



Student Support Policy and Procedure

***'A relational approach to
understanding behaviour -
Ready, Respectful, and Safe'***

DEPARTMENT	STUDENT SERVICES
DATE ISSUED	JANUARY 2025
REVIEW DATE	AUGUST 2025
VERSION	2.2

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Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Purpose	4
3. Scope	4
4. Responsibility	5
5. Policy	5
Expectations And Standards Of Behaviour	6
6. Procedure	10
Taking Action When Expectations Are Not Being Met	10
Suspension and Permanent Exclusion	12
7. Appeals	15
Internal Appeals	15
External Appeals	16

Summary of Changes

Section/Page	Description	Rationale
3.3	Policy changes	Reflective of policies that this policy and procedure relates too
4.1	Minor amendments	To include all members that have overall responsibility of this policy
6	Minor amendments	To include correct job titles, small changes to time frames, meeting types, and clarity regarding suspensions and exclusions
7	Minor amendments	Changes made to Section 7 including amendments to complaints procedure.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Walsall College is committed to our agenda of 'Every Student Matters', this is achieved by investing in all students, nurturing character, and facilitating a wealth of opportunities that supports their meaningful transition into the future.
- 1.2 Walsall College is dedicated to cultivating an environment, where behaviour is at the heart of productive learning. All stakeholders are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour and encourage others to do the same.
- 1.3 In order for students to be successful at Walsall College, they need to develop secure relationships, with consistent staff, that enable them to feel safe, valued, and have the confidence to challenge themselves. It has been evidenced that relationships, belonging, and connectedness are vital for good mental health for all – especially for those who have experienced adverse childhood experiences, multiple relational loss, abuse, and trauma.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of the policy is:
 - To promote a culture of excellent behaviour through relational practice
 - To understand the feeling and need that often drives behaviour
 - To understand that student behaviour cannot be fully understood in isolation, without considering their individual differences
 - To provide high levels of support, as well as high levels of challenge, when addressing undesirable behaviours that inhibit a student's readiness to learn

3. Scope

- 3.1 This Student Support Policy ensures that everyone is treated fairly and with respect. Throughout the policy, where 'students' are referred to, this includes all provision types including those on our Apprenticeship programmes. It may be the case the employers or those who oversee industry placements in the workplace, bring forward concerns regarding behaviours and attitudes, which will also fall in scope of this policy.
- 3.2 This policy will see both staff and students working together, to create an environment that is positive and inclusive for all. This policy is underpinned by our 'Ready, Respect, Safe' agreement, that all students will become familiar with whilst on their journey at Walsall College.
- 3.3 Please read this policy alongside the ones referenced below:
 - Child Protection and Adults At Risk Safeguarding Policy

Ref – Student Support Policy and Procedure	Issue Date – January 2025
Page 4 of 16	Review Date – August 2025

- Risk and Vulnerability Policy

4. Responsibility

- 4.1 The overall responsibility for this procedure lies with all Director of Faculties and the Head of Student Wellbeing, Inclusion, and Safeguarding
- 4.2 All staff have a responsibility and, in some cases, a legal duty to act on concerns regarding student safety, behaviour, or conduct in line with the 'Ready Respect Safe' expectations and safeguarding procedures.

5. Policy

- 5.1 The aims of this policy are to:
- To promote a culture of mutual respect, tolerance, democracy, individual liberty, and shared expectations consistent with British Values
 - To set out clearly defined expectations which are defined in the 'Ready Respect Safe' agreement, to promote a secure learning environment for all members of the College community
 - For all stakeholders to model and positively reinforce excellent behaviour, instilling an environment that is welcoming, supportive, and friendly
 - To clearly map the consequences of undesirable behaviour, with an understanding of the ecological and environmental factors that negatively impact our students lives
 - To explore the factors that underpin behaviour, viewing these as potential vulnerabilities that may require internal or external agency support
- 5.2 This policy is for **all students** including those on apprenticeship programmes at Walsall College and will be applied equitably: that means not every student will be treated the same. Our approach is fair and will acknowledge, as well as consider, the different support needs as well as experiences of all of our students.
- 5.3 The Student Support Policy sets out the processes for addressing undesirable behaviour whilst on College campus or when associated with the College. This is a graduated approach with different layers of support, in an attempt to understand the feeling and needs that often drives behaviours displayed.
- 5.4 It is essential that students have a strong sense of belonging and connectedness to the people and the place. This will be achieved through the varying support mechanisms that are in place at Walsall College.
- 5.5 Our 'Ready Respect Safe' expectations (5.9) are shared with all students and they signed the 'Ready Respect Safe' agreement during induction. We bring the 'Ready Respect Safe' expectations alive throughout the year, we believe that this is best achieved through working with our students to develop a clearer idea of what is needed from them, in order to promote a calm, positive, and inclusive environment.

