

# **STUDENT POLICIES & PROCEDURES 2016-2017**

**Revised: May 2016** by the Deputy Principal (Students), in consultation with the Director of Adult & Higher Education. When student policies are reviewed, consideration is given to equality and diversity in the context of the 2010 Equality Act and any necessary updates agreed.

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## CONTENTS

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1. Information, Advice and Guidance	page 3
2. Admissions Policy for Students	page 6
3. Guidance when a student declares a criminal conviction	page 9
4. Careers Education and Guidance Policy	page 11
5. Work Experience Policy	page 13
6. Equality and Diversity Policy for Students	page 15
7. Prevention of Bullying & Harassment (Students)	page 18
8. Policy for the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	page 21
9. Child Protection & Abuse Disclosure Guidelines	page 36
10. Guidance on the use of reasonable force & restraint with students	page 38
11. Fitness to Study Guidance	page 41
12. Complaints Procedure	page 53
13. Student Disciplinary Policy & Procedure	page 55
14. Drugs & Alcohol Policy & Procedures	page 58
15. Appeals Against Assessment	page 62
16. Charging Policy and Procedures	page 63
17. Student Financial Support	page 68
18. Fee Payment, Remission of Fees and Instalment Policy	page 70
19. Student Conditions of use of Peter Symonds College Network	page 73

*Please note that for Higher Education courses there is a separate set of academic regulations and procedures. Further details are available from the Director of Adult and Higher Education (AHed).*

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**INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE AT PETER SYMONDS COLLEGE**  
**A POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy statement applies to all students of the college, whether 16-19 or adult learners.

**The College Aims:**

- To publicise as widely as possible accurate, detailed and unbiased information on all courses and learning opportunities available for post 16 learners at Peter Symonds College.
- To provide information to the local community (i.e. 16-19 year olds, parents, adults seeking full or part-time courses, employers) about college provision and to maintain and extend links with outside organisations. To promote equality of opportunity, information will be made available in accessible formats (e.g. Braille) on request.
- To provide appropriate and timely information, advice and guidance for all prospective students from the time when they begin to make their decisions about which courses to choose, throughout the application, induction and enrolment process, during their time at college and as they prepare for the next stage in their lives. This will include information about how we support students with disabilities.

**Student Entitlement:**

Student entitlement is set out clearly in the College Charter and the Student Handbook (Adults) and covers pre-entry and entry guidance; on programme guidance and guidance on exit.

**INFORMATION AND ADVICE ABOUT COURSE OPTIONS**

***For 16-19 Full Time Students***

Course information is provided in the Prospectus and associated literature. This is available in a number of ways:

- Directly from the college – contact the Admissions Office
- Through the Careers Adviser or Head of Year at the student's school
- From Careers Fairs held in local schools
- From College Open Evenings
- From the College website

Further information, advice and guidance is provided during one to one admissions interviews and again at enrolment.

***For Adult Students***

Course information is provided in the Adult & Higher Education (AHEd) brochure, the Higher Education Prospectus and leaflets available at the Stoney Lane site, Weeke, local libraries and the website. Information includes the full range of courses offered, days, times, prices, and locations.

Further information is available on our website as follows:

- Individual course outlines and information, containing the following details: the name of the tutor; the location; who the course is aimed at; the aims of the course; what learners will be able to do by the end of the course; activities/tasks which will be covered during the course; previous knowledge required; any useful preparation before the course starts; the amount of study expected outside the course; any materials required; exam and other costs; what the course can lead to. This information is also available from AHEd reception.
- Business training opportunities available

- Maps giving directions to the different college sites
- AHEd policies and procedures: e.g. complaints, equal opportunities and refunds
- Useful local telephone numbers to seek further information

The Student Handbook (Adults) is available on our website and sets out policies and procedures as they affect adult learners. Hard copies are available at Reception at the Stoney Lane site, Weeke. There is a separate handbook for students on higher education courses that is issued at enrolment and sets out HE specific procedures and protocols (Higher Education at PSC – Student Handbook).

If learners require more help to decide which course is appropriate for them, the Adult & Higher Education Division of the College (AHEd) offers an advice service for all accredited courses e.g. Access to HE, Diplomas, and Skills for Life.

The appropriate Adviser will contact learners within five working days to arrange to speak confidentially with one of the Advisers. All records of such interviews are confidential. Staff offering information and advice are all competent to the level at which they are working.

Advice is also offered with regard to course fee funding, careers guidance, childcare and hardship funds by contacting the reception at AHEd.

## **INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE DURING A STUDENT'S COURSE**

### ***For Full Time 16-19 Students***

The college provides a programme aimed at helping students to develop decision-making and transition skills and to acquire the information they need to make their plans for the post-college stage. This will be achieved by a combination of:

- Individual activities (e.g. confidential 1:1 Careers interviews)
- One-to-one formal tutorial reviews and monitoring of targets
- Group activities as part of the tutorial programme
- An introduction to the Careers department for all lower sixth students via the Symonds lecture programme
- College careers events for full time 16-19 students (e.g. Careers Week, H.E. events, the Progression Fair, and the GAP Year Fair)
- Access to the resources available in the Careers Library
- Optional group sessions to meet specific needs (eg: lunchtime talks)

### ***For Adult Students***

- An Introduction to the Careers department will be offered to all Access and Higher Education students and their tutors
- There is a Careers section available on Moodle for Higher Education students
- Learners are provided with the National Careers Service website address and/or phone number for general careers advice and guidance

## **Feedback**

We welcome comments to help us improve the IAG services provided to students.

- For Adult students, evaluation forms are issued soon after the course starts, focusing on the pre-course information and/or application/interview process. Comment or Complaint forms are available at in the coffee area and reception area at the Stoney Lane site. Students can also feedback via Facebook and Moodle, our VLE. We are always keen to improve and regularly evaluate our service. We monitor the comments received (which can be anonymous) and refer to them when making improvements in the advice and information offered. If you need to speak to a member of staff, the receptionist will either connect you directly or leave a message for the appropriate person who will contact you within five working days, except in exceptional circumstances when the situation will be made clear to you.

- For full time 16 – 19 students, there are opportunities for feedback about IAG services via cross-college student questionnaires and SPOT/SPOC focus groups (which are part of our Quality procedures), as well as via feedback sessions and questionnaires organised by the Careers Department, as part of our commitment to the Investor in Careers quality standard.

### ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR PETER SYMONDS COLLEGE

The college aims to welcome students from all backgrounds and supports those with learning difficulties and disabilities to access the curriculum and operates an equal opportunities policy.

The Sixth Form College receives an increasingly large number of applications each year. To ensure that growth does not take place at the expense of quality, the Governors have adopted the following admissions policy. They wish to re-affirm the College's Mission to serve the community of Winchester and the surrounding area, taking into account the range of courses and facilities available within the College. To this end, we cannot guarantee to interview applicants who live outside the local area.

Each course has its own specific entry criteria, as stated in the prospectus. Every year the College will assess its predicted number of applications against its required intake number of students, and applicants may be given a firm offer of a place, or may be placed on a reserve list. In some cases, we may feel there is no suitable course available for the applicant or the applicant will not benefit from our course and suggest applying elsewhere.

Subject to the conditions set out below for all applicants, when deciding which form of offer to make an applicant the College will take into consideration:

- a) **Home address:** those living closest to the Winchester area are likely to receive a firm offer. Students are expected to be living with their immediate family or legal guardian(s).
- b) **Previous school:** those attending one of the College's partner schools are likely to receive a firm offer.
- c) **Family connections:** those with siblings already at the College, or similar family connections, are likely to receive a firm offer.
- d) **Date of application:** those applying after the closing date published in the College prospectus are unlikely to receive a firm offer.
- e) **Progression directly from year 11:** priority will be given to applicants joining the college directly from year 11.
- f) Any factors likely to raise doubt about a student's suitability for a place at this college; eg: predicted grades, school reference, etc.

#### Reserve list

Those students not falling within one of the categories listed above are more likely to be placed on the College's reserve list. Available places will be offered to students on the reserve list at the Principal's discretion. When exercising that discretion the following factors will be taken into account:

- a) Suitability for proposed course.
- b) Other factors such as transport routes and ease of travel, date of application, school references and any extenuating circumstances.

#### All Applicants

- In the Admissions process, must demonstrate a strong commitment to further study and the ethos of the college.
- Must have a satisfactory reference from their previous school (for students at partner schools, the College will usually liaise with the relevant link member of staff).
- Must satisfy the requirements for admission to the proposed programme of study.
- Must agree to adhere to the Rules of the College as set out in the Student Handbook and to any agreements made between the college and individual students/and/or their parents or legal guardians that the college can reasonably require.

### **Students with Additional Needs**

All students are encouraged to disclose on their application form any medical conditions, learning difficulties or physical or sensory disability so that we can discuss with them how they might be supported in their learning to fulfil their academic potential.

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) agreed and completed by the Local Authority will help us to assess a student's needs and the additional support we are able to provide. Students should indicate on their application if an EHCP has been agreed by their Local Authority.

### **Students wishing to re-start or to re-enrol**

Students who have already studied at the College need to demonstrate their suitability for further study at interview and may have specific conditions placed on their re-application which they must meet, for example, a certain level of attendance. Staff feedback and recommendations will always be sought and will influence a final decision about a student's re-application.

### **Older applicants**

When making offers, priority will go to students joining the College directly from Year 11. Applications to the Sixth Form from students who will be 18 years and older when they plan to start studying at Peter Symonds will not normally be considered. However, students will be advised to contact the Head of Admissions if they have very exceptional circumstances which they wish to be taken into consideration. In such cases, the Head of Admissions in consultation with the Deputy Principal (Students) may accept a student over 18 years old, subject to interview. Provision for adults is made by the College in the Adult & Higher Education division at Stoney Lane, Weeke (AHEd).

### **Applications to enter college half way through a course**

This is not recommended. We will consider applications on an individual basis and will only accept students under very exceptional circumstances. Entry would be dependent on the compatibility of syllabuses previously studied and space on courses, and would be subject to satisfactory references, including comments on performance and attendance, from the applicants' previous school/college.

### **Hampshire Specialist Music Course**

This course has a strictly limited number of places available and has its own special entry criteria, which relates to musical talent and an audition, in addition to the standard College entry requirements. Early applications are strongly advised.

### **Boarding**

Places in Boarding are strictly limited and will be allocated according to our assessment of the academic needs of each individual student, their suitability for boarding as demonstrated at interview and the date of their application. Final decisions are made by a Boarding Admissions Panel.

Priority will be given to:

- Students progressing to the college directly from year 11;
- Students who are aged 16 by 1<sup>st</sup> September;
- Students who are under 17 years of age on 1<sup>st</sup> September;
- Students who are sponsored by the Falklands Islands Government;
- Students with family connections with the college; i.e. those with siblings already at the college;
- Students who apply by the deadline for boarding applications;
- Students who are UK/EU nationals;
- Students who will qualify for an Advanced level course, as indicated by their predicted grades, school reference, etc.

### **Adult Students at Stoney Lane, Weeke**

Adult learners must sign the Learning Agreement as confirmation that they will adhere to the Rules of the College as set out in the Student Handbook (Adults) / HE Student Handbook and to any agreements made between the College and individual students that the College can reasonably require.

The College aims to provide all applicants with a programme of study that suits their individual needs. However, places may not be offered for the following reasons:

- The applicant is unable to demonstrate that they hold the minimum entry requirements
- The applicant is seeking to undertake a programme where there is no realistic chance of success
- The applicant has a criminal conviction which bars them from certain areas of work and therefore some courses will not be available.

If the College is unable to admit an applicant to the programme of their choice, we will try to offer a suitable alternative programme and/or appropriate advice and guidance.

NB A separate admissions policy exists for Higher Education students and is available on the Adult & Higher Education website under 'Wider Information about HE' (see HE Admissions Protocol).

## **Guidance when a student declares a criminal conviction**

### **Section 1: Introduction**

The college is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all students. However, there may be times when a student declares a criminal conviction and, in line with our 'duty of care' to all students and staff, the college has to assess whether or not it is appropriate for the student to enrol or continue with their programme of study. In which case, the following will be assessed:

- whether there is a real risk that they will cause harm or distress to others;
- whether we can meet their individual needs.

### **Section 2: Pre-course**

Students are asked to disclose any criminal convictions on their application form. Failure to provide correct information may result in the offer of a place being withdrawn at any time.

When the college receives an application form declaring a criminal conviction or caution, the college will write to the applicant requesting further information, to include:

- Formal confirmation of the offence(s);
- Sentence(s) passed;
- Any mitigating circumstances;
- Any other information, which the applicant wishes to put forward.

The college will also explain to the applicant that they may include a statement regarding their suitability to commence a programme of study.

The college will also make any other enquiries it deems necessary upon receiving notification of a criminal conviction and the applicant will be expected to assist the college in making those enquiries.

A panel comprising three senior members of college staff (drawn from Heads of Faculty/Curriculum Heads/Director of Adult & Higher Education and members of the Senior Management Team) will be identified and will meet promptly to consider the application. The chair will be the most senior member of staff on the panel, who will open proceedings. The panel will then consider the application form, any statement submitted and any other supporting information submitted by the applicant.

The panel will reach a decision taking into account whether the offence(s) constitute(s) a risk to the safety and/or wellbeing of other members of the college community that is not consistent with the college's duty of care. The panel need not be unanimous in its decision. The panel will reach a decision based on the balance of probabilities, based on all the facts available at the time.

Possible outcomes would be:

- (a) to offer a place on the programme of study subject to other entry criteria being met;
- (b) to request further information of the applicant regarding the offence;
- (c) not to proceed with the application.

For students already enrolled on a specific programme of study the panel may:

- (a) take no further action;
- (b) request further information from the student regarding the offence(s); or
- (c) withdraw the student from the programme of study.

In all cases, the chair of the panel will take into account the reasonable interests of all concerned.

If the decision of the panel is to take no further action or to proceed with the application, then the Principal's PA will hold all records relating to the panel in confidential storage.

If an offer of a place is then made, it may be subject to conditions appropriate to the applicant and their particular circumstances. Furthermore, a Support Plan and/or Risk Assessment may be required, which will be shared with those involved in supporting the student.

### **Section 3: On-course**

If a student gains a criminal record while at college, they should inform the college via their Head of Faculty or Curriculum Head and the following may apply:

- with the student's consent, the college will obtain further information from their probation officer or other key support worker;
- the college's student disciplinary procedures may be invoked, depending on the circumstances;
- it may be appropriate for the college to undertake a DBS check;
- the college will review the student's suitability to continue with their programme of study, as set out above;
- if the student continues at college, a Support Plan and/or Risk Assessment will be put in to place, where appropriate, and shared with those involved in supporting the student;
- parents/guardians/carers will be involved in discussions about the student's future at college, as appropriate;
- if a student does not inform the college of a criminal conviction gained while a student at the college, and the college later finds out about it, the student's place may automatically be withdrawn;
- any student who has their place at college withdrawn as a result of a review of their fitness to study based on a criminal conviction will have the right of appeal to the Principal.

The college will make any other enquiries it deems necessary upon receiving notification of a criminal conviction and the student will be expected to assist the college in making those enquiries.

If a student's place at college is withdrawn, the Head of Faculty, Deputy Principal (Students) or Director of Adult & Higher Education will write to the student as soon as practicable to confirm this.

### **Section 4: Right of Appeal**

Any student who has their place at college withdrawn has the right to appeal in writing to the Principal, within five working days of the receipt of written notification that their place is permanently withdrawn.

The Appeals procedure will be that set out in the Student Disciplinary Policy, a copy of which can be obtained from the Principal's PA.

The Principal's decision will be final.

**CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE POLICY**  
**FOR THE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**

**Introduction**

A young person's career is their pathway through learning and work. All students at Peter Symonds Sixth Form College are provided with a planned programme of activities that challenges stereotypes and helps them make informed post-college choices and, therefore, a smooth transition into adulthood. The Careers Education and Guidance (CEG) programme is integrated into students' experience of the whole curriculum, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people.

**Statement of Commitment**

Peter Symonds College is committed to providing a planned and impartial Careers Education and Guidance (CEG) programme for all students at the Sixth Form College, along with impartial information, advice and guidance (IAG). The college adopts the values and behaviours in the Foundation Code for Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance, ensuring our students are given the highest quality CEIAG, and uses the DfE (2015) Careers Guidance and Inspiration report as guidance when planning our career provision for students.

**Aims and Objectives**

- To help and support individuals in making realistic, informed decisions about the future, in order to make the most of the choices available and appreciate the consequences of these for their future options.
- To encourage individuals to take responsibility for the future directions of their lives by enabling them to progress from dependence to autonomy.

**Modes of Delivery**

The college has a dedicated Careers Library, containing comprehensive careers literature and computer software packages to which students have easy access, so that they can appreciate and research the variety of routes available.

CEG is formally delivered as part of the college's tutorial programme and Symonds lecture programme. All students attend two tutorial sessions per week, which are delivered by personal tutors, and one lecture a fortnight. It is differentiated and personalised to ensure progression through activities that are appropriate to students' stages of career learning, planning and development. Students on Level 2 programmes are provided with a differentiated CEG programme delivered via tutors and in subject lessons to ultimately support them in progression to Level 3 courses or employment with training.

