

Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy - Students

Version:	1.2 January 2020
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Approved by:	Principal (Manchester)
Implementation Date:	Feb 2016
Next Review Date:	August 2022

1. Policy Statement

1.1. At New College Group (NCG) we believe that students, staff members, homestay hosts, accommodation providers, contractors, visitors and members of the outside community all have the right to study, work and live in an environment that is safe and free from bullying and harassment.

1.2. This document's ultimate aim is to ***achieve a safe, healthy, fair and stress-free learning environment where each and every student is able to make the most of his or her experience at NCG.*** This is to be pursued by:

- 1.2.1. Fostering an environment where it is clear that bullying and harassment are unacceptable, thereby reducing the chance that bullying and harassment will occur in the first instance.
- 1.2.2. Deterring bullying or harassing behaviour, detecting it when it occurs, and dealing with it on a case-by-case basis by counselling and/or disciplinary sanctions and, if necessary, by expulsion.
- 1.2.3. Encouraging the reporting of bullying or harassing behaviour at all levels.
- 1.2.4. Setting out strategies and mechanisms to respond to allegations of bullying and harassment and to resolve complaints where bullying or harassment have occurred.
- 1.2.5. Complying with the duties under the Equality Act 2010.

2. Scope of the Policy

- 2.1. The provisions of this document will apply to any person enrolled on a course at NCG, regardless of age, gender, nationality or other personal circumstances.
- 2.2. The provisions of this policy will apply on the College's premises at all times without exception. It is intended that such provisions will also apply, in appropriate circumstances, when the students are away from the College's premises, either on social trips with other students or on their own.
- 2.3. This policy relates to bullying and harassment perpetrated by or against (the following list is non-exhaustive):
 - 2.3.1. Fellow NCG students;
 - 2.3.2. Teachers and other members of NCG staff;
 - 2.3.3. Homestay hosts working with NCG and their immediate family members, relatives, friends and visitors;
 - 2.3.4. Accommodation providers working with NCG and their staff members;
 - 2.3.5. Contractors working for NCG;
 - 2.3.6. Visitors on NCG premises;
 - 2.3.7. Members of the general public.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions will apply:
 - 3.1.1. **Student:** Any individual who is enrolled on a course of study at any NCG locations, regardless of the number of weeks and numbers of daily hours of study.
 - 3.1.2. **Victim/Complainant:** Any individual who believes they have been subject to, or witnessed instances of harassment or bullying.
 - 3.1.3. **Perpetrator/Offender:** Any individual who is accused of having conducted themselves in a manner that may be deemed to constitute bullying or harassment as defined in this policy
 - 3.1.4. **Bullying** (as defined in the Department for Education (DfE) guidance *Preventing and Tackling Bullying*, October 2014):

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

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a [student] is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between [students], or perceived differences”

Examples of what constitutes bullying are given in Appendix A

3.1.5. **Harassment** (as defined in the Equality Act 2010):

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

Examples of what constitutes harassment are given in Appendix A

3.1.6. **Protected Characteristic** (as listed in the Equality Act 2010):

- i. Age;
- ii. Disability;
- iii. Gender reassignment;
- iv. Marriage and civil partnership;
- v. Pregnancy and maternity;
- vi. Race;
- vii. Religion or belief;
- viii. Sex;
- ix. Sexual orientation.

4. General Principles for the Prevention of Bullying and Harassment

4.1. NCG will strive to promote an anti-bullying and anti-harassment culture among its students at all times.

- 4.2. NCG will never condone or tolerate any form of bullying or harassment under any circumstances. This includes bullying and harassment perpetrated by visitors or other members of the general public.
- 4.3. NCG will always encourage and support the disclosure and reporting of any bullying or harassment episode by those who believe they have been subject to, or witnessed, harassment or bullying.
- 4.4. Any reported incident will be treated seriously however trivial it may seem at first glance. NCG guarantees absolute confidentiality to any complainant.

5. Responsibility of Students

5.1. All NCG students, with no exceptions, are expected to:

- 5.1.1. Help NCG to promote and achieve an anti-bullying and anti-harassment culture by fully adhering to the principles set out in this policy and refraining from acting or conducting themselves in a bullying or harassing manner towards fellow students or any other individual.
- 5.1.2. Prevent bullying and harassment by being sensitive to the reactions and needs of others, and ensuring that their conduct does not cause offence.
- 5.1.3. Discourage bullying and harassment by others through making it clear that such conduct is unacceptable, and supporting any individual who is taking steps to stop bullying or harassment.
- 5.1.4. Speak up and report to a member of staff they trust if they believe they have been subject to, or witnessed, harassment or bullying.

6. Reporting Bullying or Harassment

6.1. Any student who believes they have been subject to, or witnessed, harassment or bullying, shall follow the procedure(s) outlined below:

- 6.1.1. Informal resolution:
 - i. Individuals may not realise that their behaviour is unwelcome or misunderstood and therefore an informal discussion can lead to greater

understanding and to an agreement that a particular behaviour or conduct will cease.

- ii. Complainants are encouraged to ask the offender to stop or make it clear that their behaviour is unwelcome. This may be done verbally or in writing,

in which case the complainant should keep a copy of the documentation and, where possible, the times and dates of incidents should be recorded.

- iii. If the complainant feels unable to approach the alleged perpetrator, a fellow student or a friend could be asked to speak to the alleged perpetrator on the complainant's behalf.

