

Student Code of Conduct

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Community Values

William College is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful academic community where all students can thrive. This Student Code of Conduct outlines the expected standards of behaviour, ensuring that students act with integrity, responsibility, and respect in all aspects of college life. It aligns with sector-wide expectations, including the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (QAA), OfS Regulatory Framework, and the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023.

William College is a scholarly community dedicated to the pursuit of learning and research. Its core purpose is to provide high-quality teaching, foster academic curiosity, and promote research excellence. The College also supports the social and recreational needs of its students, ensuring a well-rounded academic experience. It is a community that values diversity and inclusion, and all students are expected to conduct themselves with consideration, courtesy, and respect—both on and off campus. Responsible behaviour is fundamental to maintaining the integrity of this academic community.

This Code applies to all students from the point of enrolment until graduation, including activities on-campus, online, and during off-campus college-related events.

1.2 Core values and expectations

All students are expected to:

- Respect others: Treat all students, staff, and visitors with dignity, ensuring a safe and inclusive learning environment.
- Uphold academic integrity: Maintain honesty in coursework, assessments, and research, avoiding plagiarism and misconduct.
- Exercise freedom of speech responsibly: Engage in respectful debate while ensuring speech does not incite violence or harassment.
- Follow institutional and Partner Universities policies: Adhere to all William College regulations, including health and safety, digital conduct, and disciplinary procedures.
- Engage in professional conduct: Display professionalism in academic and extracurricular interactions.
- Comply with UK Law: Act in accordance with UK civil and criminal law, including laws on discrimination, harassment, and disorderly behaviour.

1.3 Freedom of Speech & Academic Freedom

Under the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023, William College upholds the principle of free expression within the law.

- Students have the right to engage in open debate, express opinions, and challenge prevailing ideas.
- Freedom of Speech does not protect speech that incites violence, discrimination, or harassment.

- Students must respect the rights of others to express differing views without fear of intimidation or censorship.
- Public events, debates, and guest speakers will be facilitated in accordance with institutional policies, ensuring lawful and constructive dialogue.

Violations of this principle, including the disruption of lawful speech, may result in disciplinary action.

1.4 Digital conduct & Social media use

The OfS Regulatory Framework expects institutions to address student conduct online. As such, students must:

- Use digital platforms responsibly and not engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or the spread of misinformation.
- Ensure that social media activity does not harm the reputation of the College or breach confidentiality.

Respect copyright laws and avoid academic misconduct through AI misuse or contract cheating.

1.5 Commitment to Equality and Diversity

The College is firmly committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion, safeguarding the well-being of all its members. The Equality and Diversity Policy outlines the College's stance on sexual misconduct, bullying, harassment, unlawful discrimination, and victimisation. It provides a clear framework for students and staff to understand the processes for raising concerns, making disclosures, and seeking resolution.

1.6 Student Responsibilities and Expectations

As members of William College, students share the responsibility for maintaining a safe and supportive environment conducive to study, living, and working. By enrolling in a programme, students agree to abide by the College's **Terms and Conditions**, ensuring that their conduct aligns with the institution's expectations.

Expectation of Behaviour:

- Treat all members of the William College community with respect, avoiding offensive, discriminatory, or aggressive behaviour or language in any form, whether in person, over the phone, in messages, writing, or online platforms, including social media. Do not participate in bullying, threats, harassment, or coercion, nor encourage others to engage in such behaviour.
- Respect the privacy of other students and staff and not access, copy, or share private information or confidential information.
- Promote equity and inclusivity by valuing diversity at William College and refraining from discriminatory actions based on disability, gender, race, cultural background, religious or spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation, or physical appearance.

Discriminatory behaviour includes verbal, written, and online communication, as well as academic work.

- Not engage in sexual harm, including sexual harassment, assault, coercive control, stalking, or sharing intimate images without consent.
- Avoid engaging in criminal activities or any unlawful acts while on William College premises or participating in college-related activities.
- Not engage in behaviour that would compromise the integrity of the William College's activities by offering, promising, giving, receiving or soliciting a financial, academic or other advantage or favour as a means to influencing the actions of others, or otherwise securing a particular end.

1.7 Academic environment and conduct

The College is committed to fostering an academic environment that enables students to reach their full potential. Any behaviour that disrupts this environment or affects the learning experience of others will not be tolerated. Students who fail to meet these expectations may be asked to leave a teaching, learning, or research setting and may also face disciplinary action.

Students are expected to:

- Follow all William College policies, procedures, and rules, including academic regulations and guidelines governing the use of college services and facilities.
- Attend and engage with classes, be punctual and prepared for classes and other appointments.
- Be familiar with William College and its awarding partner's regulations regarding assessment applicable to their programme.
- Conduct their studies with honesty and integrity, and not engage in fraudulent behaviour, plagiarism, contract cheating or collusion or engage in any activities in which a student gains an unfair advantage. Students should comply with the College's Policy on Academic Misconduct.

