



Student Bullying and Harassment Policy

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1. Introduction

Diversity and Equalities Statement

We will positively promote equality, diversity and human rights for all.

In doing so, the college will:

- Foster good relations based on dignity and respect;
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Eliminate harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

City of Glasgow College is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation for all learners.

All students are entitled to a caring, friendly college environment so they can learn in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying, harassment and victimisation are unacceptable. If these do occur, all students should be able to report any incidents and know that they will be taken seriously and that their complaints will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

2. Purpose

The College aims to ensure that there is a positive and supportive environment for all students in which effective learning can take place. This Policy will help to encourage all students to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of conduct and academic performance; it will also make clear that there are consequences for inappropriate behaviour. The College is committed to ensuring that all students who may be subject to disciplinary processes are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner, whilst taking into account the individual circumstances of each student.

The Student Harassment and Bullying Procedure is intended to implement the purpose of the Student Bullying and Harassment Policy to ensure that there is

an environment free of bullying, harassment and victimisation and that students are aware of a clear structure to report incidents and to receive support. The definitions of bullying, harassment and victimisation in the Student Bullying and Harassment Policy should be used to inform this Procedure.

3. Principles

The College Student Bullying and Harassment Policy is underpinned by the College's statutory duties and responsibilities under current legislation.

4. Scope

This policy covers all students.

5. Definition and Features of Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation

Bullying

Bullying is not specifically defined in law. However, bullying can be defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying can take many forms. Although not intended to be exhaustive, these include:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- **Cyber** - misuse of email, internet chat rooms, text messaging, telephone calls or associated technologies such as cameras

The focus of bullying can take many forms. Although not intended to be exhaustive, these can relate to: age; physical or mental impairments, health; gender identity; pregnancy; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; dress and appearance; and physical or mental characteristics.

Harassment Related to a Protected Characteristic

Harassment may be directed at an individual or a group. Under the Equality Act 2010, harassment is defined as “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.” As such, harassment related to a protected characteristics can be:

- **Ageist** - because of, or focusing on age.
- **Disablist** - because of, or focusing on disability.
- **Biphobic, or homophobic** - because of, or focusing on sexual orientation.
- **Pregnancy based** - because of, or focusing on pregnancy.
- **Marriage, or civil partnership based** - because of, or focusing on whether someone is married or in a civil partnership.
- **Racist** - taunts, graffiti, or gestures due to a person’s race, colour, nationality, ethnicity or ethnic or national origins.
- **Religion, or other belief based** - because of, or focusing on religious faith or belief.
- **Sexist** - because of, or focusing on a person’s sex.
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- **Transphobic** - because of, or focusing on a person’s transgender identity.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment occurs when you engage in unwanted behaviour which is “of a sexual nature and which has the purpose or effect of:

- Violating a student’s dignity, or
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the student.”

“Of a sexual nature” can cover verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct including unwelcome sexual advances, inappropriate touching, forms of sexual assault, sexual jokes, the display of pornographic photographs or drawings, or sending emails with material of a sexual nature.

Features of Harassment

In relation to harassment, the word “unwanted” means “unwelcome” or “uninvited”. It is not necessary for the individual/s to say that they object to the behaviour for it to be unwanted. For harassment related to a protected characteristic, it is also not necessary for the individual/s to have a particular characteristic themselves. Instead, they could be associated with someone else who does, or be wrongly perceived as having a particular characteristic.

Differences in attitude or culture can mean that what is perceived as harassment by one person may not seem so by another. In such circumstances, the perpetrator may not fully understand the impact of his or her behaviour. The defining feature, however, is that the behaviour is unwanted.

Many forms of behaviour may constitute harassment. Examples of such behaviours, which are not intended as being exhaustive, are outlined below:

- **Threatened or actual physical contact** or unnecessary body contact ranging from touching to serious assault.
- **Verbal and written communication** through lewd, offensive and inappropriate jokes, remarks, banter, gossip, slander, threats, emails and use of social media on the basis of relevant protected characteristics.

- **Visual displays** of posters, images, graffiti, slogans, obscene gestures, flags, bunting or any other offensive material (which may include inappropriate screensavers, social media, desktop wallpaper etc.).

Victimisation

Victimisation is treating people less favourably because of something they have done under or in connection with the legislation, e.g. made a formal complaint of discrimination or given evidence in a student disciplinary case. Sometimes victimisation it is directed towards someone who has supported or championed another person who is being harassed.

6. Linked Policies

Guidance Policy

Student Disciplinary Policy

Diversity & Equalities Strategy

Diversity & Equalities Policy

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