

Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedure

1. Rationale

Oxford English Language Centre (“Oxford”) is a community. Communities are built on respect for oneself and others. As a College, Oxford is committed to ensuring that its staff members, students and visitors are equally valued and treated with respect and to provide an environment which maximise the educational opportunities and outcomes for all students.

This Policy and the Code of Conduct will ensure that all members of the community are aware of the expectations. It will be promoted to students and parents/guardians/carers via:

- Oxford website;
- Orientation and Mentor group;
- student handbook; and
- school newsletters.

2. Definitions

Bullying is a repetition of unreasonable behaviour directed toward a student or a group of students or to a staff member that creates a risk to health and safety. Any form of bullying in class or outside class is strictly forbidden. This includes cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying is bullying that is done through the use of technology. For example, using the Internet, a mobile phone or a camera to hurt or embarrass someone constitutes cyber bullying.

Harassment is a situation in which a person engages in unwanted conduct which has the purpose or the effect of violating the other person’s dignity and/or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that other person, on any grounds of race, colour, nationality, or ethnic or national origin, gender, age, size, health status, disability, sexual orientation, politics, religion or beliefs. The reasonable perception of the other person’s behaviour constituting harassment will be taken into account. Harassment can be a “one-off” incident or a continuous behaviour.

3. Policy

Bullying and harassment in any form or manner are unacceptable. This behaviour breaches the proper and professional conduct. Oxford has a responsibility to provide a free bullying and harassment environment in both the teaching and learning sectors and encourages staff and students to develop such attitudes and skills to ensure that everyone is equally valued and treated with respect.

4. Procedure

Education & Communication

Staff, students and stakeholders of the Oxford’s community will be informed of the Oxford’s approach to anti-bullying and information relating to their rights and responsibilities will be provided to them.

All staff will be made aware of the legislative requirements relating to bullying and harassment. Please refer to the Australian Human Rights Commission website; <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/>.

Complaint Process

All forms of bullying and harassment are not to be tolerated. Any person who had encountered these behaviour at Ozford is to, in the first instance, ask the bully/harasser to cease such behaviour preferably in the presence of a representative or friend. The request to the offender can also be communicated in writing, outlining therein the reason(s) you feel the behaviour displayed by the perpetrator is offensive and the impact of such upon you.

Oxford's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures will be undertaken in the investigation and resolution of any such matters.

All claims of bullying and harassment in any form or manner will be taken up seriously and treated with upmost confidentiality basis, thoroughly documented and thereafter promptly and constructively addressed by the Head of Department.

If the behaviour continues, then the staff and students are encouraged to report the incident to the Head of Department with any documentary evidence that include dates, times and places (if available). This evidentiary documentation will be significant in the investigation and resolution upon the submission of a formal written Complaint.

The Head of Departments are responsible for addressing the behaviour of the alleged perpetrator and to provide all necessary support for the victim at Ozford.

Bullying and harassment behaviour will attract consequences consistent with the Oxford's Student Code of Conduct and the Oxford's Staff Code of Conduct.

Disciplinary Measures

Students who breach the policy will be subject to disciplinary action. These include:

- a verbal warning;
- extra duties;
- time limited withdrawal of privileges;
- time limited withdrawal from class;
- detentions;
- placed on conduct card;
- written warning;
- suspension/exclusion from Ozford; and
- Permanent expulsion/referral to the relevant authority for serious breach/breaches of law.

Oxford's staff members are advised to take the following into consideration when implementing disciplinary measures to ensure procedural fairness:

- nature of the behaviour;
- student age;
- circumstances surrounding the breach or breaches;
- interest, health, safety and wellbeing of the students and the community;
- impact on the student engagement;
- duty of care to the students; and
- the family circumstances of the student.

Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure and will only be implemented when other disciplinary measures including the adoption of all appropriate process have not generated a satisfactory outcome in the resolution of the situation. A student shall not be suspended for a period of time greater than nine school days in any one year.

Expulsion is a severe form of sanction to be used only in the most serious circumstances.

The Academic Director/Principal has the authority to make the final decision with regard to suspension and expulsion of the student.

Parents/guardians/carers of students under the age of 18 will be notified by a telephone call and /or a written notification in the cases of serious penalties such as suspension and expulsion. Records of breaches of expectations and disciplinary measure imposed will be retained in the student's file.

5. Feedback

Feedback or comments on this policy and procedure is welcomed by the Executive Management Team.