- 5.6 Relationships are at the core of what we do here, we understand that students benefit from clarity around boundaries and expectations. Agreements around behaviour are meaningful, clearly communicated, and regularly discussed.
- 5.7 Staff here at Walsall College will provide clear modelling, guidance, and instruction on how to behave, through a range of different strategies that are outlined in The Walsall College Way: A Staff Guidebook on Relational Practice.

Expectations And Standards of Behaviour

- 5.8 Through our commitment to developing students as Walsall College Graduates, all students are expected to demonstrate behaviours and attitudes which fosters a culture where every member of the community feels valued, accepted, and is able to be the best version of themselves.
- 5.9 The following messages detail and outline the 'Ready Respect Safe' expectations for student behaviour and attitudes:



**READY
RESPECT
SAFE**

**IT STARTS
WITH YOU.**

HOW HAVE YOU
PREPARED TODAY TO
BE **READY** TO LEARN?

 Walsall College

Ready

- Attend ALL timetabled classes
- Turn up on time
- Have ALL necessary equipment with you
- Have a positive attitude to learning
- For online learning be prepared to log in with a camera and microphone
- Complete classwork and homework to the highest standard
- Complete all examinations and assessments
- Only take water into classrooms and workshops
- Submit work within agreed deadlines
- Make sure all of your work is your own
- Make the most of enrichment and work experience opportunities
- Take pride in your learning
- Be ready to contribute and have your say

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Respect

- Do not use mobile phones in lesson, unless directed by your tutor
- Use positive language
- Respect others and your environment
- Behave in a way that does not offend others
- Keep the College environment litter free and tidy
- Promote British values;
 - Democracy
 - Rule of Law
 - Respect and Tolerance
 - Individual Liberty.
- Take pride in others

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Safe

- Wear your student ID pass at all times
- Be safe and keep others safe
- Stand up in corridors
- Understand Prevent duty
- Adhere to the College's IT Acceptable Use Agreement
- Follow Health and Safety rules and regulations at all times
- Take pride in yourself

6. Procedure

- 6.1 At Walsall College, students are championed and supported by all staff to ensure that their needs are met. This is at the heart of our approach, to enable all students to flourish and thrive not only whilst they are a student with us but for life after College.
- 6.2 We understand the importance and fundamental need of human connection. As human beings, we are hardwired to connect with others, it is what gives us purpose and meaning to our lives.
- 6.3 Connection at Walsall College means that we give our students our attention, we respect them enough to listen to them, we value their contribution to problem solving and we communicate to them that we are on their side – whether we understand, like or dislike the behaviour they are displaying.
- 6.4 We recognise here at Walsall College that there are a variety of factors that can have an impact on our overall capacity, functioning, and performance. Our ethos is that we will praise our students when things are going well and support them when things are not going so well.

Taking Action When Expectations Are Not Being Met

- 6.5 At Walsall College, we believe that actions taken to address behavioural issues must follow the principles of modelling appropriate behaviour and reactions, rather than a punitive approach.
- 6.6 For our students, developing an understanding of the consequences of actions, skills, and resilience, means they are more likely to respond differently over time. Resolving these issues through the formal Student Support Process should be the priority. As educators at Walsall College, we should always consider the context when interpreting behaviour.
- 6.7 Key premises of understanding behaviour through a relational lens:
- **Relationships come first** to create a positive culture of connection, inclusion, and respect
 - **Every behaviour is a form of communication**, there is a feeling or need that drives behaviour and must be viewed in the context of relationships, rather than an internal problem
 - **A non-judgmental, curious, and empathic approach** means we can focus on the feeling or need that drive behaviour, not the behaviour itself. This does not mean condoning undesirable behaviours or having no consequences
 - **Not all behaviours are a 'choice'** a positive choice is made in a calm, thoughtful, and an emotionally regulated manner. Poor choices that display undesirable behaviours are often made from an emotionally dysregulated state
 - **Maintain clear boundaries and expectations** with structures, routine, and consistency to create a climate of safety and care