The CEG programme includes practical careers education sessions, career guidance activities (group work and individual interviews), information and research activities (using the Careers Library resources and the college intranet) and work-related learning (including opportunities for work experience). In addition to this students are provided with optional opportunities to experience, sample and progressively gain knowledge of future routes through visits by employers, professionals working in the field, previous students and educational institutions in order to improve the basis on which individuals make decisions.

### **Monitoring, review and evaluation**

The CEG programme is reviewed annually by the Head of Careers and the college Careers Advisers. Students are actively involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the careers education and guidance programme through discussions with tutors, peers and the use of feedback forms. College staff are consulted through the Head of Careers attending Faculty meetings and the use of feedback forms. An annual Careers review is provided to the Senior Management Team. The Careers Department also participates in the college self-assessment process, producing a Development Plan each year as a result.

This policy was developed and is reviewed annually through discussions with Senior Management, students and governors. Peter Symonds College is committed to maintaining the Investor in Careers quality award for Careers Education and Guidance to help support the work of CEG within the college.

### **Management and Staffing**

The Careers department is managed by the Head of Careers, supported by a deputy and a team of Careers Advisers and Careers Assistants. The Careers team support the work of the tutors and subject teachers in promoting CEG, as well as initiating its own work in this area. The careers programme is planned, monitored and evaluated by the Head of Careers and line managed by the Deputy Principal (Students). Work experience is planned and implemented by the Work Experience Co-ordinator.

### **Links with other policies**

The CEG policy supports and is underpinned by key college policies including those for teaching and learning; information, advice and guidance; admissions and equal opportunities.

### **WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY FOR THE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**

#### **Introduction**

Work experience is a placement with an employer in which a student carries out a task or a range of tasks in much the same way as an employee, with the emphasis on learning from the experience. Students studying vocational courses at Peter Symonds College are required to attend work experience placements as part of their course.

#### **Statement of Commitment**

Peter Symonds College is committed, subject to resource restraints, to supporting planned work experience placements for all students studying vocational courses, promoting equality of opportunity, inclusion and anti-racism. To ensure that work experience placements are delivered to a high standard, we give due regard to the 'Post 16 work experience as a part of 16 to 19 study programmes and traineeships' document (DfE 2015).

To support the work experience placements the college has a dedicated Work Experience Co-ordinator.

#### **Aims and Objectives**

- To provide opportunities for learning about the skills, personal qualities, roles, structures and careers that exist within a workplace or organisation.
- To relate their learning to the work environment.

#### **Responsibilities**

To ensure successful placements, the Work Experience Co-ordinator works closely with students, their parents or carers, the college and employers. Procedures are flexible, influenced by circumstances and individual needs. Outlined below are the main responsibilities to ensure placements occur smoothly.

#### **Students**

- Participate in the process of identifying the types of placement that will meet their learning needs.
- Complete and return work experience paperwork.
- Meet the cost of a DBS check where such a check is required for a student to undertake a particular placement; in cases of financial hardship, students can apply for help from the Student Support Fund.
- Attend work experience preparation sessions.
- Behave appropriately and follow the instructions given to them by the employer.
- Give feedback to employers following a placement.

#### **Parents/Guardians**

- Are involved in the choice of placement.
- Give consent and return paperwork.
- Are the out of hours emergency contact for employers.

#### **The College**

- Gives due regard to statutory requirements.
- Works in partnership with employers to ensure well-structured, interesting placements.

- Issues a job description to students, parents/carers and employers before the placement starts.
- Completes a DBS check where such a check is required for the student to undertake a particular placement and the placement is an essential requirement of the Awarding Body for the course.
- Discuss and provide students and employers with copies of the Aims & Learning Outcomes, prior to the placement starting.
- Reviews Health and Safety checks/requirements.
- Ensures, where appropriate, that students with additional needs are supported eg: with consent, through the sharing of information or the completion of a Risk Assessment.

### **Employers**

- Complete and return college work experience paperwork.
- Ensure that all Health and Safety requirements are followed.
- Support students during their placements.
- Contribute to end of placement reviews, in discussion with students.

### **Monitoring, Review and Evaluation**

The Work Experience Co-ordinator reviews all placements once complete, via feedback with students, staff and discussion with employers. An annual report is made to the Senior Management Team.

All students are monitored by college staff whilst on their placements, through visits and/or telephone contact within two days of the placement starting. Immediately after the placements, students are actively involved in debriefings via discussions with college staff, peers and/or presentations and feedback forms. Employer assessment forms are also reviewed and given out to students following the placements.

Peter Symonds College is committed to monitoring, review and evaluation and currently holds the Investor in Careers quality award for Careers Education and Guidance.

The records kept by the Work Experience Co-ordinator are subject to internal Audit.

### **Management and Staffing**

The Work Experience Co-ordinator is managed by the Head of Careers and is located within the Careers Department. The Vocational Course Leaders and tutors work in partnership with the Work Experience Co-ordinator, supporting all students on vocational courses completing work experience placements.

### **Links with Other Policies**

The Work Experience policy supports and is underpinned by key college policies including those for teaching and learning; information, advice and guidance; careers education and guidance, and equal opportunities.

### **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS**

#### **Introduction**

Peter Symonds College is committed to creating an inclusive college, where people are treated with dignity and respect and where we anticipate and respond positively to different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their potential. We welcome students from all backgrounds and actively celebrate the benefits that diversity and difference bring to the College and our society.

Equality and Diversity is crucial to overall quality improvement and we place it at the very heart of everything we do. The College promotes and advances equality of opportunity by raising awareness of equality and human rights and working to combat all forms of inequality, disadvantage, prejudice, unfair discrimination, harassment and mistreatment. We believe that all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination are unacceptable and we are committed to creating a safe environment for all.

#### **Protected Characteristics and the Law**

Under the Equality Act 2010 age, gender, disability (including mental ill-health), race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy and maternity are 'protected characteristics'.

It is unlawful for any students to receive unfair treatment due to their protected characteristic. The College will seek to identify and act upon any unfair or unlawful discrimination.

Definitions of unlawful treatment introduced by the Equality Act 2010 are set out in Appendix A.

#### **The College is fully committed to:**

- Preventing unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations between people

The College's Strategic and Operational Plans will reflect this commitment.

#### **The College will publish:**

- Equality Objectives every four years
- An annual Equality and Diversity Analysis

#### **Quality of provision**

- The commitment to creating an inclusive College will be communicated to potential students, students, staff, parents, employers and other community interests.
- All teaching resources and curriculum content will reflect and promote Equality and Diversity where appropriate.
- Student handbooks, induction and tutorial programmes will reflect and promote Equality and Diversity.
- Use of Language guidelines will encourage good practice in using language in an inclusive way which shows respect for all other members of the College
- Departments will take systematic steps to ensure that learners have access to all opportunities irrespective of protected characteristic.
- Teaching observations and the self-assessment process will monitor Equality and Diversity.
- The language needs of full and part-time learners will be treated sympathetically.
- Arrangements for internal and external assessment will be sensitive to the needs of different groups.
- Students' success rates, achievement, retention and value-added will be monitored to ensure no group underachieves or is disadvantaged.
- Enrolment processes will be used to personalise support for learners, including those with

additional support needs.

- Multiple opportunities will be given for learners to disclose any disabilities or learning difficulties or other needs relating to protected characteristics that they may have. The College will, through a culture of inclusivity, ensure an environment in which people feel able and confident to disclose and to see disclosure as the right course of action.
- The College will always provide reasonable adjustments (see Appendix A) in response to disclosure and will never disadvantage a learner on the basis of such needs, in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014.
- The College will continue to modify the site, buildings and facilities to ensure access and suitability for students with mobility and sensory impairments.
- The College will continue to provide training for all staff and awareness raising opportunities for students to create an inclusive College and ensure compliance with this Equality and Diversity policy.
- All providers of work-based learning and those contracting with the College will be made aware of this Equality and Diversity policy and will be expected to comply.

### **Responsibilities**

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the College has an effective Equal and Diversity Policy and an action plan as part of the college's Operational Plan which complies with current legislation. The Senior Management Team is responsible for ensuring that the policy and action plan is implemented.

Heads of Faculty, Heads of Subject, the Director of Adult & Higher Education and the Adult & Higher Education Division Curriculum Heads are responsible for ensuring that both the letter and the spirit of the policy are built in to all aspects of curriculum delivery.

All staff and students are expected to take responsibility for acting in accordance with both the spirit and the letter of the policy.

### **Complaints**

Students can raise concerns in relation to this policy through: Anti-Bullying and Harassment Procedures; Complaints Procedures; their tutors; student Equality Focus Groups and surveys.

Students who feel they have been treated unfairly may refer to the procedures set out in their Student Diary/ Handbook and/or talk to their Tutor, Lead Tutor, Head of Faculty or Student Services.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through student data, the annual Equality and Diversity Analysis and review of the College Equality Objectives and reported on annually to the Governing Body.

Equality and Diversity is a standing agenda item at the termly Management Forum meetings.

Equality in all protected characteristics is analysed by reference to the "Student Journey", which is part of the Single Equality Scheme and available on the College website: [www.psc.ac.uk](http://www.psc.ac.uk)

*This policy is based on the 2010 Equality Act, which supersedes previous legislation. This policy is reviewed annually in the light of updated legislation and guidance.*

## **Appendix A - Definitions**

### **Direct Discrimination**

This occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.

### **Associative Discrimination**

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic (for example, a mother of a disabled child).

### **Perceptive Discrimination**

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

### **Indirect Discrimination**

Indirect discrimination can occur a condition, rule, policy or a practice in the company that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

### **Reasonable adjustments:**

- To take reasonable steps to avoid a provision or practice or physical environment which puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage.
- To adopt reasonable alternatives if appropriate.
- To provide auxiliary aids which prevent a disabled person being disadvantaged compared with people who are not.

### **Discrimination arising from disability**

Treating disabled people unfavourably when using services provided for a reason connected with disability.

### **Harassment**

Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

### **Victimisation**

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act.

**PREVENTION OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT (STUDENTS)**  
**POLICY & PROCEDURE**

The college has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. The purpose of this policy is to enable students to fulfill their potential in college, both academically and personally, in a safe and supportive environment where each individual is respected and valued and 'counted in ones'.

This policy also relates to the college's Equal Opportunities policy and Student Disciplinary policy.

This policy is not intended to supersede the college's student disciplinary procedures. Serious instances of proven bullying and/or harassment within college will usually be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

**1. Definition and examples**

**Bullying - definition**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Examples:

Bullying behaviour can take many forms. It could be verbal (eg: name-calling), emotional (eg: taunting), indirect (eg: exclusion from a group) or physical (eg: hitting). Furthermore, it could be racial or religious bullying; homophobic or transgender bullying; bullying related to a learning difficulty or disability; and cyber-bullying, involving the use of electronic equipment like computers and mobile phones.

Bullying is different from banter if:

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves
- It is (usually) persistent

The perception of bullying will vary from person to person, but the perception of the student feeling bullied is central to the consideration of any complaint of bullying.

**Harassment - definition**

Bullying can sometimes take the form of harassment. This is defined as unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or humiliating environment.

Harassment would include any conduct related to age, creed, disability, nationality, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic, which is unwanted, unreasonable or offensive to the recipient, or any conduct that affects the dignity of any individual or group.

Examples:

*Physical*            contact, assault or gestures, intimidation, aggressive behaviour.

*Verbal*             unwelcome remarks, suggestions and propositions, malicious gossip, jokes and banter based on any discriminatory characteristic (gender, sexuality, disability and ethnicity, including for example Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hostility and other religious hostility).

*Non-verbal* offensive literature or pictures, graffiti and computer imagery, text messages, emails, inappropriate use of social networking sites, isolation or non-co-operation and exclusion from social activities.

The perception of harassment will vary from person to person, but the perception of the student feeling harassed is central to the consideration of any complaint of harassment.

## **2. Policy Statement**

The college considers bullying/harassment in any form to be a serious matter, which will not be tolerated. While there is no single solution to bullying/harassment, the college will always seek to try to resolve an issue. However, where there is a lack of evidence and/or conflicting evidence and/or counter-claims, it may not be possible to 'prove' or 'disprove' a case. Only where there is clear and unambiguous evidence in support of an allegation will formal procedures be used, such as the student disciplinary procedure, if appropriate.

In relation to bullying/harassment, the college will:

- Take any allegation seriously
- Talk to all parties and take appropriate steps to stop the bullying/harassment and to prevent any further victimisation as a result of the allegation eg: via mediation
- Offer support to victims of bullying and harassment as vulnerable students
- Offer support to the perpetrators as they too may be vulnerable students
- Raise student awareness of bullying and harassment; for example, via the tutorial programme
- Train staff so that they know what bullying/harassment is and what to do if they see it or a student discloses to them
- Liaise, where appropriate, with parents/guardians
- Take appropriate and reasonable disciplinary action where bullying/harassment is proved

It is recognised that any successful attempt to resolve a situation will rely on the willingness, openness and honesty of all those involved.

## **3. Procedures**

The starting point for any intervention should be to talk to the student who has been bullied/experienced harassment, establish what has happened and identify a way forward.

In all cases, the college will proceed in the way which is considered to be the most appropriate in the circumstances, but generally speaking any member of staff with whom a student confides that they are being subjected to bullying/harassment should listen sensitively, make a note of what is said, and make the student aware of the following options:

1. The student should be encouraged to discuss any concerns with their Tutor, Lead Tutor, Curriculum Head, Student Services or any member of staff they feel comfortable talking with. This can allow time for the student to reflect on an incident and give an objective account of what happened.
2. If at all possible, the student suffering bullying/harassment should be encouraged to inform the perpetrator that his/her behaviour is offensive and causing distress and ask for it to stop. Sometimes individuals do not realise that their behaviour is offensive and causing distress.
3. If the student suffering the bullying/harassment does not feel sufficiently confident to undertake this first step, or this first step fails to resolve the problem, the student should talk to their Tutor, Student Services or any member of staff they feel comfortable talking with.
4. This member of staff should keep an informal, confidential record of the conversation and, with the student's consent, share this with the Tutor/Lead Tutor/ Curriculum Head, Head of Student Services (as appropriate) so that they are aware of the problem and can support the student in trying to resolve the matter.

5. The Tutor/Lead Tutor should arrange to see the student 3 or 4 weeks after an incident is resolved to ensure that all is well and no further advice or support is required.
6. The student should keep a note of any incidents and witnesses that may be able to help resolve the matter.

If an allegation appears to be well-founded, the matter should be referred directly to a senior member of staff, such as the Head of Faculty, an Adult & Higher Education Division Curriculum Head, the Deputy Principal (Students) or the Director of Adult & Higher Education, who will review the evidence, decide on the most appropriate course of action and more formally seek a resolution, in which case the following may apply:

1. A resolution may involve a meeting with the student suffering the bullying/harassment and the perpetrator to try to resolve the issue. Parents/guardians would be contacted and involved, as appropriate.
2. If such a meeting takes place, it will be made clear to the perpetrator that there is zero tolerance of bullying and what the consequences are of continued bullying/harassment. However, it is recognized that the perpetrator may also need help and support in understanding their behaviour and its effects on others. The contents of any meeting will be recorded in writing.
3. At this stage the person suffering bullying/harassment may find it helpful to talk to the college counselling service. In addition, the perpetrator may be advised to use the college counselling service.
4. The student suffering the bullying/harassment will be asked to make a formal note of any future bullying, recording the date, place and content of the bullying/harassment.
5. The students' Head of Faculty or Curriculum Head (AHEd) should arrange to see the student 3 or 4 weeks after an incident is resolved to ensure that all is well and no further advice or support is required.
6. If the bullying/harassment continues, the college disciplinary procedure may be invoked and the perpetrator may be suspended or even asked to leave the college.
7. Where bullying behaviour or harassment is particularly serious or involves a criminal offence (eg: assault, criminal damage, hate crime etc) the police may be asked to be involved.

All staff involved in such issues must be aware of any individual needs a student may have (eg: a disability or a learning difficulty) which may need to be addressed prior to any meeting or attempt at resolving the matter. Staff should contact the Head of Study Support for advice.

**At all times consideration will be given to confidentiality, impartiality and equality of opportunity.**

### **Monitoring and Review**

All incidents dealt with formally are logged and will form the basis of an annual monitoring report to the Senior Management Team, and reported to Governors for information. Incidents relating to Equality and Diversity will be reported on in the annual Equal Opportunities report to the Senior Management Team and the Governing Body. The policy is reviewed annually.

This policy was reviewed and updated in the context of HCC Children and Young People's Anti-Bullying policy (2009), along with Safe from Bullying in further education colleges (DIUS 2009) and Preventing and tackling bullying (DfE 2012).

**POLICY FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE  
AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Child Protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare and refers to activities that are undertaken to: protect children and young people from maltreatment; prevent impairment of health or development; prevent radicalisation; ensure they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and action is taken to enable all to have the best outcomes.

The College will work in accordance with guidance set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (DFE March 2015), 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DFE May 2016), 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (DFE 2015) and 'Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers' (DFE March 2015).