1.9 Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Action

The Student Disciplinary Policy applies when a student is suspected of breaching the Code of Conduct. This section provides examples of unacceptable behaviour; however, it is not an exhaustive list. The College reserves the right to take action against any conduct that is deemed inappropriate.

The College considers misconduct to include any behaviour that:

- Improperly interferes with or negatively impacts the College's community, activities, interests, property, or reputation.
- Compromises the safety, well-being, learning, research, or student experience of its members, including students, staff, and visitors.

1.10 Scope of misconduct

Misconduct may occur in various settings, including:

- College-related activities such as teaching, placements, field trips, and extracurricular events.
- On-campus and off-campus environments, including digital platforms.
- During and outside of term time, particularly if it impacts the College's reputation locally or more widely.

1.11 Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to all students enrolled in programmes offered by William College. It also extends to students' visitors when they are on College premises or engaged in College-related activities.

1.12 Health and Safety

William College is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its students and staff and strives to provide a secure environment for work and study. Students must follow reasonable instructions from staff and adhere to safety regulations.

- Students should ensure that they do not take any action that endangers themselves or others. In case of an emergency, students must comply with any instructions given.
- Students should conduct themselves in a manner that does not compromise their own health and safety or that of others.
- Students must not intentionally or carelessly interfere with or misuse any equipment, substances, or materials on college premises. Smoking and vaping are prohibited inside all William College buildings, including corridors, foyers, toilets, and entrances. Students should also avoid smoking or vaping near designated no-smoking areas.
- Students must not possess, use, or supply illegal drugs on campus or in the surrounding areas. Any illegal substances found in a student's possession will be confiscated, and the student will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

1.13 Enforcement and Sanctions

The College takes any suspected breach of the Code of Conduct seriously. Violations will be addressed through the Student Disciplinary Policy or other relevant procedures. Sanctions will be applied consistently to uphold the College's standards, protect its members, and maintain its academic and professional reputation.

William College reserves the right to exclude, suspend or expel any student who contravenes William College' regulations, William College Student Code of Conduct as detailed in this document.

1.14 Criminal Investigations and College Disciplinary Processes

In implementing the Student Disciplinary Policy to address suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct, the College does not investigate alleged breaches of criminal law, nor does it determine whether a crime has occurred.

1.15 Sanctions for Breaches of the Code of Conduct

The Student Disciplinary Policy outlines the potential sanctions that may be imposed when a student is found to have breached the **Code of Conduct**.

1.16 Expected Conduct in Disciplinary Proceedings

All individuals involved in disciplinary proceedings—including students, their representatives, friends, staff, and witnesses—must conduct themselves with courtesy, fairness, and respect at all times. They are expected to engage with the process professionally and uphold its confidentiality. Failure to do so may result in further disciplinary action.

1.17 Specific Codes of Conduct

Given the diverse nature of higher education experiences, specific Codes of Conduct may be required for different areas within the College.

1.18 Local Procedures for Specialist Learning Environments

Certain specialist learning environments may have additional local procedures in place. Students enrolled in relevant programmes will be informed separately about any specific requirements they must adhere to.

2. Requirements

2.1 Consistency in the Application of Sanctions

The College is committed to ensuring fairness and consistency in applying sanctions for misconduct. The indicative behaviours outlined in the tables below represent actions that constitute a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action. These breaches are categorised as follows:

- **A:** Offences against individuals
- **B:** Offences relating to Safety, Health, and Well-being
- **C:** Offences against the environment
- **D:** Other offences

2.2 Determining Penalties

Each offence is accompanied by an example of the type of penalty that may be imposed on a student found to have breached the Code of Conduct. When determining appropriate penalties, the College will consider all mitigating and aggravating factors, including:

- Precedents from similar cases
- Any prior instances of misconduct by the student
- Individual mitigating circumstances

A comprehensive list of potential penalties is detailed in Appendix 1.

2.3 Transparency in Disciplinary Outcomes

The table of offences and associated penalties serves as a guideline to ensure that all students understand the potential consequences of breaching the Code of Conduct. It outlines possible penalties for both minor and major offences. However, this table is not exhaustive, and additional sanctions, conditions, or offences may apply. A full list of available sanctions is included in the Student Disciplinary Policy.

3. References:

- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Academic Appeals Policy
- Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy
- Assessment regulations and policies
- Terms and Conditions

