

## GLOBAL COLLEGE MALTA

### STUDENT HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY

Global College Malta (the College) is committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination and affirms the right of all members of the College's community to be treated with dignity and respect. The College will not tolerate harassment of one member of its community by another nor sexual misconduct. The College takes allegations of harassment and sexual misconduct very seriously and may take action, including disciplinary action, in response to a complaint from a learner.

The College defines harassment as single or repeated incidents involving unwanted or unwarranted conduct towards another person which it is reasonable to think would have the effect of (i) violating that other's dignity or (ii) creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that other.

Harassment may be verbal, psychological, or physical, in person or via a virtual platform, or through other methods of contact. Harassment may occur in the course of an academic, social, or other activity either within the College or elsewhere in the context of a learner's membership of the College.

Unacceptable behaviour, whether intentional or not, can take a variety of different forms. The following descriptions are not exhaustive, but give an indication of the types of behaviour which the College considers to be unacceptable:

- making sexually offensive comments about dress or appearance, the display or distribution of sexually explicit material, or demands for sexual favours;
- engaging in harassment on the grounds of a person's sexuality (or assumptions about a person's sexuality) including making derogatory homophobic, transphobic, or bi-phobic remarks or jokes aimed at a particular person, offensive comments relating to a person's sexuality, refusal to acknowledge a person's gender or identity, or threats to disclose a person's sexuality to others;
- making offensive references to a person's race, ethnicity, skin colour, religion or nationality, dress, culture, background or customs which have the effect of ridiculing or undermining an individual or fostering hatred and/or prejudice towards individuals or particular groups;
- ignoring, disparaging, or ridiculing a person because of mistaken assumptions about their capabilities, or making offensive reference to an individual's appearance, in the context of their disability; and,
- controlling or coercive behaviour, such as pressure to subscribe to a particular political or religious belief.

Online harassment may take the form of intimidating, offensive, or graphic posts on social media sites or chat rooms, or communications by email, text, or instant messaging.

Sexual misconduct includes the following, whether or not within a sexual or romantic relationship, including where consent to some form of sexual activity has been given and then withdrawn, or if consent has been given on previous occasions:

- sexual intercourse or engaging in a sexual act without consent;
- attempting to engage in sexual intercourse or engaging in a sexual act without consent;
- sharing private sexual materials of another person without consent;
- kissing without consent;
- touching inappropriately through clothes without consent;

- inappropriately showing sexual organs to another person;
- repeatedly following another person without good reason; and,
- making unwanted remarks of a sexual nature.

#### Responsibilities of College students:

At all times:

- Students must ensure that they behave in a way that does not cause offence, humiliation, embarrassment or distress to others.
- Students must ensure that they are familiar with the contents and definitions of this document
- Students who perceive that they are being harassed or bullied should act promptly and should not wait until it reaches an intolerable level, or their well-being is jeopardised.
- Students who witness bullying, harassment or any incidents of unacceptable behaviour must not ignore it. They should report any instances of unacceptable behaviours, attitudes or behaviours to their tutor or to a member of the College's Academic Team.
- To ensure any complaints are made in good faith, are true and not vexatious or for personal gain.

#### Responsibilities of staff:

- To deal appropriately with any complaint of harassment/bullying, using the College's agreed procedures-
- To ensure that students are treated fairly, in a manner that does not cause offence, humiliation, embarrassment or distress.
- To watch for signs of bullying by others, be aware of what is unacceptable behaviour.
- Act as a source of advice to students.
- Staff who witness bullying or harassment incidents should not ignore it and, if they feel confident to do so, deal with the incident themselves using this policy for guidance.

#### Process of Handling Complaints & Disciplinary Actions

The following outlines the way the College will deal with instances of bullying, sexual misconduct or other instances of unacceptable behaviour related to this policy:

1. The College becomes aware of inappropriate behaviours and practices: the first stage is when a student approaches a member of College professional support staff, a member of the teaching faculty or a fellow student and raises a concern or when a member of College staff raises a concern.



STUDY WORLD

Global College Malta

2. **Investigation:** the College will carefully investigate the situation by talking to all parties with respect and empathy. The College will at all times seek to create a safe environment in which individuals who have raised a concern can talk freely and openly and feel safe from any repercussions. The College will also talk with the alleged perpetrator(s) in order to gain a better understanding of their perspective.
3. **Provide Advice and Support:** the College will support students by providing a person to talk to or refer to a professional if need be.
4. Taking Disciplinary action:
  - a. **First Complaint:** Once a complaint has been verified through conversations with all parties, the student will be asked to attend a meeting with a member of the Academic Team. In this meeting the seriousness of the situation will be outlined to the student. Depending upon the seriousness of the matter, a student will typically be issued with a verbal warning advising them that the behaviour(s) raised in the complaint against them are wholly unacceptable. The student will be advised that should such behaviour(s) continue then the student runs the risk of being immediately terminated. The verbal warning will be followed up with a formal email to the student documenting the meeting and the warning.
  - b. **Second Complaint:** If further complaints are made against an individual who has previously received a formal verbal warning under Stage One then, subject to College verification of these further complaints then the student will be called for a meeting and their studies with the College will be terminated immediately.

Any acts of violence or behaviour that are determined to be in contravention of the prevailing laws of Malta, will be reported by the College to the respective authorities.