This policy outlines the guidance for Peter Symonds College staff in dealing with allegations, suspicions or disclosures of abuse or radicalisation by students. Where the term 'child protection' is used, it includes reference to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The underlying principles are:

- To support the student and put their interests first
- To act at all times with the knowledge and consent of the student
- To maintain the confidentiality of any matter within the context of the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults (see below)

**1) Background Information**

Peter Symonds College has a statutory and moral duty to ensure that it functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all those who are students at the College.

The governing body is committed to ensuring that the College:

- Provides a safe environment for students to learn in
- Provides opportunities for students to learn about keeping safe
- Identifies children, young people and vulnerable adults who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm, and
- Takes appropriate action to see that such children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe, in partnership with other services as appropriate

In pursuit of these aims, the governing body will ensure that the College designates an appropriate senior member of staff to take lead responsibility for child protection and approve and annually review policies and procedures with the aim of:

- Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of students and the promotion of a safe environment for all those learning at the college
- Aiding the identification of students at risk of significant harm or radicalisation and providing procedures for reporting concerns

- Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse or radicalisation against members of staff
- Establishing procedures and checks for the safe recruitment of staff

Every member of staff must be aware of their responsibilities for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse or radicalisation and must take all allegations or suspicions seriously and respond to them sensitively and put the interests of the student first. Staff members must be aware that they may be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual students.

## 2) Definitions

- Child abuse is defined as: ‘when there is evidence of a cause for concern that a child or young person has suffered from or is at significant risk of, any one or more of the following: neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and/or emotional abuse.’ See Appendix 1.
- The term ‘children and young people’ is used to refer to those students who are under the age of eighteen. In addition, this policy applies to students under the age of twenty five who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities as they are ‘vulnerable adults’ also in need of protection.
- The term ‘member of staff’ includes all academic and support staff employed by the College, be they full time, fractional, part time, permanent or temporary, and volunteers; this also includes staff employed by contractors.
- ‘Radicalisation’ refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. (Prevent Duty Guidance 2015)

## 3) Confidentiality

Young people from 16 to 18 have rights to confidentiality which must be respected. Young people under the age of 16 have similar rights, qualified by their age, understanding and vulnerability (ie they are 14 or over and are judged to have the capacity to understand and make their own decisions).

However, in matters concerning the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults the law permits the disclosure of confidential information to external agencies, like Children’s Services and the Police, necessary to safeguard a child, young person or vulnerable adult. **Therefore, full confidentiality cannot be promised to a student.**

Within College, information about a student in relation to the protection of a child, young person or vulnerable adult should be shared on a ‘need to know’ basis. Early sharing of information is key to providing effective early help and support where there are emerging problems. At the other end of the continuum, sharing information will be essential to put in place effective child protection services. Be open and honest with students and explain why information needs to be shared and with whom it will be shared.

## 4) Designated staff with responsibility for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults

**The designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection (Designated Safeguarding Lead – DSL)** is the Deputy Principal (Students) who is responsible for:

- Overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations of abuse or radicalisation
- Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults

- Ensuring proper records of any referral, complaint or concern are kept
- Ensuring that the parents of children and young people within the College are aware of this policy; in the Adult & Higher Education Division the Director of Adult & Higher Education will ensure that the parents of young people studying there and the carers of vulnerable adults are aware of this policy
- Liaising with external agencies, local schools, employers and training providers over child protection matters for sixth form students; in the Adult & Higher Education Division this responsibility lies with the Director of Adult & Higher Education
- Ensuring that staff in the sixth form college receive basic training in child protection issues and are aware of the College child protection procedures; in the Adult & Higher Education Division this responsibility lies with the Director of Adult & Higher Education
- Keeping up to date with developments in child protection issues and raising awareness of the College's policy and procedures
- Providing an annual report to the governing body of the College setting out how the College has discharged its duties
- Liaising with the Director of Adult & Higher Education if a young person under 18 years of age or a vulnerable young adult under 25 years of age studying at the Adult & Higher Education Division is considered to be at risk

**Other designated members of staff** with responsibility for child protection issues include:

- The Head and Deputy Head of Student Welfare
- The Director of Adult & Higher Education
- Senior Management Team and Heads of Faculty
- The Head of Study Support
- The Head of Boarding

These staff will:

- Report all cases to the senior member of staff with lead responsibility
- Know how to make an appropriate referral
- Be available to provide advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child protection
- Be available to listen to children, young people and vulnerable adults studying at the College
- Deal with individual cases, including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate
- The contact details for Hampshire Children's Services are: 0845 603 5620 or [childrens.services@hants.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services@hants.gov.uk) ; the contact details for Hampshire Adult Services is: 0845 603 5630

**The Designated Governor** with responsibility for child protection is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the College has policies and procedures in place that are consistent with guidance from the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board
- Ensuring that the governing body considers the College policy on child protection each year
- Ensuring that each year the governing body, via the C&QA sub-committee, is informed of how the College and its staff have complied with the policy and discharged its duties
- Overseeing liaison with the Principal and senior staff member with lead responsibility over matters regarding child protection
- Overseeing liaison between appropriate agencies in connection with allegations against the Principal or senior staff member with lead responsibility. This will not involve undertaking any form of investigation, but will ensure good communication between parties and provide information to assist enquiries. To facilitate this, the Designated Governor and Chair of Governors will be informed immediately of any allegation against a member of the senior management team

To assist in these duties, the designated governor will receive appropriate training.

**5) Responsibilities of all staff when responding to an allegation, suspicion or disclosure of abuse or neglect** (*further guidance is contained within the Staff Handbook and Staff File*):

- All staff should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect and radicalisation and are responsible for responding appropriately to a disclosure and must act with the knowledge of the student
- All allegations or suspicions of abuse or neglect or radicalisation must be taken seriously. Staff are required to respond with sensitivity and tact to any student who confides in them, recognising that it requires courage to share such painful and personal concerns
- Staff members are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned
- Staff are **not** responsible for the investigation of abuse or neglect or radicalisation and should not attempt to deal with it beyond listening to and supporting the student and then referring the matter immediately to a designated member of staff
- An immediate record should be kept of the conversation between staff and the discloser of abuse. The record-keeping must comply with the Data Protection Act
- The designated member(s) of staff will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies on behalf of the College
- All internal communication about the case must be kept to a minimum, on a 'need to know' basis
- The student will be informed of all actions to be taken
- Students with specific needs may require a different approach from other young people. Staff must be aware of any special considerations with regard to communication difficulties and equal opportunities
- If the allegation of abuse is about a member of the College staff, this should be reported immediately to the Principal, unless the Principal is the person against which the allegation is

made in which case the report should be made to the designated Senior member of staff or designated governor, who will follow the appropriate staffing policies and procedures

- If the allegation is about another student, the Student Disciplinary Procedures should be followed
- If staff have concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the College's safeguarding procedures, they should raise these with the senior management team and/or designated governor; the College's whistleblowing procedures can be followed if such concerns are not addressed. The NSPCC operates a whistleblowing advice line: 0800 028 0285

## **6) Monitoring and Review**

The governing body will receive an annual report from the designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection. This report will review how the College and its staff have complied with the policy and how it has discharged its duties. The governing body will also review this policy each year.

## **7) Training and Staff Development**

All designated staff will receive training in child protection issues and inter-agency working along with refresher training at least every two years.

Training and briefings will be provided, as appropriate, to all members of staff via the College's normal staff training routes (including the staff induction programme for new staff and scheduled staff training days) to ensure that they are aware of these guidelines, with refresher training at least every three years. The designated members of staff are available to discuss with colleagues any areas/cases that give cause for concern.

## **8) Other relevant policies:**

The following policies and procedures all form part of the College's overall policy for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults:

1. Child Protection and Abuse Disclosure Guidelines
2. Code of conduct for caring for young people & prevention of the abuse of trust
3. Drugs and Alcohol policy & procedures
4. Prevention of bullying & harassment (students) policy & procedures
5. Recruitment procedures
6. Criminal Records & Disclosure Policy
7. Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff
8. Equality and Diversity Policy for students
9. Data Protection Policy
10. Whistleblowing Policy

The College's Equality and Diversity Policy and Single Equality Scheme encompasses the nine 'protected characteristics' defined under the 2010 Equality Act.

## **Appendix 1: Definitions of different types of abuse**

### **In relation to all students:**

**Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.**

Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by other (eg: via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children/young person or young people.

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse causes harm to a student's person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child or young person.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation**

Sexual abuse involves a child or young person being forced or enticed to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child or young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children and young people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children and young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child or young person in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

**Child sexual exploitation** is a form of sexual abuse where a child or young person is sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child or young person may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse occurs where there is persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or young person. It causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's or young person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child or young person that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child or young person opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed, which may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child or young person participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children and young people frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child or young person, though it may occur alone.

## **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): we need to be alert to the possibility of a female student being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Females at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

*NB: If any member of staff discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, that member of staff MUST report this to the police. This is a statutory duty as FGM is illegal in this country.*

**Source: Working Together to Safeguard Children (DFE 2015); What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (DFE 2015); Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2016).**

**In relation to vulnerable adults, the following also applies:**

### **Financial Abuse**

Financial abuse occurs when someone steals from or bullies a vulnerable person in to handing over money or possessions.

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination occurs when a vulnerable person is treated unfairly because of their age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation.

**Source: Safer Practice, Safer Learning (NIACE 2007)**

### **Radicalisation**

The Prevent Duty comes in to effect from 1 July 2015. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 requires the college to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

**'Radicalisation'** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. (Prevent Duty Guidance 2015)

In respect of safeguarding individuals from radicalisation, the College works to the Prevent element of the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy and, where deemed appropriate, seeks external support for learners through referrals to the Channel Programme. This programme aims to work with the individual to address their specific vulnerabilities, prevent them becoming further radicalised and possibly entering the criminal justice system because of their actions.

It is recognised that radicalisation can occur to an individual from any section of society and is not particular to any racial, ethnic or social group. It is further recognised that in many instances the process of radicalisation is essentially one of grooming by others.

## **Appendix 2: Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of Staff**

*These procedures should be read in conjunction with staff disciplinary procedures and apply to all staff, whether teaching, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word "staff" is used for ease of description.*

### **Introduction**

- 1.1 The College recognises that an allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that those investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.
- 1.2 The College recognises that the welfare of the student is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the College will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

### **2 Receiving an Allegation from a Student**

- 2.1 A member of staff who receives an allegation about another member of staff from a student should follow the guidelines set out in the Staff File and Staff Diary/Handbook for dealing with disclosure
- 2.2 The allegation should be reported immediately to the Principal, unless the Principal is the person against whom the allegation is made, in which case the report should be made to the Designated Governor or the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will inform the Designated Governor. The Principal (or designated person if the allegation is against the Principal) will:
  - 2.2.1 Obtain written details of the allegation from the person who received it, that are signed and dated. The written details should be countersigned and dated by the Principal (or designated person).
  - 2.2.2 Record information about times, dates, locations and names of potential witnesses.

NB: All allegations about a former employee should be referred directly to the police.

### **3 Initial Assessment by the Principal (or designated person)**

- 3.1 The Principal (or designated person) will make an initial assessment of the allegation, consulting with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Designated Governor, HCC Children's Services and the Hampshire Local Safeguarding Children Board, as appropriate. **Advice should always be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and where the allegation is considered to be either a potential criminal act or indicates that the student has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the matter should be reported immediately to the Police and Children's Services.** It is important that the Principal (or designated person) does not investigate the allegation. The initial assessment will be on the basis of the information received and is a decision whether or not the allegation warrants further investigation.
- 3.2 Other potential outcomes are:
  - 3.2.1 The allegation represents inappropriate behaviour or poor practice by the member of staff and is neither potentially a crime nor a cause of significant harm to the child,

in which case the matter will be addressed in accordance with the College disciplinary procedures.

- 3.2.2 The allegation can be shown to be false because the facts alleged could not possibly be true.

#### **4 Enquiries and Investigations**

- 4.1 The College will assist external agencies (the police and/or children's services) with their enquiries. The Principal (or designated person) will ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained in connection with the enquiries, in the interests of the member of staff about whom the allegation is made. The Principal (or designated person) will advise the member of staff that he/she should consult with a representative, for example, a trade union.
- 4.2 The College will hold in abeyance its own internal enquiries while the formal police or children's services investigations proceed; to do otherwise may prejudice the investigation. Any internal enquiries will follow the existing staff disciplinary procedures.
- 4.3 Subject to objections from the police or other investigating agency, the Principal (or designated person) will:
- 4.3.1 inform the student or parent/guardian making the allegation that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
  - 4.3.2 ensure that the parent/guardian of the student making the allegation have been informed that the allegation has been made and what the likely process will involve.
  - 4.3.3 inform the member of staff against whom the allegation was made of the fact that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
  - 4.3.4 inform the Chair of Governors and/or the designated governor of the allegation and the investigation.
- 4.4 The principal (or designated person) will keep a written record of the action taken in connection with the allegation.

#### **5 Suspension of Staff**

- 5.1 Suspension will not be automatic. In respect of staff other than the Principal, suspension can only be carried out by the Principal. In respect of the Principal, suspension can only be carried out by the Chair of Governors (or in his/her absence, the Vice Chair).
- 5.2 Suspension may be considered at any stage of the investigation. It is a neutral, not a disciplinary act and shall be on full pay. Consideration will also be given to alternatives: eg paid leave of absence; agreement to refrain from attending work; change of, or withdrawal from, specified duties.
- 5.3 Suspension will only occur for a good reason. For example:
- 5.3.1 where a student is at risk.
  - 5.3.2 where the allegations are potentially sufficiently serious to justify dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct.
  - 5.3.3 where necessary for the good and efficient conduct of the investigation.

- 5.4 If suspension is being considered, the member of staff will be encouraged to seek advice; for example, from a trade union.
- 5.5 Prior to making the decision to suspend, the Principal (or Chair or deputy Chair of Governors) will interview the member of staff. If the police are engaged in an investigation, the officer in charge of the case may be consulted.
- 5.6 The member of staff will be informed that an allegation has been made and that consideration is being given to suspension. This initial interview is not a formal disciplinary hearing, but a means for raising a serious matter which may lead to suspension and further investigation.
- 5.7 If the Principal (or Chair or deputy Chair of Governors) considers that suspension is necessary, the member of staff will be informed that he/she is suspended from duty. Written confirmation of the suspension, with reasons, will be within two working days.
- 5.8 The suspension will remain under review in accordance with the College disciplinary procedures.

## **6 The Disciplinary Investigation**

- 6.1 The disciplinary investigation will be conducted in accordance with the existing staff disciplinary procedures.
- 6.2 The member of staff will be informed of:
  - 6.2.1 the disciplinary charge against him/her.
  - 6.2.2 his/her entitlement to be accompanied or represented by a trade union representative or friend.
- 6.3 Where the member of staff has been suspended and no disciplinary action is to be taken, the suspension will be lifted immediately and arrangements made for the member of staff to return to work.
- 6.4 The student making the allegation and/or their parent/guardian will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and proceedings. This should occur prior to the return to College of the member of staff (if suspended).

## **7 Allegations without foundation**

- 7.1 In consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or the Designated Governor, the Principal will:
  - 7.1.1 inform the member of staff against whom the allegation is made orally and in writing that no further disciplinary or child protection action will be taken. Consideration should be given to offering counselling/support.
  - 7.1.2 inform the parent/guardian of the alleged victim that the allegation has been made and of the outcome.
  - 7.1.3 prepare a report outlining the allegation and giving reasons for the conclusion that it had no foundation and confirming that the above action had been taken.

## **8 Records**

- 8.1 Documents relating to an investigation will be retained in a secure place, together with a written record of the outcome and, if disciplinary action is taken, details retained on the member of staff's personal and confidential file.
- 8.2 If a member of staff is dismissed or resigns before the disciplinary process is completed, he/she will be informed about the College's statutory duty to inform the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service).
- 8.3 The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations: **Substantiated** (there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation); **Malicious** (there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive); **False** (there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation); **Unsubstantiated** (there is insufficient evidence to either to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence).

## **9 Monitoring Effectiveness**

- 9.1 Where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, the Designated Governor together with the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead will, at the conclusion of the investigation and any disciplinary procedures, consider whether there are any matters arising from it that could lead to the improvement of the College's procedures and/or policies. Consideration will also be given to the training needs of staff.

## **Duty of Care**

As an Employer, the college recognises its duty of care to their employees and will act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations process. Individuals will be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless there is an objection by the children's social care services or the police. The individual will be advised to contact their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support. They will also be given access to welfare counselling or medical advice where this is provided by the employer.

When an allegation is made, the college will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

Parents/guardians or carers of a student involved will be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. However, where a strategy discussion is required, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the college will not normally do so until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the parents/guardians or carers. Parents/guardians or carers will be kept informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. The deliberations of a disciplinary hearing, and the information taken into account in reaching a decision, will not normally be disclosed, but the parents/guardians or carers of the student will be told the outcome in confidence

### **Appendix 3: Safe practice guidance for the avoidance of allegations against staff**

The following guidelines are intended to be a common-sense approach that reduce opportunities for the abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults and help to protect staff from any false allegation.

