



Student Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Bullying Policy 2026-27

Content

1. Policy Statement	2
2. Scope	2
3. Introduction and purpose of the policy	2
4. College Values	3
5. Key principles	3
6. Procedure, responding to an allegation of harassment or bullying	3
7. Responding to concerns	4
8. Confidentiality	4
9. training	4
10. Related Policies and Procedures	5
11. Definitions	5
12. Further information	6
13. Location and access to the policy	6
14. Policy status and version control	7

Policy Statement

Tameside College is committed to ensuring a safe and inclusive environment where all community members can study, work, and live free from harassment. We are committed to promoting equal opportunities, embracing diversity, and fostering inclusivity, which we believe are essential to achieving our strategic goals and long-term success.

We are proud to be able to provide a welcoming and supportive setting where everyone is treated with respect and dignity, enabling them to learn, develop and reach their full potential. We have a zero-tolerance approach to unlawful discrimination and do not tolerate harassment or bullying within our community. We strive to create an atmosphere where our members know that we take accusations of harassment and bullying seriously and where they can report concerns about harassment and bullying without fear.

Scope

This policy applies to the following: -

- Harassment and bullying between students or students and staff (or individuals engaged with official college activities).
- All current and prospective students including those under 18 years old, over 18 years old, Apprentices and HE students.
- College Governors and staff.
- Individuals engaged with official college activities.

1. Introduction and purpose of the policy

This policy outlines the college's approach to addressing allegations of harassment and bullying of students. It aims to foster a learning environment where harassment and bullying are unacceptable and where students feel confident to report any concerns.

This policy has been developed with consideration of the latest national safeguarding and harassment legislations and guidelines (including KCSIE 2026, OfS- Condition e 2025, Equality Act 2010) and relevant college policies. Its **purpose** is to ensure:

- A clear commitment to providing a safe and inclusive environment where harassment and bullying are unacceptable.
- Support for students in identifying and understanding what constitutes harassment and bullying.

- A defined framework and assigned responsibilities for handling student concerns or incidents related to harassment or bullying.
- Consistent and appropriate responses to all reported incidents.
- Promotion of the anti-harassment, sexual misconduct and bullying policy in line with the college's values.
- Provision of support and advice in the event of harassment in learning environments on and off campus when activities are linked to the college community such as work placements, trips and internships and online.
- Compliance with the relevant regulatory bodies.

2. College Values

The college's values underpin and reflect our behaviours and play a critical role in shaping our college's working environment. We promote safeguarding, support a positive learning experience for all and our values play a key part in the way we wish to achieve our ambitions. The college values are: -

- Excellence through learning
- It's my responsibility,
- Work together
- Act with integrity
- Value and respect each other



3. Key principles

- We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment that enables students to learn, develop, and reach their full potential.
- We promote acceptable behaviours that make members of our community feel safe, valued, and treated with dignity and respect. The College's Acceptable Behaviour Policy outlines unacceptable behaviours on campus and online and addresses how breaches of these standards are managed.
- We proactively provide regular opportunities to build students' skills, including resilience, understanding of expectations, and awareness of anti-bullying measures.
- We will ensure that students are not academically disadvantaged as a result of harassment or misconduct and offer the necessary support.
- Unlawful discrimination of any kind within the College will not be tolerated.
- Every member of our community is responsible for helping to create an inclusive and supportive environment, free from discrimination, and for promoting positive relations among all members.

- All students have a personal responsibility to behave in ways that are not offensive to others and to recognise that others may hold views and opinions different from their own. Such differences of opinion do not typically constitute harassment.
- Students must comply with this Policy and ensure that they avoid behaviours that could be considered harassment or bullying of any individual or group.
- Students are encouraged to report incidents or concerns related to harassment or bullying promptly, so that appropriate actions or investigations can be conducted as soon as possible.
- If a student believes they are under physical threat or at serious risk of imminent harm, they must immediately contact emergency services.

4. Procedure, responding to an allegation of harassment, sexual misconduct or bullying

Reporting - What to do if you want report a concern or an incident?

- You can report a harassment, sexual misconduct and or bullying concern through one of the following methods: -
 - a) **Email** - send an email to harassment@tameside.ac.uk
 - b) **In person** - drop in to the Student Hub to speak to a member of the student services team.

5. Support- Responding to harassment, sexual misconduct and bullying reports

1. Once an allegation of harassment or bullying is received, a staff member will triage the allegation and acknowledge the complaint within 48 working hours.
2. A member of staff will be designated to conduct the investigation and will communicate appropriately with those involved, taking into account other relevant college policies.
3. If the concern involves a staff member, the case will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will work with the Human Resources team to address the concern.
4. All students experiencing or involved in harassment or bullying cases will be provided with information and guidance on support and wellbeing services.
5. Complaint outcomes will be communicated to the student as quickly as possible, usually within a timeframe of 15 working days, unless additional time is needed for further investigation.
6. Possible outcomes may include the concern being unfounded, mutually resolved, or confirmed as valid. If an allegation is found to be valid, the college will take appropriate actions in line with the Acceptable Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

7. The college will assess the severity of harassment, sexual misconduct and bullying cases and determine whether to refer the matter to external agencies such as the police.
8. If a case is under police investigation, we may suspend any internal proceedings until the police investigation is complete.
9. If the resolution is deemed unsatisfactory, an individual may wish to submit a formal complaint.
10. If an allegation or complaint is found to be malicious, vexatious, or based on false information, the complainant may be subject to action under the college's Policies.

