

# STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

## DIGNITY AT WORK AND STUDY

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### 1: **POLICY STATEMENT**

- 1.1 Stranmillis University College is committed to equality of opportunity for all of its staff and students. It aims to provide a working and learning environment which is free from unfair discrimination and in which staff and students can fulfil their personal potential. Every individual in the College community should be treated with dignity and respect.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to assist in the development and promotion of a working and learning environment in which harassment and bullying are known to be unacceptable and where individuals have the confidence to deal with harassment without fear of ridicule or reprisals.

- 1.3 This policy aims to ensure that if harassment or bullying does occur, adequate procedures are readily available to deal with the problem and prevent it from happening again.
- 1.4 This policy applies to all members of the College community. Any incident of harassment or bullying will be regarded extremely seriously and can be grounds for disciplinary action including dismissal or expulsion.

## **2: DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES**

- 2.1 Harassment is unacceptable behaviour, which can range from violence to more subtle behaviour such as ignoring an individual at work or study. Harassment may be physical (such as unnecessary body contact), verbal (e.g., offensive jokes) or non-verbal (e.g., ostracising or isolating an individual or sending unwanted emails).
- 2.2 It subjects an individual or a group to **unwelcome** attention, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, offence or loss of privacy. It is **unwanted** by the recipient and **continues** after an objection is made, although a **single incident** may be serious enough to constitute harassment and justify a complaint.
- 2.3 Differences in attitude, background, experience and culture can mean that what is perceived as harassment by one person may not seem so to another. Harassment will have occurred if any reasonable individual deems it to have occurred.
- 2.4 The following list, while not exhaustive, includes some examples of behaviour which may be forms of harassment and bullying. If any individual experiences behaviour which they think may be harassment or bullying, please seek help, advice or information – see section 4 and Appendix 2 which list those whom you may wish to approach.

### Sexual Harassment:

- unwanted physical contact
- display of sexist pin-ups or pornographic material
- unwelcome advances, attention, invitations or proposals
- sexual innuendo
- suggestive comments, looks or attitudes or jokes
- stalking
- ridicule of a person who is gender re-assigning

### Racial Harassment:

- name calling or ridicule resulting from cultural differences
- verbal abuse
- racist jokes
- references to an individual's skin colour

- unnecessary comments or intrusive questioning about racial issues or origins

#### Harassment on Grounds of Disability or Health:

- uninvited, patronising or unnecessary assistance
- prejudging an individual's capabilities without reference to them
- excluding a person with a disability from social events or meetings
- offensive behaviour relating to HIV or AIDS
- offensive language, mockery, taunts or jibes

#### Harassment Relating to Sexual Orientation:

- homophobic comments or jokes
- innuendo or gossip
- expressing stereotypical assumptions
- threats of disclosing sexual orientation

#### Harassment Relating to Age:

- derogatory remarks or behaviour
- expressing prejudicial assumptions about abilities based on age

#### Harassment on the Grounds of Religious or Political Affiliation or Conviction:

- treating an individual unfavourably because of their membership or non-membership of a Trade Union
- embarrassing or derogatory comments
- drawing unwelcome attention to an individual's religious or political convictions
- religious or political jokes
- display of pin-ups/posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags, emblems

#### Personal Harassment:

- spreading malicious rumours
- insulting remarks about personal appearance or personal circumstances
- bullying an individual because of personal dislike or personality clash
- indiscriminate bullying because of own levels of workload, pressure or stress
- procuring or sending inappropriate/offensive material via e-mail or the internet. (Staff and students should be aware that internet use and the content of e-mails may be monitored and recorded centrally - please see Acceptable Use of IT and User Guidance Notes for further information. Both of these are available on the College website and form part of the process of logging into a user account.)