Furthermore, these guidelines should be read in conjunction with the staff Code of Conduct and apply to all staff, whether teaching, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word “staff” is used for ease of description.

#### **You should:**

- Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect and respect their right to personal privacy
- Avoid private 1 to 1 discussions with students; where they take place they should do so in a room with visual access or an open door, and with the knowledge of another member of staff or as part of your scheduled duties (eg: 1 to 1 tutorials for a personal tutor)
- Exercise caution when discussing sensitive issues with children, young people and vulnerable adults
- Avoid any inappropriate discussion and insensitive, disparaging or sarcastic comments
- Avoid physical contact with a student; it is unwise to attribute touching to your teaching style
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse
- Keep parents/carers informed of all anticipated activities (eg: on trips and visits)
- Avoid informal out of college relationships with students (eg: via social networking sites, texting, email etc)

#### **Most importantly,**

Following any incident where you feel that your actions or comments have been misconstrued, you should discuss the matter with your line-manager

#### **You should not:**

- Spend excessive time alone with a student, away from others
- Take students alone in a car journey, however short
- Take students to your home in your capacity as a member of staff
- Engage in physical or sexually suggestive games
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Make over-familiar or sexually suggestive comments, even as a joke
- Enter changing rooms (or bedrooms in the boarding houses) unless there is an emergency
- Let unacceptable comments or behaviour from a student go unchallenged
- Do things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves
- Take photographs, films or any other image of a student without their permission, except in extra-ordinary circumstances eg: an incident which might be a disciplinary matter
- Contact students via social media, text messages or email, unless this is directly related to a college matter

## **Appendix 4: Safeguarding statement and procedures in view of the Prevent Duty**

The Prevent Duty came in to effect on 1 July 2015. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 requires the college to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

'**Radicalisation**' refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups and is very much a safeguarding matter.

### **Who are we safeguarding?**

Everyone.

There is no stereotype for people who hold extremist views. People can become vulnerable for many reasons, including: low self-esteem; guilt; loss; isolation; fear; anger; family breakdown; peer pressure. These factors will not necessarily drive someone to terrorism, but a sense of injustice (be that on a personal or more far reaching scale) can be exploited by people who have their own agenda.

Signs of radicalisation are difficult to define, but will look a lot like troubling behaviour:

- Emotional – angry, mood swings, new found arrogance
- Verbal – expressing opinions that are at odds with generally shared values
- Physical – changes in appearance; changes in routine

### **What should you do if you believe someone to be at risk of radicalisation?**

In essence, follow the now well-established safeguarding procedures for student concerns: listen; observe; record; report on; don't promise confidentiality.

#### **Notice; Check; Share:**

- **Notice** any changes in behaviour or appearance
- **Check** out your concerns with someone else who knows the student, but trust your instinct if you are still concerned
- **Share** your concerns with a Head of Faculty or member of the Senior Management Team.

### **What will then happen next?**

As with any other safeguarding matter the situation will be explored further, which may include talking with the student and his/her parents and advice being sought from an external agency. A formal referral may then be made to an external agency like the police and the Channel programme or Children's Services.

#### **Concerns about a member of staff:**

If your concern is about a member of staff, please speak with a member of the Senior Management Team. The appropriate personnel procedures will then be followed.

## **Appendix Five - Managing allegations against other students**

DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) says that 'governing bodies should ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children'.

The guidance also states the importance of minimising the risks of peer-on-peer abuse.

All students have a right to attend college and learn in a safe environment. In most instances, the conduct of students towards each other will be covered by the Student Contract and the Disciplinary Policy or the College's Policy on Bullying and Harassment.

### **Allegations against other students which are safeguarding issues**

Some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they may raise safeguarding concerns. These allegations are most likely to include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

Situations involving sexual activity between students will require difficult professional judgments. It is important to distinguish between consensual sexual activity between students of a similar age and sexual activity involving a power imbalance, or some form of coercion or exploitation. It may also be difficult to be sure that what has or has been alleged to have taken place definitely does have a sexual component.

Allegations will be dealt with on a case by case basis and in the best interests of the student(s) concerned, and to avoid risk to themselves and/or others. Referral to Children's Services and/or the police under safeguarding arrangements may be necessary, guided by the following considerations:

- The age of the student;
- Any disability or special needs of the student;
- Their social and family circumstance;
- Any evidence in the behaviour or presentation of the student that might suggest they have been harmed;
- Any evidence of pressure to engage in sexual activity;
- Any indication of sexual exploitation;
- Any indication of a criminal activity.

There are also contextual factors. Gender, sexuality, race and levels of sexual knowledge can all be used to exert power. A sexual predator may sometimes be female and the victim male.

### **Examples of safeguarding issues against a student could include:**

#### **Physical Abuse**

- Violence, particularly pre-planned
- Forcing others to use drugs or alcohol

#### **Emotional Abuse**

- Blackmail or extortion
- Threats and intimidation

#### **Sexual Abuse**

- Indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assaults
- Forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting

## **Sexual Exploitation**

- Encouraging other children to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour (for example, having an older boyfriend/girlfriend, associating with unknown adults or other sexually exploited young people, staying out overnight)
- Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts

## **Procedure to be followed**

- When an allegation is made by a student against another student, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be informed.
- A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances.
- The DSL should contact the children's reception team (CRT – Children's Services) to discuss the case. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a referral where appropriate.
- If the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offence has taken place, CRT will refer the case to the multi-agency agency safeguarding hub where the police will become involved.
- Parents, of both the student being complained about and the alleged victim, should be informed and kept updated on the progress of the referral.
- The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the files of both students' files.
- It may be appropriate to suspend the student being complained about for a period of time, both to minimise risk and to keep all parties safe and/or as part of a disciplinary process.
- Where neither Children's Services nor the police accept the complaint, an internal college investigation would then take place into the matter according to the college's student disciplinary procedures.
- In situations where the college considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment will be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan.
- The plan will be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

## **CHILD PROTECTION & ABUSE DISCLOSURE GUIDELINES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The College recognises that many members of teaching and support staff are regularly in situations where students may disclose details about their home or personal life that are of a confidential nature. In many instances it will be completely appropriate for the member of staff to keep the student's confidence; however, there are occasions when this is not the case. This guidance seeks to set down exactly the circumstances in which staff **must** breach confidentiality and how to do this.

Staff are of course able to use their discretion as to whether to share with colleagues information given to them in confidence in relation to matters such as students' relationships, self - esteem, substance abuse, pregnancy and so on. It would be unwise to keep confidential any disclosure concerning illegal activities. The College Counsellor is available to advise staff who are unsure as to whether or not to keep such information confidential.

The one exception to this use of staff discretion is when staff hear a disclosure that a student is suffering in an abusive situation.

It is recognised that the abuse of children and young people (defined as people under the age of 18) or vulnerable adults may be physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. It must always be taken seriously and the correct procedures followed. Colleges have both a statutory and a moral duty to assist Children's Services departments with investigations into abuse cases; therefore, complete confidentiality should never be promised to a student.

Early sharing of information is key to providing effective early help and support where there are emerging problems. At the other end of the continuum, sharing information will be essential to put in place effective child protection services. Be open and honest with students and explain why information needs to be shared and with whom it will be shared, on a 'need to know' basis.

Key documents are: 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2015), 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (2015), 'Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers' (2015) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2016).

### **GUIDELINES FOR STAFF WHO ARE TOLD OF ABUSE**

A student who is suffering from abuse or who is being treated in a way which makes them feel uncomfortable may begin to tell you about their situation.

You should bear in mind the following steps:

1. Even if you are worried about what you might hear, and perhaps that you are not the "right" person to deal with their allegation, don't stop them from talking. The fact that they have chosen you means that you are the right person for them. If they ask you whether they can tell you something in confidence you should warn them that some things will have to be shared with the Deputy Principal (Students) or the Director of Adult & Higher Education or other designated person in the interests of the student, but that no other members of staff or students need ever know.
2. If the student goes ahead and discloses abuse to you, listen to them carefully, just allowing them to talk. It is important for them that they are heard, and that you do not jump to conclusions about what they are saying, or try to voice their feelings for them.

3. If you need to ask questions keep them to a minimum, and only ask open questions such as “What happened next?” “Do you want to tell me anymore?” **Don’t ask any leading questions such as “Did he touch you / hit you?” as these may hinder any subsequent prosecution.**
4. **Immediately** after the interview with the student you should make a note of exactly what was said to you as you remember it and your questions. **Be as specific as you can, remember that your notes could be used to support a subsequent prosecution.** Record the date, time and setting of the interview, and the time of your actual note making. If the student has appeared upset in the recent past you may wish to record this too, but only if you already had concerns. Don’t look for things in retrospect which you hadn’t noticed before.
5. You should **not** investigate concerns or allegations yourself, but should report them as soon as you can. You should contact the Deputy Principal (Students), who is the designated senior member of staff for child protection, who will then usually inform the local Children’s Services department (or Adult Services if the student is over 18) who will assess the situation. In the case of absence of the Deputy Principal (Students) you should contact the Head or Deputy Head of Student Welfare or a designated Head of Faculty. This is best done via the Secretariat ext 7527, 7528 or 7529. In the Adult & Higher Education Division, you should contact the Director of Adult & Higher Education. The Deputy Principal or the Director of Adult and Higher Education will take responsibility for whatever happens next. This may be a slow process. You should not feel guilty about the student possibly returning to an abusive situation. We can only follow the legal guidelines required of us, and may not always be able to resolve situations for our students. The College Counsellor is available to talk to staff who find themselves in this situation. You should not discuss the disclosure with anyone other than the Deputy Principal or Director of Adult & Higher Education and the Counsellor. This includes your Line Manager and the student’s tutor, Lead Tutor or Head of Faculty or Adult & Higher Education Division Curriculum Head.
6. Your written record of the disclosure should be handed to the Deputy Principal (Students) or Director of Adult & Higher Education who will note the details of the referral to Children’s Services/Adult Services and then store the document in a locked filing cabinet.
7. Obviously, this is a very distressing time for the student concerned, and wherever possible you should encourage them to see the College Counsellor. You should reassure them that their disclosure will not be shared with subject teachers etc, but you may seek to gain their permission to advise their Lead Tutor/Head of Faculty/Adult & Higher Education Division Curriculum Head that they are having a particularly difficult time, so that if attendance / class performance / work rate slips the student is not chased unnecessarily.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS**

While all disclosures must be passed on to a designated person, students may not want to proceed from their disclosure, but will be relieved just to have “told”. If, however, the student does wish to go ahead with a report to Children’s Services, Adult Services or the Police, and ultimately a prosecution, lots of support is available to them along the way. It should be stressed to a student considering reporting to the Police that the report may be suspended at any time at the request of the student, so setting the ball in motion doesn’t mean it will spin out of the control of the student.

However, there may be instances when the College has to ensure the safeguarding of others and so external agencies will be contacted even if the student making a disclosure does not wish to proceed with a report to the police or Children’s/Adult Services.

## **Guidance on the use of reasonable force & restraint with students**

*Updated December 2015 in line with 'Use of reasonable force: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies' DfE 2015, where further information can be found.*

The college recognises that there may be circumstances where reasonable force or restraint may have to be used, either to protect an individual from harming themselves or to prevent them from causing harm to others, or to prevent damage to property or from causing disorder.

### **What is reasonable force?**

- Force is usually used either to **control or restrain** - ranging from guiding a student to safety by the arm to break up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to **prevent violence or injury**.
- **'Reasonable in the circumstances'** means using no more force than is needed.
- **Control** means either **passive** physical contact, e.g. standing between students or blocking a student's path, or **active** physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of a classroom.
- **Restraint** means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control.
- College staff should always try **to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury**, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injury.

It is recognised that whether or not to physically intervene is a professional judgement dependent on the individual circumstances. However, a student should never be put in a locked room as a form of reasonable restraint (this is illegal) and it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

### **When can reasonable force be used?**

All members of staff in the college have a legal power to use force as is reasonable in the circumstances.

Reasonable force can be used to prevent students from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

Reasonable force may be exercised both on the college premises or elsewhere when the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the student (eg: on a college trip).

### **Students with special needs:**

Where a student has a disability or special educational needs, reasonable adjustments may need to be made with regard to the way that their behaviour is managed. Where behavioural issues are identified through an assessment of need, appropriate strategies to manage defined behaviours will usually be part of their Support Plan and may even be part of a Risk Assessment.

### **The college is committed to:**

- Meeting the needs of each individual student, in accordance with its commitment to 'counting in ones'.
- Only using reasonable force and restraint in very exceptional circumstances.
- Providing training to key staff on the use of reasonable force and restraint.
- Informing parents/guardians when reasonable force or restraint has been used.
- Keeping a central record of all uses of reasonable force or restraint, in order to monitor frequency, usage and effectiveness.

### **Following an incident when reasonable force has been used:**

- Staff should report the incident using the normal college reporting systems; ie raising a 'cause for concern' on the student record and emailing details to the Head of Faculty and/or a member of the senior management team.
- Parents/guardians will be informed by the Head of Faculty or a member of the senior management team. For example, it may be appropriate for parents/guardians to collect the student from college as soon as possible.
- Appropriate follow up action will be taken; this could range from formal disciplinary action to a support plan involving all relevant parties.
- After the event, it may be necessary to hold a 'debrief' meeting with those involved. Staff dealing with the incident will be offered the opportunity to talk through the event with a Head of Faculty or a member of the senior management team.

### **Searching students:**

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following "prohibited items":

- knives and weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- stolen items;
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- fireworks;
- pornographic images;
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Force cannot be used to search for other items banned under the college rules.

### **Dealing with complaints:**

A student or their parents may make a complaint about the use of force or restraint under the Student Complaints procedure.

All complaints about the use of force should be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated.

- Where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action.
- When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably.
- Suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.
- The Principal and/or Governors should always consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action against the member of staff.
- As an employer, the college has a duty of care towards their employees. It is important that the college provides appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident.

## **Appendix 1: How to de-escalate a situation**

When working with students, you may encounter someone who is angry or upset. The following verbal de-escalation techniques may help you to calm down the student.

1. Appear calm and self-assured, even though you don't feel it. Relax facial muscles and look confident. Your anxiety can make the student feel anxious and that may escalate aggression.
2. Use a modulated, low monotonous tone of voice (our normal tendency is to have a high pitched, tight voice when scared or nervous).
3. Empathise with feelings, but not with the behaviour.
4. Always be at the same eye level. Encourage the student to be seated, but if he/she needs to stand, you stand up also.
5. Allow extra physical space between you. Anger and agitation fill the extra space between you and the student.
6. Do not stand full front to the student. Stand at an angle so you can sidestep away if needed.
7. Do not maintain constant eye contact. Allow the student to break his/her gaze and look away.
8. Do not point or shake your finger.
9. DO NOT smile. This could look like mockery or anxiety.
10. Do not argue or try to convince; instead, give choices. (e.g. Would you like to continue our meeting calmly or would you prefer to stop now and come back tomorrow when things can be more relaxed? Would you like to take a break and have a cup of tea/coffee?)

*Remember that a student who has been angry or upset is like a recently boiled kettle – it will not take much for them to get to boiling point again. Allow them to calm down fully before you try to talk about the incident and follow it up. In some circumstances, this can take a day or more.*

### **Peter Symonds College: Fitness to Study Guidance**

#### **Section 1: Introduction**

The college is committed to 'counting in ones' and supporting all students so that they can be successful in their learning. We make reasonable adjustments where appropriate to meet individual needs.

However, each year there are some students whose mental or physical health and well-being affect their learning, making things like regular attendance or full concentration on their work difficult. Their condition may mean that their safety (or that of others) on the college campus is compromised. Indeed, sometimes there are students whose developing health problems mean there may be occasions when we cannot meet their learning needs or this conflicts with meeting the needs of others, given our 'duty of care' to all students and staff.

In the sixth form college the Deputy Principal (Students) will have an overview as the college's Designated Safeguarding Lead, in the Adult & Higher Education Division the Director of AHed will have an overview, and (where appropriate) the college's Health and Safety Officer will have an overview of both sites.

#### **Section 2: Purpose**

The purpose of this guidance is to:

- Clarify how we try to ensure that a student is 'fit to study';
- Outline our support for students who are confirmed as 'fit to study' (and the limits to that support);
- Establish when it is not appropriate for a student to attend college and/or to continue with their programme of study.

#### **Section 3: Meeting Individual Needs**

##### **a) Pre-course:**

Students are encouraged to disclose any additional learning needs related to their mental or physical health during the application process. This information is used to establish if the college can meet their needs and the additional support and/or reasonable adjustments necessary to enable a student to access a programme of study.

Where appropriate, the applicant will be asked if they agree that health professionals and others supporting them (eg: occupational therapists, specialist teachers, etc) can be contacted so that an agreed support plan can be formulated (which may include the completion of a risk assessment). There will usually be a transition meeting to discuss an appropriate programme of study, individual support needs and any reasonable adjustments, to establish an agreed support plan. In most cases, medical evidence will be required to inform the support plan and any reasonable adjustments, including access arrangements for examinations.

