



Queen Mary's College

# **Harassment and Bullying Policy**

Harassment and Bullying in the College or between members of the College is unacceptable.

All members of the College should respect each other.

See also Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy  
Guidelines for Safe Internet Use

This information is available in an alternative format such as large print. Please contact extension number 5300, if you need us to provide this information in a different way.

## **What is Bullying?**

Bullying can be defined as behaviour which is unwelcome or unacceptable and which results in the creation of a stressful or intimidating environment for the recipient. Importantly, Bullying is behaviour that YOU find unacceptable.

## **What is harassment?**

Harassment can be defined as any conduct related to age, disability, nationality, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic which is unwanted, unreasonable or offensive to the recipient or any conduct which affects the dignity of any individual or group of individuals.

Bullying/harassment can take many forms including:

- unwelcome physical or verbal advances
- physical or verbal abuse
- cyberbullying (offensive messages etc) by text, email, on the internet or social media – ie any form of electronic communication
- unfair treatment/ victimisation
- inappropriate jokes or banter (including when written down in any form)
- graffiti
- remarks which are embarrassing, insensitive, threatening, or intimidating
- aggressive behaviour
- inappropriate gestures
- offensive clothing or badge-wearing
- offensive pictures
- setting a person up to fail (e.g. impossible deadlines)
- excessive supervision
- abusive or offensive screen savers

## **Whose responsibility?**

It is the responsibility of ALL members of this College to ensure that the workplace, and our transport to and from college, are free from harassment or bullying. QMC takes reports of bullying extremely seriously, and will do all we can to resolve any issues, through mediation, support, and, where necessary, disciplinary procedures. In line with our statutory duty, we will refer any cases of bullying where a link to extremist threats or potential radicalisation is suspected to the appropriate authorities. As part of the monitoring process, incidents of harassment or bullying will be assessed annually by the Human Resources Director and Equality & Diversity Lead Teacher with the Assistant Principal, Personal Development, Welfare & Progression, and brought to Quality Group for further analysis.

We are aware that students with special educational needs, learning difficulties or disabilities may be more at risk from bullying, particularly bullying online. We include this in our curriculum and Induction and tutorial programmes, so that all students are aware of the risks associated with online learning, and that QMC does not tolerate any form of bullying. We have sections on our Firefly site about online risks, and about bullying.

### **What to do.**

If you feel that you have been harassed or bullied, or if you witness bullying or harassment, you have a number of options.

Remember that students can talk to the Counselling Service at any time and staff can talk to the Employee Support Line. These Services offer you an opportunity to talk, in confidence, about anything which is troubling you, and will help you to decide how to deal with your situation.

***If you are a student***, you could:

- Talk to the person concerned: it may be that they do not realise that they are causing offence or discomfort.
- Talk to your personal tutor or one of your subject tutors.
- Talk to the Assistant Principal, Personal Development, Welfare & Progression.
- Talk to your Assistant Principal or to the Deputy Principal.
- Talk to the Student Support Advisor or Wellbeing Team.
- Talk to the Equality & Diversity Lead Teacher.
- Talk to a member of the Student Union Committee.
- Use the 'Comments, Suggestions and Complaints' form and box, located at the Help Desk.
- Email [someoneotalkto@qmc.ac.uk](mailto:someonetotalkto@qmc.ac.uk) or text in confidence 07624 805400

***If you are a member of staff***, you could:

- Talk to the person concerned.
- Talk to your line manager, Director or another senior member of staff.
- Talk to the Human Resources Director

- Talk to your Union Representative.
- Use the 'Comments, Suggestions and Complaints' form and box, located near Help Desk.

## **What will happen?**

If you use the 'Comments, Suggestions and Complaints' box, your form will be looked at by the relevant member of staff who will then decide what to do. You will receive a reply telling you what action will be taken and the reasons behind this.

All the other options listed involve talking to someone.

The person you talk to will listen to what you have to say and talk over the situation with you.

Whoever you are, and whoever you talk to, it is important that you decide between you at the beginning of the first meeting whether the talk is confidential or not, and whether it is formal or informal. If it is possible that the matter will be taken further, or if it is a formal discussion, one of you ought to make a confidential record of what is said between you which you are both agreed on and which is dated. This could be important for future reference.

In most circumstances, if you agree, the person you talk to will try to resolve the matter themselves before taking it further. This will probably mean someone talking to the person(s) concerned, and trying to end the situation as quickly as possible. In student matters, any repercussions following on from this initial conversation will be referred straight to the Deputy Principal, or in serious cases, the Principal.

You can of course write a letter of complaint to the Principal yourself. Once this has been done, the College is obliged to do something to try to end the situation. Other people may have to get involved and disciplinary action may be taken. The full, formal procedure for students is set out in the *Students' Charter*. For staff, the procedure is set out in the *Grievance Procedure*, available from The Principal's Secretary.

Please note, in some cases, including hate crime, racism, physical attacks and cyberbullying, we are legally obliged to refer the matter to the police. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory material in any media, including internet sites, see §127 of the Communications Act (2003), The Malicious Communications Act (1988) and The Protection from Harassment Act (1997).

If staff would like further guidance on how to tackle student bullying or harassment incidents please talk to the Equality & Diversity Lead Teacher, The HR Director, Beth Linklater or to your Assistant Principal.

Dr Beth Linklater, June 2020

## Responsible Staff

Principal: Ali Foss (see Val Hayes to make an appointment)

Deputy Principal: Mark Henderson (see Caryn Betts to make an appointment)

Assistant Principals: Kate Need, Helen Henderson

Assistant Principal, Personal Development, Welfare & Progression: Beth Linklater

Student Support Advisors: Barbara Dossett, Chris Tuckwell

Equalities & Diversity Lead Teacher: Lisa Hotten

Human Resources Director: Sally-Anne Spooner

Counselling Coordinator: Eleni Pickett