## Bullying:

- shouting and sarcasm
- abuse of power, position or knowledge
- threats relating to academic progression, promotion or ongoing employment
- continually setting objectives with impossible deadlines or setting unachievable tasks
- excessive and unwarranted supervision or monitoring
- inappropriately removing duties and/or responsibilities
- derogatory remarks or unwarranted criticism
- refusal to delegate, where appropriate
- taking credit for someone else's work, but failing to take responsibility if something goes wrong
- exclusion or isolation
- unreasonable refusal to co-operate, or withholding information/ deliberately supplying wrong information so that another person is less able to do their job effectively
- subjecting someone to group pressure
- physical violence

- 2.5 Bullying is a particular form of personal harassment. It is threatening, abusive, intimidating or insulting behaviour that may be an abuse of power, position or knowledge.
- 2.6 It can happen in public or in private. It is not confined to open, derogatory remarks or aggression, but can also be subtle and devious, resulting in an individual being singled out, demeaned or devalued or feeling vulnerable or threatened.
- 2.7 Bullying can be carried out by an individual or group of individuals. It can involve someone in a position of authority bullying someone in a lesser position. Bullying of people in a more senior position by people in a lesser position and between people in an equal position may also occur. All are equally unacceptable.
- 2.8 Bullying can be unpredictable, irrational and sometimes unseen by others. It can cause an individual to feel isolated. It may have possible implications for physical and mental health and the College would strongly advise anyone who feels that they are being subjected to bullying or harassment to take steps to address the situation.
- 2.9 Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff who report to them perform their duties to an acceptable standard. Bullying does not, therefore, include legitimate, justifiable, appropriately conducted criticism of an employee's behaviour or job performance. An assertive management style would in itself not constitute bullying. However, if assertiveness on the part of the manager gives way to aggression, it is likely to become destructive rather than constructive and could constitute bullying.

- 2.10 Vigorous speech and comment, academic debate and legitimate management of the performance of staff or students can be distinguished from bullying behaviour. However, care should be taken to ensure that neither staff nor students are made to feel intimidated.

### **3: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **3.1 Rights**

- 3.1.1 As members of the College community, members of staff and students have rights that they can expect to be upheld under the Dignity at Work and Study Policy.

- 3.1.2 Individuals have the right to:

- be treated with respect and dignity
- work and/or study in an environment free from harassment, bullying, intimidation and victimisation
- expect the appropriate level of confidentiality to be extended to you
- equitable treatment, irrespective of status
- request education about this policy
- be accompanied to any meeting, relating to circumstances of alleged harassment or bullying by an Equality Adviser, work colleague, Trade Union representative if you are a member of staff, or fellow student (such as the SRC President or a member of the SRC Executive) or College employee if you are a student.

- 3.1.3 If a person believes that they are being harassed or bullied, they have the right to:

- seek support and assistance from identified sources (see Section 4: Help, Advice and Information)
- decide the level of action they wish to take if they believe they are being harassed or bullied i.e. informal action, formal action or no action
- raise a complaint, be heard and be taken seriously
- make a formal complaint
- to be protected from victimisation, due to raising a complaint.

- 3.1.4 If a person has a formal complaint made against them, they have the right to:

- an initial assumption of innocence pending the outcome of an investigation
- be clear about the nature of the complaint
- have a copy of the written complaint together with any relevant documentation and material
- a fair hearing.

## **3.2: Responsibilities**

3.2.1 To ensure that individuals' rights are upheld and that an environment free from harassment and bullying can be achieved and maintained, members of the College community have responsibilities that must be fulfilled.

### Staff and Students

3.2.2 All members of staff and students have responsibility for:

- familiarising themselves with the Dignity at Work and Study Policy
- contributing towards a positive working and learning culture and environment in the College
- respecting the dignity of all members of the College community
- contributing towards preserving individuals' confidentiality by not participating in rumours or gossip
- challenging instances of harassment and bullying, where they feel able to do so
- co-operating, as necessary, with investigations into complaints of harassment or bullying
- identifying institutional issues and raising any concerns.

3.2.3 If a member of staff or student believes they are being harassed or bullied and wish to have the situation resolved, they are responsible for:

- identifying the problem and playing their part in resolving the issue
- seeking help and support as soon as possible
- providing the evidence to support the complaint in the recommended format (see Section 7)
- giving the College the opportunity to resolve the issue, at the lowest level which this individual feels is appropriate
- seriously considering the options for resolution
- making reasonable efforts to make the recommended solution work
- accepting that if they decide to take no action, it may not be possible for the problem to be resolved.

3.2.4 Managers:

In addition to the responsibilities that apply to them as employees, those who manage staff also have a responsibility to:

- support the institutional culture of respecting the dignity of the individual, and to act as a role model
- discuss and raise awareness of the Dignity at Work and Study Policy
- provide guidance to staff on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour at work

- challenge instances of harassment and bullying that occur within their own area of management responsibility
- enable complainants to take action without fear of repercussions or victimisation
- fully play their role, as outlined above, in ensuring that the workplace is free from harassment and bullying.