- iv. An individual who is made aware that their behaviour is unacceptable should:

- a) Listen to the complaints and the concerns raised;
- b) Respect the other person's point of view;
- c) Understand and acknowledge that it is the other person's reaction/perception to another's behaviour that is important;
- d) Agree the aspects of behaviour that will change;
- e) Review their general conduct/behaviour

6.1.2. Formal resolution:

- i. If the above informal request is ignored, or if the student is unable to take an informal approach, the student can report the bullying or harassment to any member of staff they trust or they feel comfortable talking to. This member of staff will make written notes and report the complaint to the Principal (or the Director of Studies), who will treat it as a formal complaint.
- ii. In exceptional circumstances, such as when the allegations involve the Principal or the Director of Studies, a complaint may be raised directly with the Managing Director, who will appoint an appropriate senior manager to arrange for the matter to be progressed in accordance with this policy and procedure
- iii. The Principal or the Director of Studies or the senior manager appointed by the Managing Director will then investigate the formal complaint as per the Complaints Procedure. Allegations will be dealt with seriously and

confidentially and there will be no victimisation of any student making or being involved in a complaint.

- 6.1.3. The timescales for action will be set by the person investigating the incident and will vary depending on the gravity of the allegations, the number of individuals involved,

the extent of the investigation and other circumstances. Once set, the timescales will be communicated in writing to all parties concerned.

- 6.1.4. In cases of serious alleged harassment, any student directly involved may be suspended pending further investigation.

- 6.1.5. Should the outcome of the investigation confirm that a bullying or harassment incident has actually taken place, the perpetrator will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure. Should the outcome of the investigation reveal that the allegations were malicious or vexatious, the complainant will be dealt with in accordance with the company's Disciplinary procedures.

6.2. Appeals against decisions taken under this policy shall be dealt with as follows:

- 6.2.1. Appeals against a disciplinary sanction will be dealt with in accordance with the appeals process in the Disciplinary Procedure.
- 6.2.2. Appeals by a complainant about the outcome of any inquiry will be dealt with in accordance with the appeal process in the Complaints Procedure.

6.3. If you are unhappy with the College's response, students can raise their complaint with English UK. A written complaint including details of how the problem has been dealt with by the College must be posted or e-mailed to:

English UK, 219 St. John Street, London EC1V 4LY
info@englishuk.com

7. Responding to Bullying or Harassment

7.1. When formal allegations of bullying or harassment are raised, NCG will endeavour to:

- 7.1.1. Take all bullying or harassment issues seriously and investigate all incidents thoroughly.

- 7.1.2. Deal with each incident individually and assess the needs of each student separately.
 - 7.1.3. Ensure that bullies and victims are interviewed separately.
 - 7.1.4. Obtain witness information.
 - 7.1.5. Keep a written record of the incident, investigation and outcomes.
 - 7.1.6. Ensure that action is taken to prevent further incidents. Such action may include:
 - i. Imposition of sanctions, up to expulsion with no refund of tuition and accommodation fees (following the Disciplinary Procedure).
 - ii. Obtaining an apology.
 - iii. Informing the parents of both bully and bullied if those involved are under 18 years of age.
 - iv. Provide advice and support for both victim and bully.
- 7.2. In assessing what actions to take when a bullying or harassment incident has been reported, it will be taken into account whether the bullying or harassment is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as "teasing" or "a game". These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may not be malicious and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions.
- 7.3. Notwithstanding the provisions of this policy, any student who is found to be bullying or harassing another individual is liable at law for their conduct and may face action in the courts.

Appendix A

A.1. Bullying: the examples provided below are not exhaustive.

A.1.1. Bullying may be:

Physical: hitting, kicking pushing people around, spitting; or taking, damaging or hiding possessions.

Verbal: name-calling, taunting, teasing, mimicking, insulting or demanding money.

Exclusionary Behaviour: intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group.

General Unkindness: spreading rumours, any kind of initiation ceremony or exploitation of another pupil, or writing unkind notes, mobile phone texts or e-mails;

Cyber bullying: using the internet, mobile phones or other electronic devices, social networking sites etc. to deliberately upset someone else (see section below).

A.1.2. Bullying may also be:

Sexual: talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way.

Sexist: related to a person's gender or gender reassignment.

Racist: or regarding someone's religion, belief or culture.

Related to a person's sexual orientation (homophobic).

Related to pregnancy and maternity.

Related to a person's home or economic circumstances.

Related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning difficulty, health or appearance.

A.1.3. **Cyber bullying:** "Cyber bullying" is any form of intimidation, abuse or unpleasant behaviour which targets any individual by using information and communication technologies – for example, e-mail, digital and mobile device cameras, text messages, social networking sites, web documents and online blogs. "Cyber bullying" is not restricted to College-based activities. Any form of bullying, intimidation or unpleasantness that is publicised on such sites or through any form of electronic communication will not be tolerated. Likewise, any posting on such sites that brings the reputation of NCG into disrepute will be treated as a serious offence. An incident of cyber bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures in this policy.

A.2. Harassment: the examples provided below are not exhaustive.

A.2.1 Harassment may be:

Sexist: Examples include displaying power over a man or a woman because of gender through disparaging gender related remarks and threatening behaviour.

Sexual: Examples include unnecessary physical contact; jokes of a sexual nature; displaying sexually explicit material; indecent demands or requests for sexual contact.

Harassment on grounds of sexual orientation: Examples include homophobic remarks or unwelcome jokes, threats to disclose sexuality and intimate questions about sexual activity.

Racial harassment: Examples include inappropriate questioning and/or jokes about racial or ethnic origin, offensive graffiti and intimidating behaviour, including threatening gestures.

Personal harassment: Examples include making fun of personal circumstances or appearance.

Age harassment: Examples include derogatory age-related remarks and unjustifiable dismissal of suggestions on the grounds of the age of the person.

Stalking: This can be physical or psychological. Examples include leaving repeated or alarming messages on voice mail or e-mail, following people home, or approaching others to ask for personal information.