The support plan will be reviewed after an agreed period of time.

This plan will identify a key member of staff to oversee the support plan, which will be reviewed as appropriate during a student's course. Consent will be sought to share this support plan with teaching staff, along with any other medical information that may impact on learning.

#### **b) On-course:**

If a student's needs change while they are at college, there will usually be a review meeting as soon as reasonably practicable at which the initial support plan will be considered. This meeting will involve the student and their parents/guardians/carers and will assess the situation and discuss the issues affecting the student's learning, and possible ways forward.

This will involve the Head of Faculty, Lead Tutor or Curriculum Head and the Head of Study Support or the College Nurse; the student will also be asked if they agree that any relevant health professionals who are working with them can be involved in the meeting and plan. The student will also be asked if they agree that the revised plan can be shared with the teaching staff.

If a student's needs are identified during a student's course, some or all of the following will be put in to place:

- A meeting with the student and their parents/guardians/carers to assess the situation and discuss the issues affecting their learning, and possible ways forward; this will probably involve the Head of Faculty or Lead Tutor and the Head of Study Support or the College Nurse;
- In the case of adults, a meeting with the student and a relative (if requested by the student), the Curriculum Head, Tutor and Head of Study Support (Adults);
- Contact with the relevant health professionals working with the student, with the student's consent. If appropriate, the involvement of health professionals in any meeting to confirm the student's fitness to study, and to discuss the student's programme of study and learning needs and any reasonable adjustments, with their advice and recommendations built in to a support plan;
- Consent sought from the student to share information about their health problem and support plan with teaching staff;
- The completion of a Risk Assessment;
- A PEEPs plan (Personal Emergency Egress Plan);
- Referral to the confidential college Counselling Service;
- Referral to external agencies eg: CAMHS, GP etc;
- Regular Reviews of the student's learning needs and support plan;
- Access to professional Careers information, advice and guidance to discuss (a) the implications of any changes to a programme of study and/or (b) further/higher education and employment options in view of their ill health.

In most cases, medical evidence will be required to inform a support plan and any reasonable adjustments.

#### **Section 4: Crisis situations**

Sometimes a student's needs emerge in what can only be described as a 'crisis' situation; for example, an unexpected seizure or a student disclosing that they intend to harm themselves. In all such cases the student's safety and well-being will be our primary concern, but we will always endeavour to contact parents/guardians/carers as soon as possible.

Where appropriate, the College Nurse or Designated First Aid Officer will attend the student and an ambulance called if their initial assessment deems this urgent. This course of action will be clearly stated on the student's college medical record. Alternatively, a GP appointment will be instigated, most likely by the College Nurse, or an appointment with another health professional prompted by the College Nurse, Head of Study Support, Head of Faculty, Lead Tutor or Curriculum Head.

Usually parents/guardians/carers will be asked to collect the student from the college; in exceptional circumstances the college may transport the student home or to the local A&E department or GP Surgery for parents/guardians/carers to meet there.

The student will only return to college once a health professional has confirmed that they are fit to study, in which case a meeting will usually be held, as set out above, and a support plan and/or Risk Assessment completed. As appropriate, the student's college medical record will also be updated with relevant information for key staff supporting the student.

Appendix Two provides further guidance for staff on managing acute mental ill-health and distress.

### **Section 5: Non-attendance at college**

In all situations, the college aims to work collaboratively with the student, parents/guardians, carers and external professionals to meet their learning needs and adapt their learning programme, when necessary and reasonable to do so. The support plan will normally outline the support a student has agreed to access in college. However, there are limits to the support that can be provided by the college and its staff; specifically, the resources available and the boundaries of the professional role of support and teaching staff.

If additional learning needs relating to a student's mental or physical health are identified during the application process, or subsequently, then it will not be appropriate for a student to attend college if:

- They have **not** been deemed fit to attend college by a health professional;
- An agreed support plan and/or risk assessment and/or PEEPS have **not** been completed as a result of a lack of co-operation by the student;
- They have withdrawn from their medical/health support or treatment, including discharging themselves from hospital, against medical advice;
- They are unwilling to comply with the routines/strategies (eg: specific moving and handling guidance given by health professionals) for their support and/or safety outlined in their support plan/Risk Assessment/PEEPS;
- All reasonable avenues for supporting the student in college have been exhausted;
- If a Boarding student, the level of close monitoring recommended by health professionals for parents/guardians goes beyond what can be reasonably expected from Boarding staff.

The Head of Faculty, Head of Boarding, Deputy Principal (Students) or, in the case of adult students, the Curriculum Head or Director of AHed, will write to the student as soon as practicable to confirm their view that it is not appropriate for the student to attend college. The Head of Faculty will liaise with the student, as appropriate, regarding arrangements for some short term home study and plan for a return to college. This may include identifying new support needs and the setting of short term targets.

### **Section 6: Continuance on a programme of study where there is prolonged absence**

In all cases, we will explore ways to support students studying from home or from hospital, which will usually mean the student needs to have access to the college intranet or Moodle and college email system to access work and have contact with teachers. In some cases, for example where a student

is hospitalised or is immobile at home, it may be possible for an LSA to visit home or the hospital to give some support with studying.

However, as we do not offer distance learning courses, there will be limits to the academic support we can provide and, indeed, the work the student can complete. If a student is unable to attend for more than half a term or six consecutive weeks, we will have to consider the viability of continuing with the programme of study. Indeed, our funding body (the EFA) requires us to review any student who does not attend for four consecutive weeks. This may mean that the best way forward for a student is to focus on regaining their health and, if in the lower sixth, restarting their course the following academic year (if they remain under 19 years of age by 1<sup>st</sup> September). If they are in the upper sixth and have not already repeated a year at college, it may be possible for a student to repeat the upper sixth year from the following June (if they will still be under 19 years of age by 1<sup>st</sup> September). If a student has already reached 19 years of age, alternative courses may be available in our Adult & Higher Education Division (eg: the Access course). The Careers team will be able to give information, advice and guidance about options at other colleges, with training providers, with distance learning providers and employment.

Within the Adult and Higher Education division, it may be possible for a student to defer their study for a period of time. Curriculum Heads will be able to advise on this. Students in receipt of a Student Loan or Advanced Learner Loan should note that the college is required to report their attendance to the relevant funding body on a termly basis and a lack of attendance could impact on funding eligibility. Advice should be sought from the Student Support Manager at AHED.

If a student has completed sufficient work to realistically sit an examination, with the appropriate medical evidence provided, an application for access arrangements for the examination will be made (eg: to complete the exam at home/in hospital/in a separate room at college, etc), based on the recommendations made within this medical evidence.

The college will make the final decision over whether or not it is viable for a student to continue to be enrolled at the college, but such a decision will be made following consultation, as appropriate, with parents/guardians/carers and health professionals. Factors which will influence a decision will include: the nature and severity of the ill-health; the college's ability to support a student; the college's ability to keep a student safe.

The Head of Faculty, Deputy Principal (Students) or, in the case of adult students, the Curriculum Head or Director of AHED, will write to the student as soon as practicable to confirm their view that it is not appropriate for the student to continue at college.

## **Appendix One:**

### **General guidelines for staff supporting students with mental health difficulties**

**Note:** It is important that staff do not raise unrealistic expectations about their availability to students. Personal phone numbers or email addresses must never be given out. Staff must not discuss the student's mental health with anyone other than those agreed by the student, unless there is significant risk to self or others.

#### **It may be useful to consider some of the following questions:**

- Has the student told you they have a problem?
- Have there been any significant changes in the student's appearance (e.g. weight loss/gain; decline in personal hygiene)?
- Does the student smell any different (e.g. can you smell alcohol or cannabis)?
- How does the student communicate verbally (e.g. flat, agitated, very quiet or withdrawn, very loud)?
- Has the mood of the student recently changed a lot from your previous experiences with them (e.g. moods very up and down, miserable, evidence of fatigue)?
- Has the academic performance of the student changed dramatically? Or has there been a change in attendance?
- Have others expressed concern about the student?
- Have there been recent changes in the student's behaviour?
- How long has the student been feeling or behaving like this? (everyone can have bad days, but if it goes on for weeks/months there may be a problem)

#### **If the answer to some of the above questions is yes, then the following guidance may be useful in approaching the student:**

- Do not avoid the situation or pretend nothing is wrong, as this could make the problem worse and persist for longer.
- Approach the student in an empathetic and understanding way. Remember to be sensitive to issues relating to sexuality, race, religion, culture and gender.
- Find an opportunity to talk to them away from other students.
- **If you simply ask the student how they are**, this may provide them with an opportunity to discuss their concerns with you.
- Be prepared to listen and give some time, if you can. If there are constraints on your time, inform the student from the start that this is the case. You can always agree to see the student at another time.
- Avoid using unhelpful comments like "pull yourself together"!
- Being open and honest in your initial contact will help to develop trust.

- Be clear about your role and its boundaries. Do not give your phone number/address/personal email to the student or communicate through social media sites.
- If you are concerned about the welfare and/or safety of a student, do not promise confidentiality and do refer on, as you would for a child protection matter.

**When a student does not want to talk, but you are concerned:**

- It is extremely difficult to help someone with a mental health problem unless they are ready to admit they have one. If the student is not ready to accept help or talk about their problem, do not ask intrusive questions. Always respect the right of the student if they do not wish to discuss things.
- Offer an open invitation to the student to come back and talk to you in the future. If you offer a place and time, they will know you will follow through. When you see them again, continue to ask how they are and reiterate that they can talk to you. Give them information about other people they could talk to e.g. College Counsellor; Student Services; Lead Tutor; Study Support, etc.
- However, if you are still very concerned about a student who has refused help, speak to the Lead Tutor, Head of Faculty or Head of Study Support, College Counsellor or Curriculum Head (AHed) for advice.

**When a student does want to talk:**

- If you do not feel able to handle an initial discussion with the student yourself, you might:
  - Ask the student how they have handled similar difficulties in the past, highlighting what has and has not worked, and encourage them to use their strategies.
  - Explore with the student what changes they would like to make to enable them to continue with their studies.
  - Break academic tasks down into shorter term and more manageable goals.
  - Encourage them to engage with specialist support in college and/or reconnect with possible supporters outside college (e.g. their GP; CAMHS, etc)
- Try not to give advice that is not within the boundaries of your role, but rather listen and encourage the student to seek the appropriate help in or outside of college.
- Give consideration to your environment. Could your conversation be overheard by others?
- It can be extremely stressful and time-consuming helping a student with mental health problems. Seek support for yourself by talking with the Lead Tutor, Head of Faculty, Head of Study Support, College Counsellor or Curriculum Head (AHed).

## **Handling crisis situations (see also Appendix Two):**

Most of the time the steps outlined above are sufficient. Occasionally, however, the student concerned may reach a point of crisis when their feelings have become over whelming. These emotions might express themselves in a number of ways, for example: self-harming, talking about suicide or having persistent suicidal thoughts, having no sense of reality and exhibiting behaviour that is out of character.

In all crisis situations, assuring staff safety and that of others, including the person involved, is paramount. This guidance may help:

- Try to remain calm and adopt a non-threatening approach (in most cases calm behaviour by others is all that is required).
- Do not approach the student from behind without warning, nor stare at them, as this could be interpreted as threatening. Be aware of negative body language.
- If there are other students about, calmly ask them to leave the area or take the student to a quiet room, ensuring that a colleague knows your whereabouts.
- Some situations can be very frightening and distressing. If you do not feel confident to approach the student, then get help straight away.
- If you stay with the student, give them space; avoid touching them, explain your actions before you act and continue to reassure the student, without being patronising, about what is happening.
- Take threats of suicide seriously – do not ignore them – it is a myth that “those who talk about it don’t do it”.
- Contact the College Nurse (or duty First Aider in her absence) who will either come to you and the student or will ask you to bring the student to the First Aid room behind Reception.
- In the case of students at Stoney Lane, contact a First Aider via Reception

## **Appendix Two: Guidance for staff managing incidents of acute mental ill-health and distress**

### **Purpose of guidance:**

- To have a clear understanding of the appropriate response
- To have a clear understanding of the appropriate lines of communication
- To minimise demands on staff time

### **Each situation will be different, but in acting in the best interests of a student the following principles should underpin any response to a 'crisis':**

- Key objective is to get the student back in to lessons within a reasonable time frame (an hour maximum)
- If this is not possible, parents/guardians should be contacted, advised of the situation and asked to collect them; appropriate follow up will be agreed eg: a return to college meeting to discuss support needs/confirmation of fitness to study by a GP etc
- As few staff as possible should be involved; usually the person receiving the disclosure and one other as a support (usually Head of Study Support, Head/Deputy Head of Student Welfare, College Nurse, Head of Faculty or Deputy Principal (Students))
- One of the two staff involved should contact parents/guardians or ensure that the Faculty Administrator makes contact where the student needs to be collected; the Faculty Administrator should persist in contacting parents/guardians if they do not respond straight away; a final decision about this should be referred to a Head of Faculty or an SMT member if there is resistance to parental /guardian contact from the student
- The staff involved need to recognise boundaries – there is a limit to our expertise and the support we can provide
- A safe waiting area for students can be the quiet area in Study Support
- Confidentiality cannot be promised to a student; parents/guardians will need to be informed as/when appropriate, unless it is unsafe for a student to go home; in such cases a designated member of staff for child protection needs to be contacted
- Other students should not get drawn in to a situation and miss lessons too; staff will have to be firm and usually allow no more than one friend to be present as a support if this is deemed appropriate
- Information sharing should take place as soon as possible after the event to inform a longer term support plan, if needed; a written record should be made and shared on a need to know basis
- The college Counselling Service is not a crisis management service but can provide therapeutic follow up as part of a support plan

## Appendix Three: Guidance for supporting students with an Eating Disorder

### Introduction:

Anyone can get an eating disorder, regardless of their age, sex or cultural background.

Anorexia nervosa and bulimia are the major eating disorders, where there is a preoccupation with food and/or weight and body shape, together with low self-esteem, secrecy and denial.

People with anorexia live at a low body weight, beyond the point of slimness, restricting what they eat and sometimes over-exercising.

People with bulimia have intense cravings for food, secretly overeat and then purge to prevent weight-gain (by vomiting or use of laxatives, for example).

### Examples of Risk Factors:

The following factors, particularly in combination, may make a young person vulnerable to developing an eating disorder:

**Individual:** difficulty expressing feelings and emotions; very high expectations of achievement; tendency to comply with other's demands

**Family:** home environment where food, eating, weight or appearance have a disproportionate significance; an over-protective or over-controlling home environment; overly high family expectations of achievement; neglect or abuse

**Social:** being bullied, teased or ridiculed due to weight or appearance; pressure to maintain a high level of fitness or low body weight (eg for sport / dancing)

### Examples of warning signs:

Staff need to be aware of warning signs, which should always be taken seriously and treated as a safeguarding matter.

**Physical:** weight loss; tiredness; fainting; feeling cold; dull or lifeless hair; tension headaches; tooth decay

**Behavioural:** restricted eating; skipping meals; wearing baggy clothes / several layers of clothing; increased isolation / loss of friends; secretive behaviour; visits to the toilet immediately after meals

**Psychological:** preoccupation with food; denial of hunger despite lacking food; feeling distressed or guilty after eating; self-dislike; excessive perfectionism; moodiness

### What to do if you are concerned about a student:

The most important thing for staff is to be familiar with risk factors and warning signs and to follow the college's safeguarding procedures if there are concerns about a student.

This includes listening and observing; noting down what is said and/or observed; passing this on and not promising confidentiality to a student, particularly as the student may be at serious risk of causing themselves harm.

Advice and support can be obtained from the following departments: College Nurse; Study Support, Student Services; Counselling team; Lead Tutors and Heads of Faculty. Where a student is at serious risk, a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) must be informed.

The most appropriate course of action will then be decided upon, on a case-by-case basis.

This may include:

- Contacting parents/carers
- Arranging for professional assistance eg: GP appointment

- Referral to the College Counselling Service
- Referral to CAMHS
- Giving advice to the student, parents, carers and others

### **What might happen next?**

Following a concern or a disclosure, it may or may not be appropriate for a student to continue to attend college, in accordance with the Fitness to Study guidance.

A support plan will usually be put in place by the Study Support department, in consultation with the Health Professionals working with the student, to support continued attendance at college, which the student must adhere to.

Where serious concerns are identified with a student's weight, written confirmation will be required from health professionals working with the student to confirm that the student's BMI does not pose a risk to self in the college environment, and their recommendations for support in college will be incorporated in to the student's support plan.

### **Students undergoing treatment for or recovering from an eating disorder:**

The decision about continuing with a programme of study while a student is suffering from an eating disorder will be made on a case-by-case basis. Input will be sought from the student, their parents /carers, college staff and the external professionals treating the student.

Where a student is an in-patient, the Study Support department will liaise with the hospital's education unit, as far as is practicable, to enable a student to continue their academic studies. However, there will be limits to the academic support the college can provide and, indeed, the work the student can realistically complete.

