



## **STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY**

### **POLICY STATEMENT.**

Beacon+ Limited is committed to the elimination of harassment, bullying and victimisation on any basis to include: age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, physical appearance and political views.

It is the right of every member of Beacon + Limited to work or study without fear of harassment, bullying or victimisation and we recognise that the safety and wellbeing of the students is central the success and reputation of Beacon+: we are committed to providing a supportive, friendly, safe and positive environment which is free from unacceptable behaviours so that students can learn in an atmosphere which enables them to get the most out of their learning experience.

Harassment, bullying or victimisation is unacceptable behaviour and are against Beacon+ culture and values. We have a zero tolerance approach as outlined in the student induction programme and all reports of harassment, bullying or victimisation will be investigated . This includes any unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. Harassment and/or bullying can be persistent or an isolated incident. Harassment can take many forms and may be directed at an individual or group of individuals. It is often subtle and therefore difficult to define.

It can be conveyed in a range of ways including: Physical Contact, assault or gestures, intimidation, aggressive behaviour, Verbal Comments, assumptions, stereotyping, unwelcome remarks, suggestions and propositions, malicious gossip, jokes and name calling which may be based on one or more of the following: age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity and caring responsibilities, physical appearance and political views.

Tone of voice can often be misconstrued but may also be used with the intention of causing offence. Non-verbal Offensive literature or pictures, gestures, body

language, invasion of personal space, graffiti and computer imagery, isolation or non-co-operation and exclusion from social activities.

### **Bullying and Cyber bullying.**

Bullying is behaviour, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group, physically or emotionally. One person or a group can bully others. There is usually a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victims to defend themselves. Cyber-bullying (including use of social networking sites) This is the sending or posting of harmful or cruel text or images using the internet or other digital communication devices.

Examples of cyber-bullying can be :

text messages-unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort,  
picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras – images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed

Mobile phone calls – silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible.

Emails – threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name.

Chat room bullying – menacing or upsetting responses to young people when they are in a web based chat room.

Instant messaging – unpleasant messages sent as young people conduct real time conversations online.

Bullying via websites – use of defamatory blogs, personal websites and online personal polling sites.

Comments, images etc. posted on social networking sites that make an individual feel threatened, intimidated and have an adverse effect on that individual's wellbeing.

Trolling – posting abusive, offensive message on social media which have the purpose of causing distress to an individual

The actions listed above must be viewed in terms of the distress they cause the individual. Motive is not necessarily relevant – “it's a joke,” is not a defence. It is the perceptions of the recipient that determine whether any action or statement can be

viewed as bullying. Beacon+ Limited has a statutory duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to provide staff, students and their parents and carers with support if cyber-bullying takes place.

Beacon+ Limited is able to conduct searches of internet use which includes chat rooms, messaging services and email. Using these facilities to harass others will be dealt with according to the Disciplinary Procedures

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Acceptable Use of IT and Email Policy.

Whilst it is recognised that students and staff may communicate with other students and staff via Beacon+ Limited social networking sites (e.g. Virtual Learning Centre, text tools, e-mail, Facebook, Twitter etc.), communication between staff and students via external social networking sites is not permitted. Any communication between staff/students and students/students that is inappropriate and/or of a nature that could constitute bullying or harassment will be subject to scrutiny if brought to the attention of a relevant member of staff, even if such communication is taking place outside of the Learning environment.

**Signs and symptoms that may help to recognise that bullying and/or harassment are taking place**

A person who is experiencing harassment and/or bullying may exhibit some or all of the following signs and symptoms:

Low self esteem

Not wanting to come to Beacon + either walking or on public transport

Poor attendance

Poor performance

Becoming withdrawn and anxious, interrupted sleep, nightmares

Feeling ill in the mornings

Personal possessions being damaged, money stolen

Unexplained cuts and bruises

Falling achievement in class work

Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away  
Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received  
Is afraid to use internet or mobile phone

If you notice any of these signs/symptoms in the people with whom you work and study on a daily basis, and if you feel able to do so, it may be appropriate to speak with them about your concerns, or make another member of staff aware or you should speak to your mentor. This policy applies to the whole Beacon+ community and covers issues of bullying or harassment that may occur between: student/student ; staff/student ; a student whilst on placement ; a student undertaking social activities.