6. Confidentiality

- The College complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protections Regulations, which allow for disclosure of personal data where this is necessary to protect the vital interests of a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- When addressing cases of alleged harassment or bullying, we will adhere to data protection laws. We will manage all information with care and confidentiality, taking all appropriate steps to support the legitimate victim.
- The degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the child, young person or vulnerable adult who is always the primary concern.
- We keep statistical information about the number of harassment or bullying concerns that have been reported and how they were resolved. This is in order to plan and offer effective services.

7. Training

- We provide regular, comprehensive training to our staff and maintain an effective tutorial programme to enhance students' understanding of key safeguarding topics, including harassment and the process for reporting concerns.

8. Related Policies and Procedures

- Safeguarding Policy
- On line safety policy

- Acceptable Behaviour Policy
- Staff harassment policy
- Employee code of conduct
- Freedom of speech policy

9. Definitions and key terminologies

The following definitions are drawn from KCSIE, the Equality Act 2010, Office for Students guidance and recognised safeguarding and online safety resources.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating another person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for another person. It may be deliberate and overt or may be subtle, indirect or unintentional. Harassment does not necessarily happen face-to-face; it can occur via written and electronic communications, such as telephone and email, SMS and on social media sites. Such behaviour might interfere with a student's learning, working, living, or social environment, or induce anxiety, fear or poor attendance on the part of the person who feels harassed.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated or persistent, unacceptable, unwanted, offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, which may include an abuse or misuse of power through ways which have the purpose or effect of undermining, humiliating, denigrating or injuring the recipient emotionally or physically. Bullying includes cyber bullying, prejudice based bullying and discriminatory bullying.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct (words, behaviours and conduct) of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of college. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a person's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment includes sexual comments, sexual jokes, sexualised name calling, unwanted sexual messages, online sexual harassment, sharing of sexual images, AI-generated sexual images and misogynistic behaviour and attitudes. sexual harassment should never be dismissed as a banter or "part of growing up" or "boys being boys".

Consent

Consent is a voluntary, informed and freely given agreement to participate in an activity or to do something with full awareness. Consent cannot be given where there is coercion, pressure, manipulation or where a person lacks the capacity to make the decision.

Victimisation

Subjecting someone to detriment (i.e harm or disadvantage) because they have made, supported or intend to make a complaint or allegation under equality legislation.

Flaming

A situation where an on-line conversation, usually though not necessarily between two people, escalates into an intense argument with words or insults exchanged in the 'heat-of-the-moment'. In real life, a 'moment' can pass extremely quickly, but on-line moments can linger for hours or days. Most 'flaming' exchanges are insulting in nature.

Impersonation

Impersonation refers to instances where the perpetrator poses as the victim – usually by gaining unauthorised access to another person's online account – and behaves inappropriately to the detriment of the victim, e.g. by posting negative or inflammatory comments, or sending nasty or other inappropriate messages et cetera, as if they were from the victim. Alternatively, the perpetrator could try to pose fraudulently as the victim by setting up a new on-line account and taking a username which is the same or similar to the victim's name.

Outing

Outing is the sharing of personal or confidential information with others without the consent of the person who the information is about. E.g., the victim may disclose private information to, or share photographs or videos with, the perpetrator, who then passes this on to other people, causing embarrassment and distress to the victim because of the sensitivity of the information.

Trickery

A victim may be tricked into sharing personal, confidential, or sensitive information, e.g. when the perpetrator is impersonating someone whom the victim trusts. A victim may also be tricked when their own naivety or lack of judgement lets them down, for example by sharing such information with a complete stranger with whom it is impossible to make any judgements as to their motives or trustworthiness.

Trolling

Trolling is the term in current usage to describe the process by which a person (known as a ‘troll’) posts repeated negative, hurtful, inflammatory or irrelevant statements on forums, comment pages, or social networking sites, usually in an attempt to incite an online argument (flaming), emotional outrage from other users, or to target and upset an individual.

Harmful sexual behaviour

Harmful sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children or young people which is harmful or abusive. It may occur online or offline and ranges from inappropriate sexual language through to serious sexual assault.

Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is abuse by one child against another and can include bullying, physical abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, harmful sexual behaviour, coercive behaviour, economic abuse, abuse in intimate relationships, making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes, online abuse and initiation or hazing behaviours.

AI-generated abuse

AI-generated abuse includes the creation, alteration or sharing of images, videos or audio using artificial intelligence to humiliate, exploit, deceive, sexually harass or abuse another person, including deepfake or AI-generated nude or semi-nude images.

Misogyny

Misogyny refers to prejudice, hostility or discrimination towards women and girls. Misogynistic attitudes can contribute to sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour and sexual violence.

Image-based sexual abuse

Image-based sexual abuse is the creation, sharing or threatening to share intimate images without consent, including manipulated or AI-generated images.

Making or sharing nudes

Making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes refers to the creating, possessing or sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos by children or young people. Images may be self-generated, manipulated or AI-generated.

Hate incidents and hate crimes

Hate incidents and hate crimes are terms used to describe acts of hostility or violence directed at people because of who they are or who someone thinks they are. They are motivated by hostility or prejudice based on disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, or transgender identity (protected characteristics under the equality act). These can be incidents or crimes against a person or property and include materials posted online. When hate incidents become criminal offences they are known as hate crimes and can be prosecuted.

10. Further information

If you have any queries around the content provided within this policy

Or

If you require this policy document in an alternative format, please contact:

harassment@tameside.ac.uk

11. Location and access to the policy

This Policy and supporting policies and other documents are available via SharePoint on the College network and through course handbooks and inductions for students.

12. Policy status and version control

Version Control			
Author:	Assistant Principal – Student Services and Inclusion	Approved by:	Senior Leadership Team & Governing Body
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