

Rochdale Sixth Form College

**Student Disciplinary Policy
Conduct and Behaviour**

Student Disciplinary Procedure (Conduct and Behaviour)

Scope and Purpose

To provide a set of procedures to ensure that students who fail to meet the expectations of Rochdale Sixth Form College are treated with fairness and consistency, whilst taking into account the individual circumstances of each student. Good learning depends on reasonable standards of behaviour, both in, and outside of the classroom. We have high expectations at RSFC and all staff are expected to challenge unacceptable behaviour. By signing the learning agreement (the 'RSFC 10') at enrolment, students are accepting the terms and conditions of this policy which aims to ensure that staff and students can work in a safe and considerate environment that supports learning.

Student Disciplinary Procedure Summary

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to challenge and deal with inappropriate behaviour by students. In addition, if the situation warrants, a record of the incident should be logged on Cedar for information purposes. If serious misconduct is observed by a member of staff or by a member of the public or a student, the relevant Student Performance and Development Leader (SPDL) should be informed giving the name of the student and ID (if known) and details of the incident. If immediate action is needed, the SPDL will make the Associate Vice Principal – Student Performance, Progression and Welfare aware of the situation. If they are not available, any member of the Senior Leadership Team can be informed.

The Associate Vice Principal – Student Performance, Progression and Welfare, will decide whether the formal disciplinary procedure needs to be followed. If not, they will communicate with the SPDL and decide on an appropriate action and record their decision and outcomes on Cedar. If the Associate Vice Principal – Student Performance, Progression and Welfare decides the formal disciplinary procedure needs to be followed, the procedure outlined below will be invoked.

Section A

Warnings

Informal Verbal Warning

In most cases, the SPDL will make a professional judgement about whether an informal verbal warning is required. Where this is appropriate a record will be logged on Cedar that will detail the action that needs to be taken to improve behaviour, this may involve outside agencies as required, and an appropriate date for review (normally three months). If the student's behaviour has been acceptable at the point of review, the warning will be removed from their Cedar record. At this stage, it would be expected that parents/carers are notified by the SPDL and the reasons for the informal verbal warning be explained. The parent/carer should also be directed to login to Cedar so that they can view the nature of the issue and a summary of the conversation had between the SPDL and student.

If these actions are not completed to the agreed timescale then a stage 1 contract may be put in place by the SPDL and the parent/carer will be informed.

Stage 1 Contract

The contract should be a written statement of the expectations and improvements required from the student, and should be tailored to address the details of the specific case with an additional action plan. The student must be made aware that they have entered the formal disciplinary procedure, and their future at college could ultimately be at risk if they fail to comply. The details of the contract should be recorded on Cedar using the 'Pastoral log' and 'Manage Contract' (Conduct and Behaviour). Once this discussion has been had with the student and the bespoke criteria of the contract decided, the 'notification of student contract' letter should be sent home as soon as is practical. (See Appendix 2). If it is deemed appropriate that the parents/carers need to attend, a meeting to discuss the criteria of the contract then this will be agreed and the same process followed.

The contract must have a review date, when the SPDL will meet with the student to assess progress. Depending on the level of improvement made, the SPDL may decide to extend the contract, refer the contract to stage two or complete the contract where the requirements would end. In the instance of extending a contract, a new review date must be set.

In exceptional circumstances, where it is deemed that the student is failing to respond positively to the support on offer and no progress is being made, the SPDL in consultation with the Associate Vice Principal may decide to escalate this to a Stage 2 contract.

Stage 2 Contract

The Stage 2 contract follows the same procedure as the Stage 1 Contract, however it includes an explicit statement that failure to meet its requirements could result in the recommendation that the student leaves college.

Before initiating a Stage 2 contract, the Associate Vice Principal – Student Performance, Progression and Welfare or (in their absence) Associate Vice Principal – Curriculum, Standards and Effectiveness will normally call a meeting to which the student, their subject teachers, SPDL and their parents/carers will be invited. Following the meeting, and where a Stage 2 contract is deemed appropriate, this should be recorded on Cedar using the 'Pastoral log' and 'Manage Contract' (Conduct and Behaviour). Once this discussion has been had with the student and the bespoke criteria of the contract decided, the 'notification of student contract' letter should be sent home as soon as is practical. (See Appendix 2). The contract must have a review date, when the SPDL will interview the student to assess progress.

In the unlikely event that the student fails to meet the requirements of the Stage 2 Contract, the Associate Vice Principal (who was not present in the meeting detailed above) may call a further meeting to review the case. Consequently, a recommendation may be made to the Associate Vice Principal that the student should leave college. The Associate Vice Principal will then review all documentation and meet with the student and parents/carers. The outcome of this meeting will be either to allow the student to return to RSFC with specific conditions or to permanently exclude the student from college. The decision of the Associate Vice Principal will be confirmed in writing to the student, copied to parents/carers within 3 working days of the meeting.