3.2.5 Where appropriate, there will be occasions when it is necessary for a manager of people to:

- support the complainant
- educate the alleged harasser or bully
- make a decision about an informal complaint in the absence of clear evidence by weighing the balance of probabilities, based on the information presented
- attempt to achieve a quick, low level resolution, wherever possible
- arbitrate between staff
- work with the parties to re-establish working relationships.

3.2.6 It must be recognised that those in positions of authority have both a right and responsibility to discharge managerial duties. In so doing they may need to adopt a firm or assertive style, but they should take care not to demean, devalue or intimidate staff or students.

3.2.7 Those in managerial or supervisory roles have a responsibility to promote a culture free from unacceptable behaviour, and to react to any allegations of harassment/bullying as quickly as possible. In the same way, those responsible for student welfare must react to such allegations appropriately.

#### **4: WHERE CAN I GET HELP, ADVICE AND INFORMATION?**

4.1 If you feel that you are being harassed or bullied, you may be reluctant to make a complaint, hoping that if you ignore the problem it will go away. This rarely happens and it is essential that you have the necessary support and information to enable you to address the problem and deal with it effectively.

4.2 The following people can assist you:

- An Equality Adviser (if you are a staff member) - the College has a network of Equality Advisers. These are volunteer members of staff who are available and willing to provide support to any staff member who feels they are being harassed or bullied. Your chosen Equality Adviser will listen to you and you can expect not to be blamed, judged or have assumptions made about you. The Adviser will help you review your options and support you through the process of deciding upon, and taking, any appropriate action.
- a member of the HR department (if you are a staff member)

- your Line Manager or a more senior line manager (if you are a staff member)
  - a Trade Union representative (if you are a staff member)
  - a member of the Student Support Team (if you are a student)
  - Occupational Health (staff or students)
  - President or SRC Manager (if you are a student)
- 4.3 The names and telephone numbers of the people who can offer you support and advice are listed in Appendix 2.

## **5: CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 5.1 Confidentiality is understandably an area of concern for most people when they decide to discuss a problem of harassment or bullying. You can be assured that when you approach an Equality Adviser or an internal contact (as outlined in Section 4), your confidentiality will be respected. Everything you discuss will remain confidential, if that is what you wish, unless the Equality Adviser or internal contact judges that there is an unacceptable risk to you, another person, or to the College. If this is the case, the situation will be discussed with you and your contact will refer the matter to the Human Resources Manager, if you are a member of staff, or to the Vice Principal, if you are a student.
- 5.2 There may also be occasions when, in order to give you the best possible support, your Equality Adviser or internal contact may need to seek advice from someone else in the College. If this is the case, your permission will first be sought and your identity will not be conveyed to the third party.
- 5.3 As far as reasonably practicable, strict confidentiality will be maintained throughout all investigations. However, there may be a need to refer to witnesses or directly involve others. Where it is necessary to interview witnesses, the importance of confidentiality will be emphasised. It will be explained to witnesses that any breach of confidentiality may lead to disciplinary action.
- 5.4 All meetings and investigations will be treated confidentially, subject to any statutory requirements.

## **6: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES**

- 6.1 These procedures deal specifically with complaints of harassment and bullying. There are separate procedures for dealing with other types of complaints. For example, complaints about personal employment matters are covered by the grievance procedure. There are also student complaints procedures in place, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

## 7: WHAT DO I DO IF I BELIEVE THAT I AM BEING HARASSED OR BULLIED?

### 7.1 Preparatory Steps:

- 7.1.1 If you feel you are being harassed or bullied, do not feel that you must tolerate it, or that it is your fault.
- 7.1.2 Harassment or bullying is most effectively resolved if it is dealt with as early as possible and at as low a level as possible. If issues are ignored, endured or allowed to escalate, problems can be more difficult to solve.
- 7.1.3 Before taking action, you may wish to keep a diary of the instances of harassment or bullying to which you believe you have been subjected. It is important to note the date, time and place of the incident, exactly what was said or done, the context in which it was said or done, how it made you feel and the action you took (if any). You should also note the names of any witnesses who were present and retain any related documents. This information will be relevant if you decide to make a formal complaint at a later stage.
- 7.1.4 If you decide to make a complaint you can choose from a number of options open to you. These are explained in the following paragraphs.

