

Title	Bullying and Harassment Policy	
Aim	To state the College's policy and to outline the College's approach to bullying and harassment	
Related Policies / Documents / Procedures	<p>The Bullying and Harassment Policy is related to many of the College's other policies, but in particular to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grievance Procedure • Disciplinary Procedure • Whistleblowing Policy • Equality & Diversity Policy • Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy 	
Date for Implementation	March 2008	
Approved by	Board of Governors	March 2008
Date of next review	March 2011	
Distribution	Leadership Team All College staff	
Version Control	Previous Versions approved: No previous version	

Bullying and Harassment Policy

The Co-operative College is committed to providing a working environment for all its employees, associates and learners that is comfortable and free from all forms of bullying and harassment. The College adopts a zero-tolerance approach towards bullying and harassment and any employee who is found to have harassed or bullied a colleague will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal.

If the College has grounds to believe that an employee may have been bullying or harassing another employee, whether or not there has been a formal complaint, the College will instigate an investigation into the alleged bullying or harassment.

Any employee who believes that another employee's conduct amounts to bullying or harassment has the right to complain to their line manager. Employees are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying or harassment that they experience or witness so that the College can investigate and resolve the matter. The College will take all such complaints seriously and an employee who makes a genuine complaint of bullying or harassment will be protected and will not be penalised or victimised in any way.

As part of its investigations, the College will:

- Check whether the employee accused of bullying or harassment has received previous warnings for similar misconduct and whether any earlier warnings are active.
- Talk in confidence to any employees who may have evidence relating to the employee's alleged behaviour.
- Encourage employees who may have been witness to the employee's alleged bullying or harassment, or who may have knowledge of it, to give a written statement.
- Set up an interview with the employee accused of bullying or harassment allowing him/her the right to be accompanied at the interview.
- Allow the employee a full and fair opportunity to answer any allegations against him/her and/or explain his/her conduct.
- Assess objectively whether the employee's conduct appears to have amounted to bullying or harassment.
- Adopt an objective and balanced approach to the information gained as a result of the investigation.
- Avoid allowing personal views about the employee to influence the overall assessment of the conduct under review.
- Keep confidential records of the investigation and ensure that these are handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

The College reserves the right to suspend or temporarily redeploy either the employee suspected of bullying or harassment or the employee raising a complaint of bullying or harassment during the investigations, if it is considered in the interests of the individual(s) or the College to do so. Suspension in these circumstances does not constitute disciplinary action and will be on full pay.

As soon as possible following the conclusion of the investigation, the College will inform the employee suspected of bullying or harassment as to the outcome. The College will decide at that point whether or not it is appropriate to instigate disciplinary action against the employee. Any disciplinary proceedings will, where possible, be conducted by a different manager from the person who conducted the investigation.