Section B

Suspension

When it is alleged that gross misconduct has occurred (See appendix 1), the Head of College or Associate Vice Principal may suspend a student from college immediately. In this case, suspension is not a punishment but an opportunity for the college to investigate the allegations. During suspension, it is expected that a student will work from home and respond to communications from their SPDL within a reasonable timescale, normally one working day. It would be expected that parents/carers be informed as soon as is practical if a student is suspended.

Investigation

In the event of a student being suspended, an investigation must be conducted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (normally the Associate Vice Principal – Student Performance, Progression and Welfare) prior to any formal disciplinary action being taken. The interviews will be held with the student and any witnesses and detailed notes will be recorded. Following investigation, the decision may be made, that the matter can be resolved in the interests of and by agreement with all parties, without the need for a Disciplinary Meeting but by following procedures outlined in Section A.

Disciplinary Meeting

Normally the meeting will be chaired by the Associate Vice Principal – Curriculum, Standards and Effectiveness and will provide an opportunity for the evidence to be presented by the Vice Principal – Student Performance, Progression and Welfare, the student and any witnesses. If the student fails to attend, after receiving due notice and without good cause, the meeting may take place in his/her absence.

The outcome of the meeting will be either to exclude the student permanently or, to allow the student to return to college. Where a student is allowed to return to college additional sanctions/conditions or actions may be agreed (See section A). Where a student is permanently excluded, they will also be withdrawn from all examinations.

Following the meeting, a letter will be sent to the student, copied to the parent/carer outlining the reason for the decision and any additional sanctions/conditions/actions as appropriate and within 3 working days of the meeting.

Section C

Right to Appeal

An appeal may be made by the student against the penalty imposed by the Panel. This must be made in writing to the Head of College within 5 working days of the meeting.

APPENDIX 1

Instances, which might be considered gross misconduct, and therefore sufficiently serious to lead to suspension and referral to an investigation/disciplinary meeting include the following:

1. Violent, dangerous, threatening or intimidating conduct.
2. Bringing onto the college site any knives or other weapons.
3. Sexual, racial or other harassment of a member of the public, another student or a member of staff. (Verbal and through social media/electronic means).
4. Theft or unauthorised possession of any property of a student, the College or a member of staff or damage to college property (including the college building).
5. Persistent refusal to carry out reasonable instructions of a member of staff.
6. Abuse of, or dealing in, illegal drugs, serious incapability because of being intoxicated because of alcohol or illegal drugs.
7. Serious misconduct when the student is involved in an off-site activity organised by the College.
8. Abuse of College computer systems, involving for example, interference with or destruction of files or operating systems, and downloading or processing obscene or offensive materials.
9. Involvement in any activity, which may bring the college into disrepute or impact negatively on other students.
10. Cheating in examinations and/or plagiarism.
11. Smoking or vaping anywhere on the college site.
12. Inappropriate dress.
13. Inappropriate sexual behaviour.

This is not an exhaustive list and RSFC will determine whether an incident is deemed to be of sufficient seriousness.

RSFC staff have the right to search students with their consent and authorised members of staff will have the right to search students without consent if they have reason to believe that they will find stolen or prohibited articles.

In some instances of gross misconduct, RSFC may feel the need to refer the issue to the police or other relevant outside agency.

APPENDIX 2

Notification of Student Contract Letter – Conduct and Behaviour

Dear Parent/Carer,

As a result of concerns regarding your son/daughters conduct and behaviour, a decision has been made that they will be subject to a college contract. Please be aware that this is part of the RSFC formal disciplinary procedure.

A strict set of criteria has been agreed that is designed to support your son/daughter in ensuring that they conduct themselves in a manner that is appropriate of a sixth form college.

Delete the paragraphs below as applicable

At this stage, your son/daughter has been placed on a Stage 1 contract which has been set for a period of ** weeks. At the end of this time, the contract will either be ended, as we feel sufficient progress has been made, extended, if we feel that more work is needed to improve conduct and behaviour or referred to Stage 2 in exceptional circumstances if we feel there has been no response to this action.

At this stage your son/daughter has been placed on a Stage 2 contract which has been set for a period of ** weeks. As you are aware, there was insufficient progress made with regard to the Stage 1 contract and unfortunately, this next step is necessary. At the end of this time, the contract will be ended, either as we feel sufficient progress has been made or a meeting will be held if progress is not made which may result in your son/daughter being asked to leave RSFC.

At this stage your son/daughter has been placed on a Stage 2 contract which has been set for a period of ** weeks. Due to the nature of the incident, we feel that a Stage 2 contract is appropriate. At the end of this time, the contract will be ended, either as we feel sufficient progress has been made or a meeting will be held if progress is not made which may result in your son/daughter being asked to leave RSFC.

The specific criteria of the contract is available for you to view on Cedar using your login as normal. To access this, please login and select 'Pastoral Log' on the left hand side. The contract details can be found with a 'gold header' in the pastoral log chronology.

Please be assured that all is being done to support your son/daughter in fulfilling their potential and being successful in their studies and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on 01706 ***** or *.*****@rochdalesfc.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Student Performance and Development Leader/Associate Vice Principal