### 7.2 Informal Action:

- 7.2.1 You have a number of options for informal action, which are:
- **meeting with the alleged harasser or bully**, explaining to them the details of the problem, making it clear you find their behaviour unacceptable and asking them to stop. If it seems daunting to do this alone you can ask someone to accompany you (see list of sources of support in Section 4). For example, in the case of staff, an Equality Adviser can facilitate the meeting or act in a supportive/advisory capacity.
  - **writing a letter to the alleged harasser or bully**, explaining to them the details of the problem making it clear you find their behaviour unacceptable and asking them to stop. You may wish to ask your Equality Adviser or SRC President to help you compose the letter. If you send a letter, you should keep a copy of what was sent. On receipt of a letter an individual usually asks to meet to discuss the letter, so you should be prepared for this possibility.
  - **asking someone to speak to the alleged harasser on your behalf**. It is rare that this resolves the problem and it is much better if you can keep control of the situation yourself. If you feel intervention on your behalf would be helpful, it is preferable that you

approach the Human Resources Department or the Vice Principal.

- **taking no action.** This means not going ahead with informal or formal action. Some people find it helpful simply to talk over the problem and take no action. This is perfectly acceptable. Alternatively, you may decide to adopt an appropriate response to the harasser or bully that can help resolve the situation. However, if this is what you decide upon, you need to recognise that the situation may continue and the College will not be able to resolve the problem for you without your permission.

7.2.2 If you decide to take informal action, ideally your approach should be assertive, confident and direct. Assertiveness is about upholding your own integrity and dignity whilst, simultaneously, recognising the right of others to behave in the same way. Some basic guidance for behaving assertively when speaking to an individual you feel has harassed or bullied you is given in Appendix 1.

7.2.3 As stated in Section 5 - Confidentiality, your Equality Adviser or other adviser will maintain confidentiality except where they judge there is an unacceptable risk to you, another person or to the College.

### **7.3 FORMAL PROCEDURES**

7.3.1 If informal attempts have been unsuccessful, or if the behaviour is too serious to be dealt with informally, you can make a formal complaint.

7.3.2 A formal complaint must be submitted in writing to

- the Equal Opportunities Officer, currently the Human Resources Manager, if you are a member of staff; (if a complaint is about the Human Resources Manager, it should be directed to the Principal);

or

- the Vice Principal if you are a student. (If a complaint is about the Vice Principal, it should be directed to the Principal);

7.3.3 It must specify the name(s) of the alleged harasser(s), clearly identify what the complaint is about, with details of specific incidents including dates, and names of witnesses if there are any.

7.3.4 If your complaint is about the Vice Principal, the Principal or a Governor, you should raise the matter with the Governing Body in writing via the Chair of Governors. Governors are expected to adhere to the Board's Code of Conduct. Any complaints about the Chair of Governors should be referred to the Head of the Higher Education Division in the Department for Employment and Learning.

7.4 Formal Action:

- 7.4.1 Where informal action has proved ineffective, is inappropriate, where there has been a recurrence of previous harassment or bullying, or where a serious incident has occurred you have the option of raising a formal complaint. Once raised, the College has responsibility for investigating the formal complaint in order to protect the complainant and give the alleged harasser or bully a fair hearing.
- 7.4.2 The procedure is instigated when the complainant submits a letter of formal complaint to the Equal Opportunities Officer if the alleged harasser or bully is a member of staff, or the Vice Principal if the alleged harasser or bully is a student. The letter should be as concise as possible and contain details of the incident/s as indicated in Section 6.1.2. Care should be taken that the content of the letter focuses on the actual complaint/s and is not defamatory because, in the interests of natural justice, the alleged harasser or bully will have the right to receive a copy of the formal letter of complaint.
- 7.4.3 Following receipt of the formal complaint, the Equal Opportunities Officer or Vice Principal will establish an investigation team, which will comprise of two officers (including a member of the Human Resources Department if either the complainant or alleged bully/harasser is a staff member), one of whom will act as a note taker. Both will have been specially trained to carry out this task. You may ask that a member of the investigation team is the same gender as yourself.
- 7.4.4 The team will arrange to interview you (the complainant) to clarify any points in the letter of complaint, to request the names of witnesses to the incident/s and any relevant material.
- 7.4.5 The team will meet with the alleged harasser or bully and apprise him/her of the nature of the complaint. A copy of the formal letter of complaint will be provided to the alleged harasser or bully at this stage. He/she will also be asked for the names of witnesses to the alleged incident/s.
- 7.4.6 The investigating team will scrutinise the complaint and materials provided and, on this basis, formally interview the alleged harasser or bully and witnesses.
- 7.4.7 If, following all these meetings, any further points have emerged which require a response from any of the parties, the investigating team will meet the relevant people to discuss these.
- 7.4.8 From the information obtained from the investigation, the investigating team will prepare a report, with conclusions and recommendations for action for the appropriate senior officer. It is anticipated that a full report will be presented to the appropriate senior officer within 5 weeks of a full investigation commencing. The investigation team will decide whether or not the complaint is upheld and will advise the appropriate