Where a student is deemed fit to attend college, either full or part time, while an in-patient, a support plan and/or risk assessment will be agreed with the student, parents/carers and health professionals, and the student must follow all agreed procedures while in college.

On returning to college following treatment, the advice of health professionals will be sought with regard to a relapse and support plan.

The college will always endeavour to attend CPA meetings when the student has given consent and we are invited, but this might not be possible if they are not held locally.

## Appendix Four: Guidance for supporting students who self-harm

### Introduction:

Research indicates that up to one in ten young people in the UK engage in self-harming behaviours. Self-harm is any behaviour where the intent is to deliberately cause harm to one's own body; for example:

- Cutting, scratching, scraping or picking skin
- Swallowing inedible objects
- Taking an overdose or prescription or non-prescription drugs
- Swallowing hazardous materials or substances
- Burning or scalding
- Hair-pulling
- Banging or hitting the head or other parts of the body

### Examples of risk factors:

The following risk factors, particularly in combination, may make a young person vulnerable to self-harm:

**Individual:** depression/anxiety; poor communication skills; low self-esteem; impulsivity; hopelessness; drug or alcohol abuse

**Family:** unreasonable expectations; neglect or abuse; poor parental relationships; depression, self-harm or suicide in the family

**Social:** difficult in forming relationships / friendships; bullying or rejection by peers

### Examples of warning signs:

Staff need to be aware of warning signs indicating a student is experiencing difficulties that may lead to thoughts of self-harm or suicide. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and treated as a safeguarding matter:

- Changes in eating and/or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic attainment
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure

### What to do if you are concerned about a student:

The most important thing for staff is to be familiar with risk factors and warning signs and to follow the college's safeguarding procedures if there are concerns about a student.

This includes listening and observing; noting down what is said and/or observed; passing this on and not promising confidentiality to a student, particularly as the student may be at serious risk of causing themselves harm.

If a student makes a disclosure to you about themselves or a friend, it is important to be open and supportive but also clear about boundaries and where your role stops and you have to involve others and pass on information. You need to keep yourself safe as you will probably experience a range of feelings, such as anger, sadness, shock, disbelief, guilt or helplessness.

Advice and support can be obtained from the following departments: College Nurse; Study Support, Student Services; Counselling team; Lead Tutors and Heads of Faculty. Where a student is at serious risk, a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) must be informed.

### **What might happen next?**

Following a disclosure or concern, the most appropriate course of action will then be decided upon, on a case-by-case basis.

This may include:

- Contacting parents/carers – in most circumstances, the college will usually do this following a disclosure so that parents/carers can ensure the student's safety at home
- Arranging for professional assistance eg: GP appointment
- Referral to the College Counselling Service
- Referral to CAMHS and/or Children's Services
- Giving advice to the student, parents, carers and others
- Supporting peers as they may be upset by seeing signs of self-harm and worried about betraying confidences

**In the case of an acutely distressed student, the immediate safety of the student is paramount. First Aid may be needed and they may need to be kept in a safe place, away from others, to minimise further distress to them or others. They may need to be supervised until handed over to parents and/or health professionals.**

Where appropriate, an individual support plan and/or inclusive risk assessment will be put in place by the Study Support department, which will include agreed actions for the student to take if/when they feel they may self-harm while at college to ensure their safety and well-being, and minimising risk.

Further monitoring might be necessary, especially if others in the peer group are also self-harming and need individual support. Where there are concerns of group self-harm, advice may be sought from the professional helplines operated by Children's Services and/or CAMHS.

Furthermore, students who continually self-harm may not be fit to attend college, in which case the Fitness to Study guidelines will apply and medical confirmation required to support their continued attendance at college.

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The College has a policy of continual improvement and would wish to hear complaints about any of its services, which do not meet its own high standards. Students following a Higher Education course at AHed should refer to their student handbook or the AHed website for full HE grievance and complaints procedures.

The College Complaints Procedure for students operates in three stages:

### **Stage One**

A complainant who is not satisfied with any of the services provided by the College or feels he/she has been treated unfairly should first discuss the matter with their personal/course tutor, Lead Tutor or a Head of Faculty/Adult & Higher Education Division Curriculum Head. It should usually be possible to resolve the matter quickly and informally.

### **Stage Two**

If concerns are not resolved informally then the complainant has the right to make a formal complaint in writing. A complaints form is available for students to use from the Student Services desk in the Paul Woodhouse Centre or from the Café area archway on the Weeke Site.

The completed form will be forwarded to the Deputy Principal (Students) for 16-19 students or to the Director of Adult & Higher Education for adult students. They will take all complaints seriously and will always try to seek a resolution. This may involve talking with all parties concerned. The College aims to deal with all complaints within five working term time days of the complaint being received, but it is recognised that in complex situations it may take longer. The College will inform the complainant in writing of the outcome of their complaint.

### **Stage Three**

In the case of a complainant not being satisfied with the outcome of their formal complaint, then the matter will be referred to the Principal. The complainant should write to the Principal within five working term time days of the receipt of the letter setting out the outcome to their formal complaint, setting out the reasons why they are not satisfied with the outcome.

The Principal will decide how to proceed, depending on the nature of the original complaint and the reason(s) why the complainant feels it has not been resolved at stages 1 and 2. The Principal may review the situation and respond to the complainant or may decide to convene a panel to review the complaint. A panel will usually be made up of three people, with its composition depending on the nature of the complaint. The complainant and any others invited to attend a panel meeting will be informed five working term time days beforehand who is on the panel and how the panel meeting will operate.

Any recommendations or decisions made by the Principal or a panel shall be final.

*This procedure is designed for use by students. The College is aware that parents may prefer to complain directly to the Principal or another senior member of staff, in which case they should do so in writing. Such direct correspondence will be treated as far as possible as being within Stage 2 of the procedure. If, however, the complaint has been dealt with at that stage by the Principal, any further complaint will be directed to a Complaints Panel (Stage 3).*

In the event of a formal complaint from a student or parent being about the actions of the Principal, this should be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body who, in consultation with the Chair of Governors, will decide how to proceed. For example, there may be a review of the situation by the Chair of Governors or the Chair may decide to convene a panel to review the complaint. A panel will usually be made up of three people, with its composition depending on the nature of the complaint. The complainant and any others invited to attend a panel meeting will be informed five working term

time days beforehand who is on the panel and how the panel meeting will operate.

Any recommendations or decisions made by the Chair of Governors or a panel shall be final.

### **Timescales**

Timescales for the college to respond to a complaint at stages 2 and 3 are set out above. Please note that the college will not normally deal with complaints made more than three months after the decision/action the complaint relates to occurred.

### **Scope**

In responding to a complaint at stages 2 and 3, the college reserves the right not to process a complaint which is considered to be disproportionate to the matter concerned. Also, the college reserves the right not to process complaints that are considered vexatious or malicious.

If it has not been possible to resolve a complaint through the college's Complaints Procedure, the complainant can refer the procedure of the relevant funding body. For the sixth form college, this is the Education Funding Agency (EFA); for adult education courses, this is the Skills Funding Agency (SFA); for Higher Education provision, this is the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). Higher Education students also have recourse to the validation institution's complaints policy and procedures once the College's complaints procedure is exhausted.

Note, for Appeals about examination results, students should contact the Examinations Manager for advice. If there is a right of appeal to the Awarding body, this will usually need to be processed via the College.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Formal complaints are logged and form the basis of an annual monitoring report to the Senior Management Team and Governing Body. This policy is reviewed annually.

*This Complaints Policy is available in alternative formats (Braille, large print, other languages) on request by contacting the Student Services department.*

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

The vast majority of students have an enjoyable and profitable time at college. Our regulations and requirements are designed to be in the best interests of both the individual and the college community as a whole. They are set out in the College Contract which all 16-19 year old full time students sign at the beginning of their course and in the Student Handbook (Adults). The HE Student Disciplinary & Exclusion Procedure is available in the HE student handbook, the AHEd website and on Moodle.

Most students will have no problems with them as they are common sense requirements. However, students who contravene our regulations can expect to be disciplined.

This policy will be applied with consideration to confidentiality, impartiality and equality of opportunity.

Issues likely to result in students being disciplined are listed below:

### **Unsatisfactory Behaviour**

- Repeated patterns of poor attendance or persistent lateness.
- Failure to meet coursework deadlines.
- Repeated failure to meet work deadlines.
- Repeated pattern of poor behaviour.

### **Serious Misconduct**

- Disruption of or improper interference with the academic, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the College whether on campus or elsewhere.
- Breaches of the Equal Opportunities or Health & Safety policies.
- Bullying or harassment of any member of the College community.
- Wilful damage to or the defacing of College property or the property of other members of the College community.
- Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening or offensive noise, behaviour or language while on College premises or engaged in any College activity.
- Misuse of the College premises or property belonging to the College or to another person, including computer misuse.
- Using or being under the influence of alcohol on the college premises.
- Breaching college regulations on smoking.
- Possessing, using or sharing an illegal drug anywhere on the campus.
- Any behaviour either on campus or elsewhere which brings the College into disrepute.
- Failure to comply with a previously imposed penalty or sanction.

### **Consequences of Unsatisfactory Behaviour for 16-19 Year Old Students**

- Minor transgressions will be discussed with and in many cases resolved by the student's personal tutor or subject teacher for 16-19 students.
- Persistent unsatisfactory behaviour will result in referral to the student's Lead Tutor. A note of the outcome of this meeting will be kept in the student's file. The Lead Tutor may encourage and support, issue a verbal caution or issue a written reprimand depending on the outcome of the referral interview. In the latter two cases a letter will be sent to the parents.
- 16-19 year old full time students who fail to respond to the support offered by their Lead Tutor will be referred to their Head of Faculty. A note of the outcome of this meeting will be kept in the students file. The Head of Faculty may issue a verbal caution, a written reprimand or a **Final Warning**. Parents will also be informed by letter.
- 16-19 year old full time students may be referred to the Deputy Principal (Students) by the Head of Faculty either to be given a **Final Warning** or as a result of failure to comply with the conditions of a **Final Warning** already given by the Head of Faculty. Parents/guardians of 16-19 year old students will always be informed.
- Parents/guardians of 16-19 year old students are likely to be invited in to college to be part of the

discussions at any stage in the disciplinary process. The aim is to support and address the matter rather than to punish.

### **Consequences of Unsatisfactory Behaviour (Adults)**

- Minor transgressions will be discussed and in most cases resolved between the tutor and the learner.
- Persistent unsatisfactory behaviour or more serious misconduct will be referred to the Curriculum Head who will investigate further with the tutor and learner concerned. Following the investigation, details of the necessary actions/support to be put into place will be kept on record and a copy given to the learner and the tutor involved. The Curriculum Head may refer the matter to the Director of Adult & Higher Education if the matter is still not resolved or serious. A verbal caution, a written reprimand or a **Final Warning** may be issued.

### **Consequences of Serious Misconduct**

- A referral by any member of staff directly to the Head of Faculty or Deputy Principal (Students) or, for adults, directly to the Director of Adult & Higher Education can be made at any time for serious misconduct. A **Final Warning** or an immediate **suspension** from college may be issued. Parents/guardians of 16-19 year old students will, if at all possible, be informed of the decision to suspend before the student is escorted from the campus.
- In very exceptional circumstances e.g. violent behaviour or use or sale of illegal drugs, a student may be permanently excluded without previous warning.

### **The Final Warning**

Students will only be issued with one **Final Warning**. If attendance, work or behaviour does not improve within a pre-determined period of time to meet the reasonable targets set by the Head of Faculty or Deputy Principal (Students) or Director of Adult & Higher Education, the student will be asked to leave the college. If the student improves temporarily but then returns to his/her previous poor attendance, behaviour or work patterns s/he will be asked to leave without a second warning being given.

### **Suspension**

Only the Deputy Principal (Students), Director of Adult & Higher Education or a delegated deputy like a Head of Faculty can suspend students from College. Suspension will normally be up to five working days, or for the duration of an investigation into an incident, and in the case of serious misconduct will be followed by a **Final Warning**.

Suspension involves a total prohibition on access to the College and any participation in College activities. The student and his/her parents/guardians, if the student is a full time 16-19 year old, will be informed of the suspension and reasons for it in writing.

### **Permanent Exclusion**

Only the Deputy Principal (Students), the Director of Adult & Higher Education for adults or a delegated deputy like a Head of Faculty can permanently exclude a student from college. Permanent exclusion may or may not take place after a **Final Warning** has been given.

The student and his or her parents/guardians (if the student is under 19) will be informed of the permanent exclusion in writing and will be given information about the College's Appeals Procedure.

### **Appeals Against Permanent Exclusion**

In all cases where a student is required to withdraw from College s/he will have the right of appeal to the Principal. Students and, if appropriate, parents/guardians will be informed of this in writing. Appeals to the Principal must be made in writing within five working term time days of the receipt of the Deputy Principal's (Students) or Director of Adult & Higher Education's, or their delegated deputy's, decision to require a student to leave. The student should set out in their letter their reasons for appealing. Once the appeal is lodged the student will continue to be excluded from College until the appeal is heard and a decision made.

All students required to leave College shall have the right to present their case in person to the Principal, or his delegated deputy, with one other person, who may be a parent/guardian or friend but not a legal representative, in attendance if they so wish. During an Appeal the Principal may receive representation from the student concerned, parents/guardians, Head of Faculty, Adult & Higher Education Division Curriculum Head, tutor and any other person he deems appropriate.

The College will undertake to hear the appeal within fifteen working term time days of it being lodged.

The Principal may either:

- (i) Uphold the Deputy Principal's/Director of Adult & Higher Education's decision to require the student to withdraw
- or
- (ii) Reinstate the student, with or without conditions as appropriate.

The Principal's decision shall be final.

### **Involvement of Parents/Guardians**

The parents/guardians of all full time 16-19 students will be kept informed of any disciplinary action taken against their son or daughter, other than a verbal reprimand.

Letters will be sent by first class post or email to the home address listed on the student's record.

The College will make every effort to keep in contact with parents but cannot take responsibility if communications are not received because they are intercepted by the student.

The college values the support and involvement of parents/guardians and will continue to liaise with them throughout the student's college course even if the student wishes to become independent of parental involvement on reaching the age of 18 years. The only exception will be where a student is officially estranged from his/her parents.

### **Monitoring and Review**

All suspensions, permanent exclusions and appeals are logged and form the basis of an annual monitoring report to the Senior Management Team, which is reported to the Governing Body for information. The policy is reviewed annually.

### **Other related policies**

1. Prevention of Bullying and Harassment (Students)
2. Drugs and Alcohol Policy
3. HE Student Disciplinary & Exclusion Procedure

### DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Peter Symonds College recognises the risks posed to students by the misuse of drugs and alcohol and our responsibilities under relevant legislation. This policy applies to all College activities, including those outside the normal working day and off site, like College trips and visits.

*Definition: a drug is any substance, taken in to the body, which alters the way in which the mind or body functions.*

#### **Policy Statement**

The following principles underpin our approach:

**Education:** we are committed to the promotion of drugs and alcohol education and helping students to make informed decisions about their own lives.

**Safety and well-being:** we are committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for all. In order to maintain this environment, the use and supply of drugs and alcohol is prohibited. Under the 2001 Amendment to Section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, it is a criminal offence for a College to knowingly allow the premises to be used for the administration or use of any controlled substance, along with to knowingly allow the supply and production of any controlled substance.

**Zero-tolerance:** any student found in possession and/or using any drug, alcohol or related paraphernalia will be subject to formal disciplinary procedures. Parents will be notified as soon as possible. The College may also contact the Police, especially if students are found passing on or dealing in drugs. For individual students, it is a criminal offence to be in the possession of a controlled substance, and possession with intent to supply is a more serious offence.

**Support:** we will provide support for students if they approach us for help about the effects of drug or alcohol use, which may include a referral to an external agency.

**In line with the Hampshire Children's Trust Drugs Use and Misuse Policy (Sept 2012), the College will:**

- Provide accurate and up to date information about drugs and alcohol.
- Tackle problem behaviour and take action where appropriate, including formal disciplinary action in instances of student abuse of drugs or alcohol.
- Work with external agencies like the police and health services to prevent drug and alcohol misuse and support students who see drugs and alcohol as an issue in their lives.
- Create an environment where young people can reflect on their own and others' attitudes to drugs and alcohol, and where misconceptions can be challenged.
- Manage any issues that arise sensitively, within the limits of confidentiality.
- Involve young people in the planning and delivery of drug and alcohol education.
- Set clear boundaries for behaviour.
- Provide links to services and other agencies.
- Regularly review and evaluate the above.

**This will include:**

- a) Making clear to all students the College's position with regard to drugs and alcohol in the Student diary/handbook, with a reminder that a criminal record for the possession or supply of drugs may affect their ability to practice in certain professions, such as the health professions, social work, teaching, and the law. Even a caution can limit career choices. In addition, travel

to some countries, most notably the United States of America, is impossible once a conviction for drug use is obtained.

It is the responsibility of the Deputy Principal (Students) or the Director of Adult & Higher Education in the Adult & Higher Education Division to ensure that students are aware of this policy and to co-ordinate and monitor its implementation.