- 6.8 Every student on entry to Walsall College will have access to the same educational provision:
- In receipt of high-quality teaching and learning
 - Be surrounded by consistent staff who demonstrate botheredness
 - Recognition through praise and feedback
 - Support from the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team, as well as an internal counselling service
 - Support from the Inclusive Support Team
 - Careers advice, work experience, and industry placements
 - Access to sexual health advice
 - Personal development delivered through a tutorial programme, with a range of awareness events throughout the year
 - Financial support for eligible students via our bursary
 - A dedicated security team to increase feelings of safety when present onsite
 - Access to the Student Union
 - A range of internal and external enrichment opportunities
 - Togetherall, a platform of free online mental health and wellbeing support, with 24-hour access
- 6.9 For whatever reason, if a student behaves in a way that contravenes the 'Ready Respect Safe' agreement, our formal Student Support Process should begin. **If a student has a Special Educational Need or an Education Health Care Plan in place, please seek guidance from Inclusive Support Team. If a student is Care Experience or is a Care Leaver, then please contact the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team.**
- 6.10 When staff are executing this policy, every tier of the policy it must be recorded on the Student Support System. It is important that this record is accurate and we can evidence what mechanisms of support have been put in place. The information must be well written, as this may be shared with external agencies.
- 6.11 Our first tier of support, is an Unpicking Conversation, this should take place with the student and relevant staff.
- 6.12 This Unpicking Conversation should be the first intervention to take place and the nature of this conversation should address: what has happened, who has been affected, and what needs to happen to move forwards. These should be recorded on the Student Support System, as a Tier 1.
- 6.13 Where a resolution is agreed, no further action may be necessary.
- 6.14 If there are multiple incidents where the 'Ready Respect Safe' agreement is not adhered to, that the Unpicking Conversations are not having the decided impact, the second tier is formalising these Unpicking Conversations into a Student Support Plan.

Ref – Student Support Policy and Procedure	Issue Date – January 2025
Page 11 of 16	Review Date – August 2025

- 6.15 The relevant staff members will agree what needs to happen and this will be documented in the Student Support Plan. It is important that the Student Support Plan is agreed and appropriate support is implemented.
- 6.16 Student Support Plans are to be communicated to parents/carers in writing within 5 working days of the meeting date, via the administrators in curriculum areas, for students under 18 years old and those students with Education Health Care Plans, who are not yet 25 years of age.
- 6.17 If the Student Support Plan is not having the desired impact and the student fails to engage in support, it is then escalated to the relevant Curriculum Delivery Manager, who will be supported by the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team and/or Inclusive Support Team depending on the nature of the concerns, and existing support in place.
- 6.18 Tier 3 of the Student Support Process, is where a meeting is to be held where parents/carers are invited if necessary, to attend with the student to discuss concerns raised and revise the existing Student Support Plan, if necessary.
- 6.19 The Student Support Plans from the Tier 3 are to be communicated in writing within 5 days of the meeting taking place, to parents/carers if our student is under 18 years old or has an Education Health Care Plan and is under 25 years of age.
- 6.20 Once staff involved with the student are confident that all support mechanisms have been exhausted and there is no way forward, CDMs can escalate these concerns to a Tier 4 Panel.
- 6.21 The Tier 4 Panel takes place weekly with all Faculty Directors and the Head of Student Wellbeing, Inclusion, and Safeguarding to review the information on the Student Support System. This is to ensure that all appropriate support and every opportunity has been given to the student to move forward positively.
- 6.22 If the Panel agrees that the student has exhausted all support and intervention, we will issue with a two-week notice period for termination of placement at Walsall College, which will result in an exclusion.
- 6.23 The student's place at College will be terminated at the end of the two-week period if they fail to engage in support and intervention, as this contravenes one of our College Redlines (6.31).
- 6.24 If the student is showing progress, their two-week period notice will be extended by a further two weeks. If progress is still being made, termination of place at College will be revoked. Panel or CDM will continue to monitor the student following redaction of Tier 4 intervention.

Suspension and Exclusion

- 6.25 Suspension will only be used in situations where it is not safe, or appropriate, to have a student on the premises and further investigation is required.

Ref – Student Support Policy and Procedure	Issue Date – January 2025
Page 12 of 16	Review Date – August 2025

- 6.26 Where a student is under 18 years old or has an Education Health Care Plan and is under 25 years of age, parents/carers will be contacted via a telephone call with this information.
- 6.27 If a student under the age of 18 years old has been suspended, we will inform parents/carers or emergency contact before they leave College premises.
- 6.28 All information must be recorded on the Student Support System, including the details of the suspension. Where the nature of the suspension is sensitive, we will record them on MyConcern and on the Student Support System as a safeguarding concern.
- 6.29 All students who are suspended will attend a reintegration meeting within 15 working days before entry back on site and engagement in onsite learning. However, depending on the nature of the suspension, may require further information from other agencies.
- 6.30 Where a student is under 18 years old or has an Education Health Care Plan and is under 25 years of age, the College will contact parents/carers in writing with this information.
- 6.31 The length of the Suspension will be decided on a case-by-case basis but will stay on the students record for a period of at least 12 months after the decision, depending on the nature of the Suspension.
- 6.32 Incidents resulting in Suspension or Exclusion will breach at least one of our College Redlines these include, but are not limited to:
- Suspected or in possession of a weapon/firearm/instrument with or without the intention of causing harm
 - Substance misuse - suspected to be under the influence, in possession of drugs or paraphernalia, alcohol, legal highs or banned substances
 - Deliberate acts of intentional harm, abuse or violence to any member of the Walsall College Community - this can be through aggressive, threatening, or dangerous behaviour including those of a sexual nature
 - Discrimination against a protected characteristic
 - Breaching Health and Safety regulations that could place an individual or others at risk of harm
 - Encouraging others to be involved in violence or conflict, including youth violence related incidents
 - Bullying and continually being unkind to others
 - Attempting to access inappropriate material online
 - Failing to declare a criminal conviction or an ongoing criminal investigation
 - Persistent refusal to engage in support and intervention
 - Safeguarding concern