February 2025

Appendix 1: Disciplinary Offences and Corresponding Sanctions

A. Offences against individuals

Offence	Example Sanctions
A1. Physical violence	Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension or Expulsion
A2. Harassment (including verbal, written, or digital communication)	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Written Apology, Non-contact Order Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Non-contact Order, Suspension, Expulsion
A3. Inappropriate behaviour or language (including verbal, written, or digital communication)	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology, Non-contact Order Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Non-contact Order, Restricted Access to College Facilities, Suspension, Expulsion
A4. Threatening behaviour or language (including verbal, written, or digital communication)	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Written Apology, Formal Warning, Non-contact Order Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Non-contact Order, Removal from College Accommodation, Restricted Access to College Facilities, Suspension, Expulsion
A5. Abusive behaviour or language (including verbal, written, or digital communication)	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Written Apology, Non-contact Order Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Non-contact Order, Removal from College Accommodation, Restricted Access to College Facilities, Suspension, Expulsion
A6. Creating an offensive, intimidating, hostile, degrading, or humiliating environment	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology, Non-contact Order Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Non-contact Order, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
A7. Sexual misconduct (including harassment, assault, abuse, or any non-consensual conduct, including online or digital platforms)	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Non-contact Order, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
A8. Bullying or unwanted behaviour directed at an individual or group	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology, Non-contact Order Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Written Apology, Non-contact Order, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
A9. Hate incidents motivated by hostility or prejudice	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology, Non-contact Order Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Written Apology, Non-contact Order, Suspension from Specific Areas, Suspension, Expulsion
A10. Discourteous, disrespectful, or uncooperative behaviour towards staff, students, or visitors	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Written Apology, Non-contact Order, Suspension from Specific Areas, Suspension, Expulsion
A11. Failure to disclose identity or attempting to obscure identity when required by College staff	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology
A12. Disruptive behaviour affecting lectures, exams, events, or College administration	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension from Specific Areas, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
A13. Anti-social behaviour, including intoxication-related misconduct	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Written Apology, Non-contact Order, Suspension from Specific Areas, Suspension, Expulsion

A14. Distribution or publication of offensive, threatening, indecent, or illegal material (including online content)	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension from Specific Areas or Facilities, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
A15. Participation in or organisation of initiation ceremonies involving coercion, humiliation, or harm	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension from Specific Areas, Suspension, Expulsion
A16. Fraud, deceit, deception, or dishonesty involving the College	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
A17. Making or encouraging covert recordings without prior authorisation	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology
A18. Harassment, victimisation, or discrimination based on a protected characteristic	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Written Apology, Non-contact Order, Suspension from Specific Areas, Suspension, Expulsion

B. Offences relating to Safety, Health, and Well-being

Offence	Example Sanctions
B1. Possession, use, or supply of illegal drugs, misuse of prescription drugs, or possession of weapons	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension from Specific Areas, Suspension, Expulsion
B2. Failure to evacuate during a fire alarm or returning before clearance is given	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension from Specific Areas, Removal from College Accommodation
B3. Tampering with safety equipment, such as fire alarms or extinguishers	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning
B4. Unwarranted activation of fire alarms	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Removal from College Accommodation
B5. Smoking or vaping outside designated areas	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension from Specific Areas, Removal from College Accommodation
B6. Allowing unauthorised access to College facilities using a student ID	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension, Expulsion
B7. Trespassing or unauthorised occupation of College premises	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension, Expulsion
B8. Engaging in behaviour likely to cause injury or harm	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension from Specific Areas, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion

C. Offences against Property and the Environment

Offence	Example Sanctions
C1. Theft within the College or College-owned accommodation	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension from Specific Areas, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
C2. Damage to property, unauthorised use of College property, or interference with installations	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Compensation for Damages, Suspension from Specific Areas, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
C3. Breach of the Code of Conduct by a visitor for whom a student is responsible	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Compensation for Damages, Non-contact Order, Suspension from Specific Areas, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
C4. Bringing animals onto College premises (excluding assistance dogs)	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology
C5. Misuse or unauthorised use of College premises or property	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension from Specific Areas, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
C6. Internet abuse, such as accessing inappropriate or illegal content, or spreading malware	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension from Specific Digital Services, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
C7. Unauthorised access to confidential information or attempting to breach College security systems	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension, Expulsion

D. Other Offences

Offence	Example Sanctions
D1. Failure to comply with the Student Code of Conduct	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension from Specific Areas, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
D2. Making false, frivolous, malicious, or vexatious complaints	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension from Specific Areas, Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
D3. Breach of the College's IT Acceptable Use Policy	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension, Expulsion
D4. Failure to comply with a previously imposed disciplinary sanction	Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Formal Warning, Written Apology, Suspension from Specific Areas, Suspension, Expulsion
D5. Failure to adhere to attendance monitoring policies or misuse of electronic monitoring systems	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Suspension, Expulsion
D6. Conduct that damages the College's reputation or harms relations with the local or wider community	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion

D7. Failure to declare a criminal conviction that may reasonably impact the College's reputation or community relations	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
D8. Failure to comply with precautionary measures imposed under the Student Disciplinary Policy	Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Formal Warning, Written Apology, Suspension from Specific Areas, Suspension, Expulsion
D9. Conviction for an offence outside the College that may impact College safety or reputation	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning, Written Apology Stage 2 Formal Disciplinary Panel Hearing: Removal from College Accommodation, Suspension, Expulsion
D10. Consumption of alcohol or drugs in classrooms	Stage 1 Formal Disciplinary Meeting: Formal Warning