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Quality Assurance Policies & Procedures

SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT POLICY

CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION

Appendix C

Staff conduct - personal relationships between staff and student's policy

Romantic and sexual relations with learners aged under-18 and vulnerable adults are prohibited under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. These are classed as an abuse of a position of trust regardless of whether the relationship is consensual or not. Reported incidents of this nature will come under the scope of the College's Disciplinary procedures with the potential outcome being gross misconduct and dismissal. Furthermore, in relevant circumstances the College is duty bound to inform the Disclosure & Barring Service of these instances.

Romantic and sexual relations with learners aged over 18 are discouraged as these could undermine the objectivity of teaching and learning. If these incidents do occur, the relevant line manager must be informed - in confidence. Arrangements will be made to ensure learning and assessment are free of bias, and this might involve informing other members of staff of the relationship. The relationship must be conducted entirely away from the College's campus and it is wholly inappropriate to form a relationship based on preferential treatment for sexual favours. Failure to disclose a relationship of this nature will come under the scope of the College's Disciplinary procedures.

1. A personal relationship of a sexual or other intimate nature between a member of staff and a student, with whom that member of staff also has a professional connection, gives rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest. In particular, such a relationship creates, or may reasonably be perceived to create, a risk of favouritism or abuse of authority. It also undermines the relationship of trust and confidence which is intrinsic to interactions between staff and students.
2. Members of staff are under a duty to act with integrity and not to place themselves in a position of actual or apparent conflict. A personal relationship in the circumstances described above should consequently be avoided.
3. In the event that:
 1. a personal relationship arises between a member of staff and a student with whom that member of staff also has a professional connection; or
 2. there is or has been a personal relationship between a member of staff and a student with whom that member of staff is due to have a professional connection;

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the member of staff in question must disclose the relationship immediately to the Principal or (if the member of staff would prefer) to a senior member of the HR Division who will speak to the Principal on their behalf. If a member of staff is unsure whether or not a relationship with a student should be disclosed under this policy, the member of staff should disclose it.

4. Following disclosure, the person to whom the disclosure has been made will ensure as appropriate that the student is aware of the disclosure and that alternative arrangements are put in place to avoid the member of staff having any professional connection with the student.
5. Failure to comply with this policy, or any arrangements which are put in place under it, may be treated as a disciplinary matter.
6. For the purposes of this policy:
 1. 'member of staff' includes any person who is engaged by the College as an employee or worker and/or who holds any post, as well as any person to whom the college makes available any of the privileges or facilities normally afforded to its employees - where graduate students working in a teaching or related capacity, this policy will apply to them in that capacity as if they were employees of the college
 2. 'student' includes any person pursuing a course of study who is 16-18 years of age
 3. 'professional connection' means any arrangement where a person in his or her capacity as a member of staff has any academic, pastoral or administrative or similar responsibility for a student, including for supervising, tutoring, teaching, selecting, assessing, protecting, safeguarding, or providing a reference for, the student; and
 4. 'personal relationship' means any association, however brief, of a sexual or other intimate nature, either in person or remotely (for example, via social media, email or text messaging).

Please refer to QAP 4.3.17 Code of Conduct which specifies information relating to low level concerns.