be subjected to such unacceptable behaviour.

As harassment or bullying is unacceptable behaviour at Telford College and will not be tolerated, any proven instances of either will be treated as instances of misconduct or gross misconduct under the appropriate College disciplinary policy.

This policy explains learners' rights and responsibilities.

2. DEFINITIONS

Harassment is against the law. It is unlawful against the Equality Act 2010.

Bullying and harassment is behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated or offended. It may take place because of any issues relating to the following:

- Race (national origins, colour or nationality)
- Gender, marital status or family circumstances
- Disabilities and learning needs or difficulties
- Criminal record
- Trade union membership and activity
- Sex
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Family background
- Religious beliefs, non-beliefs and/or political beliefs
- Spreading malicious rumours

Harassment is any behaviour that is unwanted, inappropriate, unsolicited and unacceptable to the person receiving it, causing them unease, stress, distress and a possible loss of self-esteem.

The following list does not aim to define all unacceptable behaviour, but to give an idea of sort of things that would be considered to be harassment:

- Telling inappropriate jokes
- Making offensive and abusive remarks
- Insulting or nicknaming, comments and actions
- Isolation or 'cold-shouldering' of individuals
- Sending offensive text messages or unwanted emails or attachments
- Making unwanted and deliberate physical contact

Bullying is very similar to harassment and involves persecution of the victim through intimidating, unfair, sarcastic, physical, malicious or angry behaviour that causes them to feel uneasy or threatened.

It may be:

- Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate (unfairly criticise) or injure the recipient
- An abuse or misuse of power including verbal or physical threats or violence
- Deliberate withholding of knowledge or information
- Shouting
- Setting unrealistic targets
- Ridicule of the recipient's work, ideas opinions, appearance or behaviour
- Deliberate occupation of public, shared space or communal areas to routinely exclude others or make them feel uncomfortable
- Spreading malicious rumours
- Unfair treatment
- Picking on someone
- Undermining a competent worker

Both harassment and bullying may be with single 'one-off' incidents or a series of incidents taking place over a period of time.

Both harassment and bullying may be committed by individuals or groups.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 Bullying and harassment are unacceptable at Telford College: Equality of opportunity is everyone's concern and everyone's responsibility.
- 3.2 All learners and staff are responsible for creating a safe learning environment, free of bullying or harassment.
- 3.3 All learners and staff should take action to stop unfair treatment. All members of the College community have a duty not to ignore, condone by their silence or collude (join in) with acts of harassment or bullying.

- 3.4 Any incident that infringes your or other people's rights should be reported confidentially.
- 3.5 If you are experiencing harassment or bullying or have witnessed any, you may wish to talk in confidence to someone who will be able to help. This might be your personal tutor, Learner Services staff, course lecturer or other member of staff.

4 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Every member of staff has a responsibility to treat all learners with dignity and respect, to ensure their own conduct does not cause offence or misunderstanding.
- 4.2 Tutors of learners have particular responsibility to support their learners through any investigation into allegations of bullying and/or harassment.
- 4.3 Heads of Schools and Quality Co-ordinators have a responsibility to ensure that the delivery of the curriculum does not contravene the requirements or spirit of this policy. All tutors have a duty to ensure that any allegations of bullying and/or harassment are treated as serious and are investigated thoroughly.
- 4.4 All staff who witness acts of bullying or harassment, or who are approached in confidence by learners who are being bullied or harassed or by learners who have witnessed such actions, have a duty to take action in line with this policy to prevent the reoccurrence of these acts.

5 PROCEDURE STUDENT-STUDENT

- 5.1 Any student wishing to report an incident about another student should in the first instance speak to their Course Tutor, Support Worker or counselling staff in Learner Services.
- 5.2 Personal Tutors or Course Tutors can also register a student's concern on a Cause for Concern form and forward these to Learner Services for action.
- 5.3 A member of Learner Services Counselling and Support Area (CASA) team will record relevant details from the victim, witnesses and perpetrator. Pastoral support will be offered to all learners involved.
- 5.4 These statements will be forwarded to the Head of School so that the disciplinary code can be carried out.

- 5.5 The College's zero tolerance stance means that incidents should be dealt with as quickly as possible. Every effort will be made to ensure the safety of the victim whilst at College.
- 5.6 In severe cases, this may mean the perpetrator or perpetrators are suspended following further investigation or consideration of evidence. Police involvement may be considered.
- 5.7 Every effort should be made to enable the perpetrators to receive awareness raising sessions about harassment and bullying.

6. PROCEDURE STUDENT-STAFF COMPLAINT

- 6.1 Where a student wishes to make a complaint about a member of staff, then the student should put this in writing and hand it in to the Head of Learner Services following the College Complaints Policy.

Associated Policies:

- Student Citizenship Code
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Complaints Policy