



**STUDENT COMMITMENT
AND
DISCIPLINARY PROCESSES**

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

September 2020

Introduction

When you enrol as a student at Solihull Sixth Form College you agree to an Enrolment Contract. This sets out the standards of commitment and behaviour which we expect of all members of the College community. If your behaviour or commitment does not meet these standards, the College will try to help you re-establish acceptable levels using the following process. If this does not work and your behaviour or commitment to study does not return to acceptable levels, you will have broken your Enrolment Contract and will be required to leave the College. The aim of the Commitment and Disciplinary process is to help you avoid this by making it absolutely clear to you what is expected of you and the consequences of failing to live up to your responsibilities.

The Key College Commitments are:

1. As a student, you make a full commitment to your studies. This means working to the best of your ability, engaging fully and promptly in all tasks set, and attending all your lessons, tutorials and other sessions on time.
2. The College makes a full commitment to supporting your study with the best possible resources and teachers, and to working with you to secure your success.
3. All members of the College community make a full commitment to working together in an atmosphere of mutual respect for each other and the College, and to following all College rules and procedures.

These commitments align with the College Mission Statement:

All members of the College community:

Aspire to be outstanding – academically, professionally and personally

Invest fully in all we do

and

Respect each other, ourselves and our environment

Informal Interventions

If you are not meeting these College commitments, staff will talk to you and remind you about your responsibilities. Initially, this may be informal and unrecorded. It might be security staff on the gate, subject teachers, Learning Resource Centre staff, or your Academic Coach. Whoever it is, you should think carefully about how you are behaving at College and respond positively so that things are not taken any further. These may be recorded on your record as a concern or a note.

Commitment Interviews

If any member of staff feels that informal interventions have not resolved an issue, they will set up a **Commitment Interview**. **Although this is not a disciplinary action, it is the start of the formal processes.** The member of staff will discuss with you how your behaviour or commitment is failing to meet the standards we expect, and set targets with you which will get you back on track. These will be recorded on Tyber, and your parents/carers will be informed. The member of staff will set up a review, usually for after two weeks. If you have sorted things out by that stage, the matter can be closed. If you have not, the member of staff may extend the monitoring period or decide that matters have now become so serious that formal disciplinary action must be taken.

You should note that any member of staff (teaching or support) can issue a Commitment Interview. If you choose not to cooperate with the process, you are making the situation worse by breaking your commitment to follow College rules and procedures and will probably be referred to more senior staff for a Behaviour Contract.

Commitment Interviews will be triggered by behaviour such as lateness or poor attendance; unsatisfactory behaviour anywhere in the College; poor work levels; rudeness, lack of respect or behaviour which disrupts the learning of others.

Behaviour Contracts

If the Commitment Interview process fails to help you restore the levels of behaviour and commitment we expect, you will be referred for a Behaviour Contract. Your parents/carers will normally attend such a meeting where you will be required to set up a formal Behaviour Contract, which sets out what you must do **urgently** to secure your continued membership of the College.

This is your last chance to sort out these problems. The Contract will set out precisely the improvements we need to see and establish a time when these will be reviewed. If you make some progress by your review date, the contract may be extended, but only once. At this stage, you need to choose between altering your behaviour and commitment, or leaving College. You will not be able to continue with us if the problems identified continue.

Disciplinary Panel

At the end of the review period, the member of staff you have been working with will refer you to a Disciplinary Panel if the targets set have not been met. This is the final stage of the College's disciplinary system and should be treated **very** seriously. The Panel is made up of two senior members of staff including either the Principal or one of the Vice Principals. The Panel has the authority to take any action up to and including permanent exclusion from the College.

The Disciplinary Panel is a formal hearing of your case. The member of staff who led on your Behaviour Contract will present the issues that have led to the Panel Hearing. You will be able to respond formally to these. We expect you to be supported at the Panel Hearing by parents/carers or another close family member. In cases where parents/carers are not fluent in English, you may arrange for another friend or family member to attend to act as a translator. If this is the case, you are asked to inform the College of the name of the additional person. No other parties are allowed to be present in the hearing. If the Panel members feel that all other College interventions have been exhausted, they may decide to exclude you or may set other requirements to be met if you are to continue as a student. These could be that you pay your own examination and assessment fees; that you undertake some form of 'community service'; or that you agree certain conditions or limitations to your life as a student. Failure to meet any conditions set would lead to exclusion.

Appeals

If you feel that a Disciplinary Panel has acted unfairly or not followed College procedure properly, you are entitled to appeal to the Chair of the Local Governing Body. Details of how to do this are sent out with the formal letter informing you of the outcome of the Panel.

Suspension and Serious Misbehaviour

Some behaviour is too serious to be addressed through the Commitment Interview process and this will trigger immediate disciplinary action: either a Behaviour Contract or Panel Hearing. This is most likely in serious cases, for example fighting, bullying, harassment, matters involving the Police or other external agencies, fraud or deliberate serious misuse of College IT systems, etc. This is not an exhaustive list of behaviours that the College considers to be serious misbehaviour.

The College also has the right to suspend students from attending College if there is any danger that continued attendance might compromise this process and create the possibility for accusations of intimidation. It is usual for all parties involved in serious allegations to be suspended during an investigation, and this is not a disciplinary action. Failure to follow the requirements of suspension **is**, however, a disciplinary offence. In cases of suspension, parents/carers will be notified.

Any senior member of staff acting on behalf of the Principal has the authority to suspend a student. If this happens, the Principal and parents/carers will be informed immediately and every effort will be taken to help you continue with your studies while you are suspended.

In some cases, a member of staff may instruct you to leave the College immediately and return at a pre-arranged time for an interview. This is usually to allow the member of staff to find out more about what happened. This is **not** a formal suspension, but failure to follow the member of staff's instructions is likely to lead to formal suspension, so it is sensible to comply.

Failure to attend Behaviour Contract meetings or Disciplinary Panels

Every effort will be taken to set these meetings at times which enable you and your parents/carers to attend. If there are unexpected reasons why they cannot attend at short notice, it is vital that the College is informed as soon as possible so that an alternative date and time can be set. If the College exhausts all reasonable attempts to set up the meeting and fails, the meeting can be held without all parties present. If a student does not attend a meeting without an acceptable reason, the College may decide to suspend them pending attendance at the meeting. If a student is already suspended, this may be extended.

Feedback and Monitoring

If you, as either a student or parents/carers have comments or suggestions concerning the principles or operation of this process, please contact the Principal. We continually review the operation of our disciplinary procedure aiming to ensure that it is both fair and effective in helping the whole student body to maximise their success. Governors monitor the process on a regular basis which includes analysis of data covering such areas as the ethnicity and gender of students involved.

Disciplinary Panel Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions.
2. Introduction to the case, any evidence collected and student record, by the College Investigation Officer.
3. Clarifying questions from the Panel and the student about the case.
4. Presentation by the student including any evidence, demands, mitigating factors or apologies.
5. Questions from the Panel.
6. Closing statement.

The Panel will then adjourn to make its decision.

Martin Sullivan
Principal
September 2020