senior officer accordingly.

7.4.9 Based on conclusions arrived at, the senior officer will decide on the appropriate action to be taken. Examples of action might include:

- further discussion between the complainant and the alleged harasser or bully
- providing guidance to the complainant and/or the alleged harasser or bully
- personal development for either or both of the parties (e.g. team building, anger management)
- counselling or any other measures considered appropriate for one or both parties
- no action
- disciplinary action. If disciplinary action is decided upon, the appropriate Disciplinary Procedure will be adhered to.

7.4.10 In cases where the working relationship has broken down irretrievably a transfer may be considered.

7.4.11 The above list is not exhaustive. Action will be decided upon, taking account of the circumstances of individual cases.

7.4.12 Where there is insufficient corroborated evidence produced, it may be necessary for the investigating team to decide on the merits of the case, based on the 'balance of probabilities'. This is an established principle enshrined in employment law, which enables the College to weigh the information obtained and, on this basis, reach a judgement.

7.4.13 Where a formal complaint has been made at the point at which a member of staff or student is leaving the College, the complaint will be investigated. If the complainant is unavailable, the Equal Opportunities Officer or Vice Principal will decide upon the most appropriate method of investigation.

7.4.14 An investigation is normally completed within 25 working days of receipt of the formal complaint.

7.4.15 This procedure does not replace or detract from an individual's statutory rights under sex discrimination, fair employment and treatment, disability or race relations legislation, or the Health & Safety at Work (NI) Order, or the Protection from Harassment (NI) Order.

7.4.16 An adapted version of the above procedure will be used by the Chair of Governors to deal with any complaint about the Vice Principal, the Principal or a Governor. Governors will be substituted for College officers where required.

7.5 Complaints to the Fair Employment/Industrial Tribunal/Court:

7.5.1 Where an individual employee pursues a statutory course of action regarding harassment and the College is named as Respondent in any such case, if the College's investigatory procedure has determined that the harasser is at fault, then the College reserves the right to enjoin the harasser in any such proceedings as Co-respondent with all of the attendant costs and penalties that may ensue.

## **8. WHAT DO I DO IF I AM ACCUSED OF HARASSMENT OR BULLYING?**

8.1 This policy makes it clear that any form of harassment or bullying is a serious offence.

### **8.2 Rights**

8.2.1 If an individual is accused of harassment or bullying this person has rights that s/he can expect to be upheld by the College. These include the right to:

- be considered innocent of the alleged offence unless an investigation leads to a different conclusion
- support from an Equality Adviser, work colleague, Trade Union representative if the individual is a member of staff; or fellow student or College employee, if the allegation is made against a student
- defend yourself
- a fair hearing
- an appropriate level of confidentiality
- request training or personal development to resolve the issue.

8.2.2 If a formal complaint is brought against an employee or a student, s/he can also expect:

- to obtain copies of relevant documents and materials pertaining to the complaint
- to refer the investigating team to witnesses
- to discuss the conclusion and decision with the Equal Opportunities Officer (in the case of staff members) or the Vice Principal (for students)
- that the College will address any instance of unfounded or malicious complaint against a student or an employee.