Ref – Student Support Policy and Procedure	Issue Date – January 2025
Page 13 of 16	Review Date – August 2025

- 6.33 In instances where the situation presents an immediate threat to the safety and wellbeing of any member of the College community, we reserve the right to move straight to Suspension. We may also suspend where a threat cannot be fully determined, without an investigation taking place.
- 6.34 The College reserves the right to involve or refer instances to the Police or other agencies for any Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions.
- 6.35 Where students are enrolled to qualifications that involve working with children or protective services, we have a duty of care to consider their suitability for their chosen career path. We reserve the right to review a student's programme of study, at any point, when considering this duty of care.
- 6.36 Suspension can be requested by staff but must be authorised by any College Middle Manager, Senior Manager, or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 6.37 To minimise disruption to learning, we will attempt to keep Suspension time to a minimum and independent learning material will be shared with the student, so they can continue with appropriate study.
- 6.38 Exclusion is only used in extreme circumstances, where no other course of action is possible. This is when the behaviour or incident is deemed serious enough, to move directly to this sanction.
- 6.39 Exclusion is a decision that can only be made by a member of the Senior Management Team.
- 6.40 The person involved will cease to be considered a College student because they have broken their 'Ready Respect Safe' agreement with us in an irreparable way and represent a risk to the wellbeing and overall safety of others. As a result, the student will be excluded from accessing all College facilities, courses, systems, and premises, for a period of time as stated by the outcome letter they receive.

7. Appeals

Internal Appeals

- 7.1 It is important that students are aware of their right to appeal and that the appeal will be treated fairly. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal against the decision **within ten working days of our response**. If we do not receive an appeal during this period, this will conclude the process.
- 7.2 Appeals must be submitted within ten working days of the date of the outcome letter by email - feedback@walsallcollege.ac.uk or in writing to:
- Quality Assurance Team
Walsall College
Wisemore Campus
Littleton Street West
Walsall
WS2 8ES
- 7.3 If an appeal is received on behalf of a student who is 18 or over, **we must obtain their permission, prior to undertaking an appeal and disclosing any information**.
- 7.4 Appeals are considered by an independent Senior Manager, acting as the Appeal Lead.
- 7.5 A formal appeal meeting does not have to be held, but the Appeal Lead may feel they need to interview those involved to help them make a decision.
- 7.6 The Appeal Lead will conclude to either uphold the original decision or overturn it. In either case they will write to the complainant to make this clear and, where necessary, set out any next steps.
- 7.7 The Appeal Lead must keep written records of the review process and document them (the outcome and any associated alerts) on the Student Support system.
- 7.8 The Appeal Lead will be required to provide an update or an outcome within 15 working days.
- 7.9 Appeals are considered where:
- New evidence has become available.
 - It can be proven that College processes were not adhered to in a way that could have affected the outcome.

Ref – Student Support Policy and Procedure	Issue Date – September 2023
Page 15 of 16	Review Date – September 2024

External Appeals

Department for Education

- 7.10 If the internal appeals stage above **has been fully exhausted**, you can contact the DfE using the contact details below:

Ministerial and Public Communication Division
Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

DfE Customer Help Portal:

<https://customerhelpportal.education.gov.uk/access-the-enquiry-portal/>

- 7.11 You can access their Procedure for dealing with complaints about Providers of Education and Training by using this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/complaints-procedure>

- 7.10 The DfE will acknowledge your complaint and will let you know what will happen next.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

- 7.11 If your appeal relates **to a Higher Education (HE)** course and the internal appeals stage above **has been fully exhausted**, you can contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) using the OIA Online Portal: <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/myoia.aspx>

You can also download a PDF version from the OIA website:

http://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/34411/oia_digital_complaint_form_and_guidance_notes.pdf

Please return PDF versions by email to enquiries@oiahe.org.uk or by post to:

OIA
Second Floor
Abbey Gate
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Ref – Student Support Policy and Procedure	Issue Date – January 2025
Page 16 of 16	Review Date – August 2025