Beacon+ Limited requires all staff and students to take responsibility for their behaviour and modify it if necessary, to ensure it does not cause offence to others. Beacon+ Limited will raise general awareness through initial learner induction programmes and staff training expecting all staff and learners to recognise they are responsible for adhering to and supporting the policy.

Students with a specific learning difficulty, which prevents them from accessing information through the above strategies, will be risk assessed and will be provided with the information in a way that meets their needs.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

Every member of staff has a responsibility to treat all students with dignity and respect and to ensure their own conduct does not cause offence or misunderstanding.

Mentors/Personal Tutors have particular responsibility to support their students through any investigation into allegations of bullying and/ or harassment.

Programme Managers have a responsibility to ensure that the delivery of the curriculum does not contravene the requirements or spirit of this policy.

All staff have a duty to ensure that any allegations of bullying and/or harassment are treated as serious and are investigated fully.

All staff who witness acts of bullying or harassment, or who are approached in confidence by students who are being bullied or harassed or by students who have witnessed such actions, have a duty to take action in line with this policy to prevent the reoccurrence of these acts. Since incidents of bullying and harassment can vary from teasing and horseplay which are not maliciously intended through to serious violence and intimidation, potentially threatening the life or mental health of the recipient, it is important to select the appropriate level of response: challenge the behaviour; explanation of why the behaviour is unacceptable, mediation; formal complaint.

All staff and students have a duty to challenge any bullying to which they are witness, as follows:

make sure that bullying is or was taking place is not merely horseplay in which the recipient was a willing participant,

make it clear to the alleged bully that their behaviour is unacceptable, and explain why

encourage and support the recipient if a student or staff member lacks the confidence to challenge bullying.

When the alleged bully has been challenged and told their behaviour is unacceptable, that may be enough to stop it. They may have been unaware that their behaviour is offensive or unwanted. If the bullying does not stop then the recipient may wish to seek a resolution through mediation or formal complaint as outlined above. This can be a distressing experience and it may be difficult for students to raise complaints directly. Accordingly, students may approach a friend or other appropriate individual (e.g. Mentor, Personal Tutor, student union, any member of staff) to raise the issue on their behalf. Any complaint of harassment and/or bullying will be investigated in a serious and sensitive manner, with due respect for all parties involved. Support and assistance to the complainant and the alleged harasser/bully will be offered.

The following websites may be useful to anyone who feels they are being harassed or bullied, or would just like to receive further

information. <http://www.antibullying.net> <http://www.bulliesout.com> <http://www.childline.org.uk> <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk> <http://www.beatbullying.org>

### **The procedure for Students**

It is recognised that the procedure for students will differ slightly if the allegation is mixed i.e. staff by student or student by staff or if a student is harassed or bullied while on work . If students wish to receive anonymous support they can use one of the national forums

<http://www.antibullying.net><http://www.bulliesout.com> <http://www.childline.org.uk> <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk> <http://www.beatbullying.org>

All staff can register a student's concern and this will be actioned by the Mentor/Personal Tutor. The Mentor/Personal Tutor will record the relevant details from the victim, witnesses and perpetrator on an incident form and complete the bullying log, which can be accessed by the safeguarding team.

Every effort will be made to ensure the safety of the victim. In serious cases, this may mean the perpetrator or perpetrators are suspended following further investigation or consideration of evidence. Police involvement may be considered. Every effort should be made to enable the perpetrators to receive awareness raising sessions about harassment and bullying and support in improving their behaviour if they remain on the premises.

**Staff – Student** Where a student wishes to lodge a complaint about a member of staff, then the student should put this in writing and hand it in to the Head of Beacon+ Limited or their mentor. The incident will then be investigated by an appropriate member of the management team. All evidence and witness statements will be reviewed by the investigating manager and a recommendation made. Where the student's complaint is upheld the manager will inform the student in writing. Human Resources will inform the member of staff of the decision in writing. The member of staff will also be informed of any further action that is deemed necessary under the Staff Disciplinary Procedure. Where the student's complaint is not upheld, then the manager will inform the student in writing. Human Resources and the member of staff's line manager will inform the member of staff of the outcome. If the student is found to have fabricated information, then the student will be dealt with under Beacon+ Limited Student Disciplinary Procedure.