8.2.3 If the outcome of an investigation results in disciplinary action against a staff member or a student, the individual has the right to:

- expect the College to comply with the appropriate Disciplinary Procedure
- be accompanied to any disciplinary meeting, if s/he so wishes, by an Equality Adviser, work colleague, Trade Union representative (in the case of a member of staff), SRC President or fellow student or College employee, (in the case of a student)

- appeal.

### **8.3 Acceptable Behaviour**

8.3.1 Types of behaviour that constitute harassment or bullying are outlined in Section 2 - Definitions and Examples.

8.3.2 Many cases of alleged harassment are 'not meant to be taken seriously' by the harasser. However, the College believes that someone experiencing such incidents is often far more adversely affected by them than the alleged harasser thinks. Where the problem is bullying, it may be that a particular management style is having a detrimental effect on the individual. In either case, the individual's work, study and/or health may be suffering.

8.3.3 The Dignity at Work and Study Policy is intended to stop any form of behaviour that is felt by the individual involved to be unacceptable. What is acceptable to one person may not be so to another. If someone believes an individual is harassing or bullying him/her, that person may take informal or formal action against the alleged perpetrator.

### **8.4 Informal Action**

8.4.1 If an individual is approached informally, the aim of the meeting is to resolve the issue and to avoid formal action. If an employee or student is approached informally, the College advises the individual to look at the behaviour in question and consider whether it can be modified. One should bear in mind that it is how the other person feels about the incident/s, not what was intended, that leads to an allegation of harassment or bullying. If an individual believes that s/he is being wrongly accused and therefore is not prepared to change his/her behaviour, the individual may find the complainant wishes to take the matter further.

8.4.2 If a member of staff or a student is approached informally about an alleged offence, it may be helpful to obtain the support of an Equality Adviser, work colleague, Trade Union representative (in the case of a member of staff), SRC President or fellow student or College employee (in the case of a student). This person may accompany the individual, if s/he so wishes, at any informal meeting.

### **8.5 Formal Action**

8.5.1 If an individual is approached as part of a formal complaint against him/her, s/he is advised to seek the support of an Equality Adviser, Trade Union representative or work colleague (for members of staff), or fellow student or College employee (for students). The person against whom the allegation is made is entitled to be accompanied by this

person at any formal investigation into an allegation of harassment or bullying.

- 8.5.2 The procedure adhered to when investigating a formal complaint of harassment or bullying is explained in Section 7 - Formal Action. Possible outcomes are also outlined.
- 8.5.3 If the outcome of the investigation results in the investigation team considering that a malicious complaint has been made, appropriate action will be taken against the instigator.

## **9: VICTIMISATION**

- 9.1 If an individual makes a complaint of harassment in good faith, s/he and anyone who gives evidence in support of the complaint will be protected from any form of victimisation as a result of having made the complaint – whether or not it is upheld.
- 9.2 Victimization means treating someone less favourably because that individual has
  - made a complaint; or
  - perhaps is likely to; or
  - may be helping someone else who is making a complaint.

Victimization does not need to be on grounds of gender, marital status, race, religion or disability. An example could be – moving someone to another job against their wishes who has supported a colleague making a complaint.

- 9.3 The failure to protect an employee following a complaint may give rise to a further act of harassment.

## **10: CRIMINAL OFFENCES & LEGISLATION**

- 10.1 The College expects members of staff and students to exercise their legal rights so as to protect themselves in cases where a criminal offence may have been committed.
- 10.2 If a criminal offence such as harassing phone calls, physical assault, indecent exposure or rape takes place nothing in any of the College's policies is intended to prevent or dissuade an individual from contacting the Police and the College reserves the right to involve the police in the event that information relating to a possible criminal offence is brought to its attention.
- 10.3 As well as being a disciplinary offence for either staff or students, certain incidents of harassment may also render individuals liable to prosecution in courts of law, under either civil or criminal legislation.

## **11: VEXATIOUS OR MALICIOUS COMPLAINTS**

11.1 The Dignity at Work and Study Policy exists to provide a fair means of resolving genuine complaints. Complaints of harassment or bullying are treated seriously by the College. The raising of unfounded allegations for mischievous or malicious purposes will be viewed as grounds for possible disciplinary action

Stranmillis University College will monitor all formal complaints of harassment and bullying and will review the effectiveness of this policy two years from implementation and thereafter on a regular basis. An annual report on the operation of the procedures will be made by the HR Manager to the Governing Body.