- b) Unannounced visits to the College by the Police and a drugs sniffer dog. As a result, students may be searched and arrested by the Police. If this is the case, formal disciplinary action will follow and parents/guardians notified.

**In addition, for 16 to 19 year old students:**

- c) Ensuring that relevant health information describing the risks associated with drugs and alcohol is always available to students, and that regular information events are held each academic year, drawing on the expertise of relevant external agencies. This is the responsibility of the Head of Student Welfare.
- d) The Symonds lecture programme and Tutorial programme will provide opportunities for students to explore their attitudes to drugs and alcohol, and that of others, and where misconceptions can be challenged. This is the responsibility of the Deputy Principal (Students), in conjunction with the staff responsible for both programmes.

**Procedures**

**Responding to suspicions:**

- If the College has good reason to suspect that a sixth form student is using drugs or alcohol, but has no definite evidence, the Deputy Principal (Students) or Head of Faculty will inform parents/guardians of that suspicion and warn the student of the consequences if they were found to be using drugs or alcohol in the future. However, this will depend on individual circumstances and be at the discretion of the Deputy Principal (Students) or Head of Faculty. For boarding students, the Head of Boarding will also be involved.
- Where staff have reasonable grounds for suspicion, students can expect their possessions and locker to be searched and parents/guardians informed. Consent to such a search is a condition of enrolment, as set out in the Student Contract.
- Support will be offered to the student from the Student Services department, who can also refer the student and their parents/guardians to a relevant external agency, if appropriate.
- If there are any concerns about a student at the Adult and Higher Education Division using drugs or alcohol, but there is no definite evidence, the concern will be passed on to the PA to the Director of the division so that an appropriate member of staff can be identified to discuss the matter further with the student.

**Responding to a drugs incident:**

- If a member of staff or a student observes a person on the College site using drugs, they should inform the relevant senior manager. This will usually be the Deputy Principal (Students), a Head of Faculty, the Director of Adult & Higher Education or the Business Manager at AHED.

- If the user is thought to be at risk from his or her usage, the College Nurse or a First Aider should be called.
- If a member of staff confiscates drugs from an individual, this should be witnessed by at least one other member of staff and the substance should be taken to a senior manager immediately in order that it may be identified and dealt with appropriately. Staff should NOT retain the substance for safekeeping, or they may place themselves at risk.
- The senior manager should dispose of the drug by flushing it away, which should be witnessed, or keep it safe in a central place to pass to the police.
- All staff involved in any incident should make a record of the action they have taken immediately after the event and hand this record to the Deputy Principal (Students), Head of Faculty, Director of Adult & Higher Education or Business Manager at AHed, as appropriate.
- The matter will then be dealt with by the senior manager.
- If the matter involves a visitor or intruder, the police will be notified and/or the visitor or intruder will be escorted off site.
- Where a student is involved, the Deputy Principal (Students), Head of Faculty or Director of Adult & Higher Education will interview the student and decide how to proceed. In all cases, the College reserves the right to notify the Police, either to seek their advice or to report a crime.
- Support will be offered to the student from the Student Services department and the college Counselling Service, who can also refer the student and their parents/guardians to a relevant external agency, if appropriate.

### **Sanctions:**

For possession of drugs and/or related paraphernalia, a student will usually be suspended as soon as possible and parents/guardians informed. This allows time for further investigation and could lead to permanent exclusion. If the student is allowed to return to College, the student will be required to provide an undertaking not to use drugs or be under the influence of drugs on site again.

Support will be offered, as appropriate, from the Student Services department, the college Counselling Service and/or the Lead Tutor or Head of Faculty.

Where a student is found to be dealing in drugs, the College will inform the Police and permanently exclude the student.

### **Responding to an alcohol related incident:**

- If a member of staff or a student observes a person on the College site using alcohol or under the influence of alcohol, they should inform the relevant senior manager. This will usually be the Deputy Principal (Students), a Head of Faculty, the Director of Adult & Higher Education or the Business Manager at AHed.
- If the user is thought to be at risk from his or her usage, the College Nurse or a First Aider should be called.

- If a member of staff confiscates alcohol from an individual, this should be witnessed by at least one other member of staff and the substance should be taken to a senior manager immediately in order that it may be identified and dealt with appropriately.
- All staff involved in any incident should make a record of the action they have taken immediately after the event, and hand this record to the Deputy Principal (Students), Head of Faculty, Director of Adult & Higher Education or Business Manager at AHed, as appropriate.
- The matter will then be dealt with by the senior manager.
- If the matter involves a visitor or intruder, the police may be notified and/or the visitor or intruder will be escorted off site.
- Where a student is involved, the Deputy Principal (Students), Head of Faculty or Director of Adult & Higher Education will interview the student and decide how to proceed.
- Support will be offered to the student from the Student Services department and the college Counselling Service, who can also refer the student and their parents/guardians to a relevant external agency, if appropriate.

#### **Sanctions:**

On the first occurrence, the student will usually be suspended for a minimum of two college days and parents/guardians will be informed. Support will be offered, as appropriate.

A repeat occurrence will result in permanent exclusion.

#### **Related policies, documents and sources of information:**

- Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Student Contract
- Student Diary/Handbook
- Student Intranet: <https://intranet.psc.ac.uk/student-services/home.php>
- Recommended website for students and parents: <http://www.talktofrank.com/>

**APPEALS AGAINST ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

**Introduction**

This policy relates to internal assessment on externally accredited courses. If at any time a student has concerns about internally marked work submitted as part of their accredited/examined course (e.g. coursework, portfolio, projects) they should use the following procedure. It is college policy not to reveal the precise coursework marks awarded internally, since these are subject to external moderation and can change.

**There is a Coursework Charter set out each year in the Student Diary / Handbook for 16 – 19 full time students. This outlines the commitments both of the college and of the student with regard to coursework.**

**Stage 1**

If, after an assignment /coursework or any other type of assessment has been made, a learner/candidate has reason to question the assessment given, he/she should talk to the assessor responsible for the assessment as soon as possible. The assessor will discuss this with the learner/candidate within 5 working days.

**Stage 2**

If concerns are not resolved about the reasons for the assessment decisions, the candidate/learner has the right to request a reassessment by another independent assessor, where available. A written request should be made to the teacher/assessor concerned and copied to the examinations manager.

The reassessment should be completed within an appropriate time span, usually 2 weeks, after which the result will be recorded and communicated to the learner/candidate. If the appeal was successful the adjusted assessment will be recorded.

**Stage 3**

If there is still no agreement, the matter can be referred to the College Appeals Panel. The candidate will present their case personally to the Appeals Panel. The candidate may be accompanied by a friend or relative, but not a legal representative. The Appeals Panel will meet normally within 2 weeks and consist of:

- Vocational Courses Co-ordinator/Adult & Higher Education Division Curriculum Head, Internal Verifier (vocational courses)
- Head of Subject and Head of Faculty (GCE AS/A level and GCSE)
- Quality Manager
- Assessor/Internal verifier from another curriculum area

In accordance with the code of practice for the conduct of external qualifications produced by the JCQ, the Appeals Panel will focus on the *procedures* used in internal assessment, but *not the actual marks or grades* submitted by the college to the Awarding Body for moderation.

The Appeal Panel will put forward a resolution, within 5 working days, by which all parties must abide. A written record of appeals and their outcome will be kept by the examinations manager. Details of appeals are available to Awarding Bodies on request.

**NVQs** For NVQs there is no Appeal Panel. The matter is referred to the External Verifier for a final decision.

NB HE students at AHed should refer to the HE Assessment Board Appeal procedure in the student handbook or on Moodle.

**CHARGING POLICY AND PROCEDURES 2016-2017**

Nationals from countries outside the European Economic Area and British Nationals who do not satisfy the three year residency requirements, i.e. have to be "ordinarily resident" in the UK or an EEA country for purposes other than education for the three years prior to the start of the course, will not be eligible for government funding and will, therefore, be charged full cost course and accreditation fees if they are accepted to study at the College. Students will be asked to provide information as part of the admissions process to help the college decide if they are eligible for government funding.

EFA = Education Funding Agency

SFA = Skills Funding Agency

**FULL TIME 16-19 STUDENTS**

There are no tuition fees for 16-19 year old students on EFA funded courses. However, textbooks and stationery, and other resources like Art equipment or calculators, are not provided by the college. There is a Learner Support Fund to which students can apply if they are in financial difficulties.

**Fees for Examinations**

The college does not normally charge for public examinations other than for those not prescribed in the official regulations, e.g. fees from outside public bodies such as BMAT. However, where a student requests a review of marking or wishes to resit an examination the college will pass on to the student the exam board fee plus a small administration charge. If students wish to enter to resit an examination after the published college deadline, a late entry administration fee will be charged in addition to any exam board penalty fees incurred. Where a candidate is not a student at the college or fails without good reason to complete the examination requirements or has a very poor record of attendance the college reserves the right to charge full fees for all examinations taken.

**Boarding**

Fees are payable if students accept a boarding place and parents or guardians of those students will be asked to sign an acceptance of financial responsibility for boarding fees. Detailed information about boarding fees will be provided by the Head of Boarding or the Finance Manager..

**19+ STUDENTS**

*On the first day of learning, the learner must be aged 19 or over on 31st August within the funding year in question.*

Changes are made in line with Government policy and SFA policy on an annual basis. All adult learners who are paying towards their course are expected to supply their own books, materials, tools and stationary. These are not included in the course fee. Those who have taken out an Advanced Learner Loan will also be expected to supply these items, except for costs and charges without which the student cannot complete their course. There is a 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund to which students (who have not taken out an Advanced Learner Loan) can apply for help with essential course-related costs including childcare, travel, but not course fees, if they are in financial difficulties (conditions and criteria apply). Those having taken out an Advanced Learner Loan, there is a limited Bursary Fund available for childcare, travel and/or learning support costs.

Learners are advised not to make purchases until they are sure that the course will run and that it suits their needs. Some courses also carry a "plusage" to cover particular costs e.g. higher cost of room hire at other centres, items supplied, consumables or for small groups. Adult learners who have had their course paid for (full fee remission) will have books, materials and uniforms, deemed essential to complete the learning aim supplied (learners will need to pay a refundable deposit and sign an Equipment Loan Agreement). These items will need to be returned at the end of the course unless the learner wants to keep these items, and then they will need to buy them.

## **1. FEES FOR VOCATIONAL SFA CO-FUNDED COURSES**

Fees for all accredited courses will be charged in line with Government policy. The College may also choose to subsidise learners for one or more of the following reasons:

- To pump prime and establish new provision in line with new Government priorities
- To increase the number of students from particular wards or post code areas going onto higher education
- To promote the Level 2 Entitlement and full Level 3 to those aged 19-24
- To raise participation rates of under-represented groups
- To charge lower prices with regard to market forces

### **FEE REMISSION**

If a student thinks they may qualify for fee remission, they can contact the Student Support team via the Adult & Higher Education division (AHed) Reception to ascertain the criteria. If applicable, they must provide up to date relevant evidence (dated within the last 4 weeks) on enrolment. Fresh evidence is needed within 4 weeks of the course start date if the student enrolls in advance to confirm that they are still eligible for fee remission.

Learners wishing to enroll on a course up to Level 2 and who are unemployed on active benefits such as Jobseekers' Allowance (JSA), the work-related activity component of the Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (income & JCP criteria apply) must supply correspondence they have received from the relevant authority dated within the last 4 weeks which proves they are entitled to that benefit. Fee remission also applies to:

- Certain learners participating in SFA funded projects
- Those taking learning aims that are funded as basic skills (literacy and numeracy) excluding English for Speakers of Other Languages
- Those taking English and Maths GCSE if they do not already have a GCSE grade A\* to C or 9 to 4 (2016)
- Those unemployed or on low income (criteria apply) and on certain other benefits studying up to level 2, provided the learning is required to gain employment or progress into more sustainable employment
- Learners aged 19 to 23 studying their first full Level 2 or first full Level 3 qualification, including Access to HE

If a student falls into any one of these groups they will not be required to pay the course fee on SFA funded vocational courses providing they produce the necessary evidence on enrolment and comply with any other required criteria.

Some accredited courses attract a Government subsidy of 50% from the SFA. This has already been deducted in the advertised course fees. Please note that anyone taking an accredited course but not intending to complete the qualification will lose the subsidy and be required to pay the full cost. You will also be required to complete various forms at different stages of your course. Your cooperation in this is essential to claim this subsidy.

### **CO-FUNDED**

Learners who are not entitled to fee remission can pay for their course on enrolment in full or enter into an instalment plan.

### **LEVEL 3 NON-FUNDED COURSES**

For learners aged 19 or over undertaking a Further Education Level 3, 4, 5 or 6 qualification, they will need to pay for their course in full. To help with this the Government has set up provision for eligible Level 3, 4, 5 or 6 qualifications offering non-means tested Advanced Learner Loans which are loans to cover the course fees. The learner does not start paying back the loan until they are earning over £21,000. If the learner undertakes an Access to HE course and then completes a higher education

programme, the Advanced Learner Loan will be written off. Advanced Learner Loan application is available online once a student has applied for a course and has been given a Learning and Funding Information letter by the College after interview.

### **Examination and Accreditation Charges**

Details about examination fees for accredited courses are included in the information about the course. The main element of the accreditation charge is determined by external examination boards. Precise cost information is often not available until after courses start in September. The College therefore reserves the right to apply a surcharge in the event of any exceptional increase applied by an accrediting body. Individual students remain personally responsible for their own examination entry. Students failing to observe the deadlines provided by their course tutor will be liable to a late-entry charge.

## **2. PRINCIPLES FOR GOVERNING THE SETTING OF FEES FOR ADULT COURSES**

Where students are not eligible for full remission of fees, the following principles will be used in setting fees.

### **SFA Funded Courses:**

- a) For courses funded by the SFA the general principle is to charge a fee of 50% of the full funded value as quoted on the learning aims data base.
- b) Account is taken of market forces, however, and in some cases a lower or higher fee will be set.
- c) All courses must break even and contribute to overheads.

### **Leisure Courses:**

- a) The fees are set on a full cost recovery basis. The aim is to at least recover the direct costs involved in running the courses and contribute to central overheads involved with leisure courses, such as marketing.
- b) The current year's assumed cost per tutor hour, taking account of contribution to central costs and on costs, is £57. This forms the basis of fee setting for Leisure courses.
- c) Once the fees for Leisure courses are calculated they are subjected to a "market forces" analysis. Comparisons are made with the fees being charged by other local colleges and what, based on previous experience, potential students are prepared to pay for a particular course. The course fee is then adjusted up or down in accordance with these findings.
- d) All courses must break even and contribute to overheads.
- e) Students who join a course late may be eligible for a reduced fee at the discretion of the Director of Adult & Higher Education.

### **Higher Education Courses:**

Fees for higher education courses (honours degrees and foundation degrees,) are determined by consideration of the following:

- Market forces
- The maximum of £9,000 per year set by the government for higher education fees

The fees for these courses in 2016-2017 are £4,500 per annum.

### **Loans for Further and Higher Education Courses:**

- **Higher Education:** Students enrolling on a higher education course can apply for a student loan via the Student Loans Company.

- **Further Education:** Students aged 19 and over who enrol on an eligible Level 3 or 4 course can apply for a Advanced Learner Loan via the Student Loans Company.
- **Professional and Career Development Loans:** These are available for both further and higher education course (not a first full-time degree) via the National Careers Service.

### **Fees for Specially Tailored Courses:**

The charge for this will be £110 (£90) per tutor hour to include:

- A detailed needs analysis prior to the start of the course
- High quality handouts and refreshments (excluding lunch)
- No minimum number of students
- Maximum group size of 10 dependent on course
- Up to 15% discount for block bookings

### **Administration Fees:**

We reserve the right to charge an administration fee for higher education courses where registration is via the validating University.

### **Examination fees:**

These are determined by the relevant awarding body and added to the overall fee

**No individual member of staff has authority to vary conditions of enrolment.**

### **Refund Policy at the Adult & Higher Education Division:**

#### **Transfers and suspension of studies:**

The following administration charges will apply for a transfer to another course or for the suspension of studies:

- One-day workshops – no fee
- Course fees below £200 (excluding one-day workshops) - £15
- Course fees above £200 - £25

Requests should be made in writing to the enrolment office via email [AHED.Registry@psc.ac.uk](mailto:AHED.Registry@psc.ac.uk) a minimum of 7 days prior to the commencement of the course. The transfer of fees or substitutions between learners is not permitted. No credit can be given in respect of payments made to other colleges.

#### **One Day Workshops:**

We require a minimum of 7 days written notice prior to the commencement of your one day course for either a transfer or a refund. This is because one day workshops often run with lower numbers and we need to make a decision to employ the tutor 7 days before the workshop takes place.

#### **Programme withdrawal:**

Students who withdraw from their programme at any time from 7 days prior to course commencement will remain liable for full course fees. If you have drawn down a Advanced Learner Loan or HE Loan to cover your fees, you need to be aware that the loan will only be paid for the period of time you have attended so you will then become personally liable for the remainder of the course fee. If the withdrawal occurs in the first term of a year-long course, the student will liable for any exam and/or registration fees and materials costs, plus a third of the course fee. Please note that this excludes Year 2 of the Business Top Up, when the full course fees including exam and/or registration fees for the year will apply. The College will pursue such a debt.