Approved October 2005  
Updated February 2010

It can be difficult to speak to a person you believe has harassed or bullied you, but it can be very effective, especially if you address the matter at an early stage. It can also help you regain control of the situation and improve your self-esteem, which may have been affected by the incident/s. The following strategies may help you to prepare for the discussion and to express yourself assertively.

- Identify your personal rights, wants and needs.
- Identify how you feel about the incident/s – for example, do you feel angry, embarrassed, humiliated, or is it affecting you in some other way?
- When describing your feelings, use 'I' statements instead of blaming the other person (e.g. 'I feel hurt', rather than 'You hurt me'). This helps to avoid defensiveness on the part of the person to whom you are speaking.
- Relate your statement about your feelings to some specific behaviour by the other person (e.g. 'I felt hurt when you said I had not completed the project on time without giving me the opportunity to explain the reason it was behind schedule'. This is clearer to the person you are speaking to than 'I felt hurt because you humiliated me').
- Be direct: deliver your message to the person for whom it is intended. Express your request in a few easy-to-understand sentences. Complicated explanations can mean that the person you are speaking to may not understand what you are trying to tell him/her.
- Try not to make assumptions about what the other person is thinking or feeling, about what their motives might be, or how they may react. Check things out with them – ask them for their views on the situation.
- Avoid sarcasm, character assassination or absolutes (absolutes often involve using words like 'You never .....' or 'You always .....'). Make sure that you are referring to the specific incident/s which you are bringing to their attention.
- Ask for feedback: 'Am I being clear?'; 'How do you see this situation?' Asking for feedback helps correct any misinterpretation people may have as well as helping others realise that you are open to communication, and are expressing an opinion or feeling, rather than a demand.
- Evaluate your expectations. Are they reasonable? Are you willing to compromise, if appropriate, in order to reach a resolution with the other person?

## USEFUL CONTACTS

## Appendix 2

Name and Designation	Extension	Telephone Number
Vice Principal		
Dr Clifford Boyd	261	(028) 9038 4261
Equal Opportunities Officer/ Human Resources Manager		
Ursula Doherty, HR	272	(028) 9038 4272
Equality Advisers		
John Cummings, Security	356	(028) 9038 4356
Barbara McConnell, Education Studies	373	(028) 9038 4373
Denise Mitchell, Education Studies	372	(028) 9038 4372
Éamon Phoenix, Subject Studies	299	(028) 9038 4299
Cilla Wagner, LSS	313	(028) 9038 4313
Student Support Centre		
Brian Booth, Student Support Officer	513	(028) 9038 4513
Brian Cummins, Widening Access	349	(028) 9038 4349
Fiona O'Donovan, Administrative Officer	510	(028) 9038 4510
Human Resources Staff		
Rosemarie McQuaid	480	(028) 9038 4480
Helen Robinson (Mon – Wed)	436	(028) 9038 4436
Occupational Health Contacts		
Ciara Matthews, College Nurse	446	(028) 9038 4446
Dr Denis Todd, Occupational Health Physician	-	(028) 9097 5520

## Students Representative Council Contacts

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Name</b>		<b>Extension</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
SRC Manager	Hugh Storey		500	(028) 9038 4500
<b>SRC Executive</b>	<b>Academic Year 2009/10</b>	<b>Academic Year 2010/11</b>		
<b>Designation</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Extension</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
President	Sara Lindsay	Sean McElhinney	324	(028) 9038 4324
Deputy President	Sean McElhinney	Jonny Harper	258	(028) 9038 4258
Secretary	Eddie Baird	Emma Byers	258	(028) 9038 4258
External Relations	Suzanne Kyle	Natalie Williamson	258	(028) 9038 4258
Entertainments Secretary	Peter Stewart	Paul Rea	258	(028) 9038 4258
Welfare Society	Rachel Green	Rachel Green	258	(028) 9038 4258
Publicity Secretary	Andrew Craig	Gregg Turnbull	258	(028) 9038 4258
Services Secretary	Callum Hannigan	Aaron Davis	258	(028) 9038 4258
Academic Secretary	Steven Condy	Callum Hannigan	258	(028) 9038 4258
Clubs/ Societies	Jonny Harper	Jeffrey Scott	258	(028) 9038 4258

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