**Administration Charges:**

A £25.00 administration fee will be charged for instalment arrangements and will also be raised each time a chosen method of payment is declined. This is non-refundable.

**No individual member of staff has authority to vary conditions of enrolment.**

**Refunds:**

Most providers do not offer refunds because it affects the viability of their programmes. Each course depends on the amount of fees collected to cover the costs of the course and decisions regarding whether the course will run are taken prior to the commencement of the course or programme.

In the event of the student being unable to commence the course, the following notice periods will apply:

28+ days prior to start of course – Full refund

27 – 8 days prior to start of course – 75% refund

7 days or less prior to start of course – No refund

We are unable to provide a refund if you decide to withdraw after your programme of study has commenced. If there is a medical reason why you cannot commence or continue the course please write to the Business Manager, enclosing a Doctor's Certificate, to ask for special consideration:

The Business Manager  
Peter Symonds College  
Adult & Higher Education Division  
Stoney Lane  
Weeke  
Winchester, SO22 6DR

We do not offer refunds for circumstances out of our control. If a class is cancelled due to circumstances beyond our control, we will endeavour to offer an alternative session to make up the lost class. If a student is unable to attend the alternative session, we regret we are unable to offer a refund. A refund will be made only if we are unable to offer an alternative session.

The college may have to cancel a course for a range of reasons, so the acceptance of a course fee payment should not be regarded as a guarantee that the course will run. Where the college cancels a course prior to commencement, for example, due to insufficient enrolments to make the course viable, we will refund the full cost of the course fees. We will only refund partial costs if the course is underway.

If your course has been cancelled and you have paid by cash or cheque, your fee will be refunded within 10 working days. However if you have paid for your course using a credit or debit card we ask that you contact us at your earliest convenience to provide us with your card information so that we can process your refund during term time (9.15am to 4pm) on 01962 889547. We do not keep card details on file due to data protection.

We reserve the right to delay or change start or finish dates, if we are obliged to do so. Only if amendments include a change of day or venue will repayment of fees be possible.

We regret that no refunds will be given in any other circumstances.

**No individual member of staff has authority to vary conditions of enrolment.**

**STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT POLICY &  
INFORMATION FOR COURSES RECEIVING GOVERNMENT FUNDING 2016-17**

**Aim**

The College is committed to providing financial support according to need which enables students to access qualification bearing provision, in accordance with the college's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and within the resources received from our funding body.

The following sources of financial support are currently available:

**FOR ALL STUDENTS**

**The Learner Support Fund**

This is a discretionary fund granted to the college each year by our funding bodies to help students who face genuine financial barriers to access their college course. It is available to both full-time Sixth Form College students and students at AHed and is means-tested and allocated on the basis of relative financial need. It can be in the form of a bursary or a lump sum. Students can obtain further information about eligibility and an application form from Student Services or from AHed Reception/Café area, and should apply as soon as they begin their college course.

**Childcare Support Scheme is available for:-**

- a) Adult students, aged 20 or over, who have a dependent child aged under 15 (16 if a child with disabilities) and subject to household income, may be eligible for help with childcare costs (which needs to be Ofsted registered).
- b) Students in the sixth form college should see the Head of Student Welfare who can advise them about "Care to Learn" funding.

**FOR 16-19 YEAR OLD FULL TIME STUDENTS**

**The Student Support Fund**

This is a sum of money available to help students with costs essential to their course. Proof of household income is needed and decisions are based on relative financial need, within the funds available. Anyone can apply using the form available from Student Services, which sets out in more detail the kind of costs that the fund will meet. Where applicable, the fund will offer help towards transport costs and books and equipment.

**Bursaries**

There are guaranteed government bursaries for those 16 to 19 year old students in care or who are care leavers; those students who are parents and claiming Income Support, and those students who are living independently and claiming Income Support. The Bursary Scheme guarantees the students in these categories a minimum level of financial support which is paid in instalments, based on attendance at College. An application form can be obtained from Student Services.

**FOR 19+ LEARNERS**

**Instalments**

Payment of course fees should be made in full at the beginning of a course. However, where students are enrolling on a course costing over £100 and lasting for more than 12 weeks, they may pay their fees via an instalment plan. Students should contact the Registry Department on 01962 889547 for further information about the conditions for payment by instalments. NB: a £25 administration fee will be charged for instalment arrangements and will be added to the amount of course fees outstanding.

### **Leisure Courses**

There are no longer any subsidies available to help students on leisure courses or professional development courses. However, if a course costs more than £100 and the duration is for more than 12 weeks, students may pay by instalments (see above).

### **Support for Students on Higher Education Courses**

Students may apply for a student loan via the Student Loans Company and should access Student Finance England for initial support: [www.gov.uk/student-finance](http://www.gov.uk/student-finance)

### **HE Hardship Fund**

This fund is available to students who have applied for and taken out the maximum Student Loans Company maintenance loan and all other support they are eligible for and who are in financial hardship that might impact on the student's participation in higher education. Forms are available from AHED Café Area.

### ***Disclaimer:***

*The Government funding outlined above is correct at the time this policy is approved. However, please note that the Government reserves the right to amend or withdraw this funding at any time.*

## **Fee Payment, Remission of Fees and Instalment Policy**

Fees quoted are for one academic year only and are payable on commencement of a programme of study. Students will not be able to start their course unless they have paid in full, have obtained confirmation of eligibility for fee remission from the Student Support team, have written proof of approval of a student loan (HE), written proof of approval of an Advanced Learner Loan or have an authorised instalment plan.

Where students are eligible for fee remission they must have provided all the necessary paperwork on enrolment and have confirmation of eligibility before they start their course. Students have the option of paying their fees by instalment, providing they meet the terms and conditions outlined below.

*Peter Symonds College reserves the right to refuse admission to students who currently have outstanding fees from a previous academic year/enrolment.*

### **Remission of fees for Skills Funding Agency (SFA) Further Education (FE) students:**

Please refer to the Charging Policy and Procedures for 2016-2017 for details.

### **Payment of Course Fees by Instalment**

#### **Instalment Policy for Students on HE, FE and Full Cost courses:**

**NB:** a £25 administration fee will be charged for instalment arrangements, this is non-refundable.

#### **Students paying their own fees can pay by up to 3 instalments providing that:**

- Course fees are in excess of £100 and the duration of the course is more than 12 weeks;
- With regards to further education programmes an initial payment equal to one third of the tuition fee plus any accreditation, examination consumables, instalment arrangement and administration fees is paid on enrolment; the second instalment of one third of the tuition fee is paid on the 5<sup>th</sup> of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month after the course start date (i.e. if the course starts in September, the 2<sup>nd</sup> payment will be due on 5<sup>th</sup> November) and the final instalment of the last third of the tuition fee is paid on the 5<sup>th</sup> of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month after the course start date (i.e. if the course starts in September, the 3<sup>rd</sup> payment will be due on 5<sup>th</sup> December);
- With regards to higher education programmes an initial payment equal to one third of the tuition fee plus any accreditation, examination consumables, instalment arrangement and administration fees is paid on enrolment; the second instalment of one third of the tuition fee is paid by February 5<sup>th</sup> and the final instalment of one third of the tuition fee is paid by April 5<sup>th</sup> of each year of the course;
- Please note that instalment payments are taken on the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month, for example, in respect of further education programmes your first payment will be taken on enrolment, then you will be given a grace period during the following month and then your second and third payments will be taken on the 5<sup>th</sup> of the following two consecutive months. With regards to higher education programmes your first payment will be taken on enrolment, the second payment will be taken on the 5<sup>th</sup> February and the third payment taken on 5<sup>th</sup> April;
- The student supplies completed instalment plan documentation, standing order mandate, written confirmation of an approved student loan (HE) a credit card, cheque or cash for the first payment. Two post-dated cheques or card details will be acceptable for the second and third instalments, made payable to Peter Symonds College;
- The student has no outstanding balance of fees from a previous year;
- The student does not have, or is not in the process of, an Individual Voluntary Arrangement (IVA); and
- The student has not defaulted on instalment/payment arrangements in a previous year.

## **Employer Payments & Invoices:**

If your employer is paying for your course, please request an Employer Invoice Authorisation Form from Registry (or an official Purchase Order stating your name, course to be studied and the maximum amount to be charged), and enclose it with your Enrolment Form.

## **Paying by instalments is subject to the following terms and conditions:**

1. Students who withdraw from their programme remain liable for full course fees;
2. Peter Symonds College charges an administration fee of £25 for instalment arrangements;
3. Instalment arrangements are not available for overseas students, sponsors or employers, or students without a UK bank account, unless agreed by the Director of Adult & Higher Education;
4. Fees will be collected on the agreed dates in the instalment plan;
5. Fees charged will normally be for one academic year only. For the majority of courses lasting more than 1 year, fees will be charged at the start of each year;
6. Peter Symonds College reserves the right to withhold applications for certification for students with an outstanding balance of fees;
7. If the college is unable to collect payment, the student's ID card will be deactivated and IT account suspended, unless satisfactory payment arrangements are made;
8. If the college is unable to collect an instalment payment from the student's bank account on more than one occasion, the student may be asked to leave their programme but will remain liable for payment of any outstanding fees;
9. Peter Symonds College is prepared to take action where necessary through the County Court, to recover debts from students/employers who do not adhere to payment arrangements and/or fail to respond to correspondence from Registry. This could result in a County Court Judgement against the student. NB: all County Court costs will be added to the balance due from the student/employer; and
10. Any student with a change of address must notify Registry immediately.

## **What happens if my tuition fee payment is late?**

If you become aware that a payment will be late, you must contact the Business Manager at the Adult & Higher Education division to explain why this has occurred. If you are in genuine difficulty making your payment we will try to agree a plan of payment that is more manageable.

If you fail to submit a payment plan or if your payment plan method fails you will be contacted within two weeks of the expected payment date and asked to make immediate payment by another method. If this payment method also fails you may be charged an administration fee.

If you fail to respond or you are unable to provide an acceptable payment plan, the college reserves the right to terminate your studies. The college will then put any outstanding debt in the hands of a debt collector. Any additional costs incurred will be added to your account.

Students who continue to be in debt to the college at the end of the first academic year will not be permitted to register for the following year of their programme. Also, please be aware that if you remain in debt to the college you will be required to pay your balance before enrolling on any subsequent courses whether they are subsidised or full cost.

## **What can I do if I'm having difficulty paying my fees?**

If you are experiencing difficulties in paying tuition fees you should seek help at the earliest possible opportunity. Initially you should approach the Student Support Manager at Reception. She will be able to provide general advice as well as information about any additional funding that may be available. You may also wish to speak to your tutor for support and advice.

It is important to keep the college informed of the developments (see above). The college will be sympathetic and assist where it can however in order to maintain the quality of teaching for everyone else the college must act to recover debts.

**Payment of interest administration charges:**

You will be liable to pay interest at 2.5% above the UK clearing bank base rate, per annum, on any amount outstanding /overdue against your payment plan. Interest will run from the due date to the date when the fees are paid. Registry will review the student related debt ledger throughout the year and apply interest annually, on a consistent basis.

An administration charge of £25.00 may be raised where your chosen method of payment is declined more than once. This will apply to each payment date.

## **Student Conditions of Use of Peter Symonds College IT Network**

### **Computer Network**

The computer network is provided for the use of students and staff at the College to support and enhance the delivery of the curriculum. Every full-time student is allocated their own log-in ID, email account, password and network disk space. These conditions apply to students accessing the network using College-owned devices or their own devices whether in the College or from remote locations.

### **General Conditions of Use**

1. The College computers are for curriculum use only.
2. Students must not attempt to permanently change the configuration of any College IT equipment without the express permission of a member of the IT Services team.
3. The downloading, installation or execution of any additional software (including games) on College computers or the network is prohibited.
4. Users must not copy software from the network in violation of College licensing agreements.
5. Users are responsible for maintaining their login password. They must not divulge it to others.
6. Users must never attempt to gain access to other users' files by using others' passwords or by any other means.
7. Users must not use the network to send instant messages to other users.
8. Users must not impersonate another user whether that user is inside or outside the College.
9. Users must not engage in commercial, gambling or political activity unrelated to the College.
10. Users must not engage in any activity that will harm, damage or interfere with the normal operation of College devices, network or telecommunications equipment.
11. The deliberate introduction of viruses or other damaging software is a serious offence. Please use virus checking software provided on the network to check any equipment brought in from home. If you find that you have a virus, please get help by contacting IT Services at once.
12. At no time may the College computing or telecommunications facilities be used for the storage, display or transmission of material, in any format, that is illegal, abusive, racist, pornographic, terrorist or deemed in any other way inappropriate in nature.
13. The College reserves the right to monitor any data stored on its equipment or transmitted to or from its site. Users should not attempt to password-protect or encrypt any data as it will be assumed to be suspect.
14. The College will log access to its network, including wireless, by users via their own ICT equipment including mobile phones. By authenticating to our network users accept that this activity will be logged.
15. When a student leaves the college mid-term their account will be deleted when they leave. Those who complete their course have their account kept open until the following October. This is to help with UCAS Applications, etc. In any case they should copy files they need before they leave.
16. The College takes no responsibility for data stored on the network or data lost due to computer failure. We do, however, take every precaution to maintain network data integrity including taking nightly backups.
17. Students will be charged for printing and copying within the college. The charge will be kept as low as possible at level to cover the cost of paper and toner. There will be no refund of any print credit credits left at the end of a student's time at the college.
18. If a student leaves the college before the end of their courses, their accounts, files and emails will be deleted at once.
19. While every effort will be taken to ensure that the system is reliable the College will not be responsible for occasional interruption to the service.

### **Internet Conditions of Use (including Social Media)**

1. Internet access during the College day is for curriculum-related work only. Social media sites are not to be accessed from College computers between 08.00 – 17.00.
2. Any defamatory text, images or other content about any member of the College (staff or student), or that brings the College name into disrepute, posted on any Internet site is not permitted and may lead to disciplinary procedures. This also applies to anything posted from either inside or outside the college.

3. Internet users who are not actively researching course material on a College computer should log out and give way to students who need to use the computer for other work such as coursework at busy times.
4. Copying text, images or other material from the Internet may breach the Copyright, Design and Patent Act 1988. Please check with the owner before copying or publishing such material.
5. Beware of other Internet users; they are not always who or what they seem. Users should not send any personal information or arrange meetings with people they don't know.
6. The College Internet access is filtered to block undesirable sites, but if users do come across unsavoury material they must quit from that area at once. The downloading, viewing, storing or transmission of any illegal, racist, pornographic, terrorist or abusive material will be treated as gross misconduct and dealt with appropriately.
7. Users must not attempt to circumnavigate any College filters or restrictions.

### **Email and Messaging**

Email is taken to include any passing of information from one person to another using electronic communications equipment such as computers linked via a local area network or the Internet. These conditions cover email hosted at the college or any other email or instant messaging program accessed from within the College.

It is important to emphasise that a carelessly worded email may be regarded as a legally binding document if there is sufficient detail and enough evidence of agreement. Furthermore, the content of an email could be construed as cyber bullying, so the wording of a message needs to consider the recipient. Similar care needs to be taken when communicating via any social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

### **Email Conditions of Use**

1. The allocation of email accounts within the College is deemed to be a privilege and not a right.
2. Users with email accounts provided by the college are expected to check their mailboxes regularly during term time (we recommend a minimum of once a week).
3. Any users accessing college emails via their own device must have a password or PIN of at least four characters or digits on that phone.
4. Users must never use email to:
  - a. Send messages that may disparage or harass others, in particular on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, age, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. This includes material in the form of offensive jokes.
  - b. Send unsolicited mail (junk mail) within or outside the College. This includes emails to large groups of users without good reason.
  - c. Send confidential or proprietary information about the College, its staff or its students.
  - d. Send statements that are defamatory or information that is false concerning the College, its staff, students or any activities that are carried out at the College.
  - e. Send or receive encrypted messages (except for secure transactions) without written permission from the Head of IT Services.
5. Important attachments should be saved to network drives.
6. Whilst incoming email is checked for malware, users must be cautious of suspicious emails, their contents and links within.
7. The College reserves the right to monitor and log any user's email in accordance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.
8. Users must be aware that email messages carry the same legal weight as paper-based letters and must assume that they may be stored and could be used in evidence at a later date.
9. Personal correspondence should not be read or written during working hours or when the computer is needed for College work.
10. Users must realise that shared disk space is limited and may have storage limits imposed on them.
11. The users' Trash folder will be cleaned every night of messages that are over one week old.

### **Consequences**

The breaking of any of these Conditions of Use may lead to a suspension of your access to the College network. More serious offences will be dealt with at the highest level and could ultimately lead to suspension or permanent exclusion from the College. Contravention of the Misuse of Computers Act,

the Obscene Publications Act, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 or the 2010 Equality Act would make the person responsible liable to criminal prosecution.

These conditions are laid down to help all the students at the College to use its computer equipment in a constructive way to enhance their learning and personal development.

*Anthony Harper*  
*Head of IT Services*

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