

Academic Performance Procedures

Student Guidelines

Purpose

At Bedford College we are committed to providing a learning environment in which students can fulfil their potential and participate freely in college activities.

Principles

The Academic Performance Procedure is designed to:

- provide a framework for dealing with issues of academic neglect
- encourage all students to meet the high standards of attendance, punctuality and work performance expected by the college
- ensure that students know what is expected of them
- ensure that students understand the consequences of poor performance and academic neglect
- ensure consistent and just treatment for all regardless of disability, age, race, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity
- ensure procedural fairness

Like the Disciplinary (Misconduct) Procedure, this procedure is underpinned by the Student Code of Conduct, which clearly sets out what we expect from you in relation to all aspects of your college life. The Code of Conduct is shown at annex A, and highlights those areas which fall within scope of this procedure. Examples of causes for concern are included at annex B.

Equality and Diversity Statement

Bedford College is committed to the advancement and promotion of equality and diversity. We aim to provide a learning environment which values individuals equally regardless of disability, age, race, gender (sex), religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity.

It is our duty and obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between different groups

This procedure will be implemented in accordance with our equality and diversity policy, and students subject to action relating to academic performance will not be discriminated against or victimised on any grounds.

Procedure

If you are not meeting the standards we expect with your studies, including poor attendance and punctuality and not submitting work on time, you will be given support to improve by your personal tutor, course manager and subject teachers. Clear targets to address the relevant issue(s) will be set and reviewed.

The First Six Weeks

If your study/work performance causes us concern during the first 6 weeks of your course we will take action quickly to find out why. It could be that you have chosen the wrong course, or the course is not what you expected. It may also be that you are on the wrong level of course.

If this happens we will work with you to resolve the situation and, where possible, transfer you to a more suitable programme. In extreme circumstances you may be withdrawn from the course.

If, after the first six weeks and following the support outlined above, you still fail to achieve the required standard, further formal action may be taken under this procedure.

Framework

The stages of the academic performance procedure are as follows:

Stage 1

Where performance has not improved following tutorial/subject support and target setting, the staff member will:

- Arrange a date and a time to hold an academic performance meeting and notify you of the arrangements
- Inform your parent (or person with parental responsibility) if you are under 19 at the start of your course, unless you have previously withdrawn consent for us to do so
- If appropriate, issue you with a Stage 1 warning, recorded on an academic performance form and signed by you
- Keep a copy of the form in your file for 12 months
- Give you a copy of the form
- Give a copy of the form to Student Services
- Advise you that, if your performance does not improve, further action will be taken.

Stage 2 and Stage 3

If your performance does not improve action may proceed to Stage 2 and then Stage 3. In such instances the relevant staff member will:

- Prepare as Stage 1 above
- Conduct the meeting in line with this procedure
- Confirm the outcome in writing to you within 5 working days of the meeting, sending a copy, with a covering letter, to your parent (or person with parental responsibility) if you are under 19 at the start of the course, unless you have previously withdrawn consent for us to do so

- Keep a copy of the letter in your student file for 12 months
- Give a copy of the letter to Student Services.

Stage 4 (Exclusion)

If your performance still does not improve and it is felt you are unlikely to succeed on your course you may be excluded.

The procedure is as for Stages 2 and 3 above.

Lesley Ferguson
Director of Student Services

Code of Conduct for Students

This Code of Conduct is designed to encourage all students to meet the standards of behaviour, attendance and work performance expected by Bedford College. The highlighted points below relate specifically to areas of academic performance, which will be dealt with through this procedure.

Students at Bedford College are required to:

- ✓ treat everyone with respect, and make sure that their behaviour does not discriminate against anyone or make any other person feel uncomfortable
- ✓ respect the rights and interests of other College students, staff and visitors
- ✓ **attend all required activities regularly and punctually**
- ✓ **explain to their tutor or lecturer any reason for non-attendance**
- ✓ **take personal responsibility for their own learning and make active use of the learning resources and support services provided**
- ✓ **work hard and complete all work within specified deadlines**
- ✓ **take an active part in reviewing their progress with their tutor**
- ✓ **seek help from their tutor or Student Services if they need it**
- ✓ act safely so that they do not put themselves or others at risk and observe all health and safety rules of the College
- ✓ carry their ID card at all times on College premises and show it, on request, to any member of the College staff
- ✓ act with consideration for the College environment and other College users, e.g. by not spitting or dropping chewing gum and litter
- ✓ pay all fees and other costs for which they are liable, or seek advice from us if in financial difficulty
- ✓ abide by all College policies and procedures.

Students at Bedford College must not:

- × behave in a disruptive, aggressive, intimidating, bullying, indecent or unruly manner
- × disrupt or interfere with the education or learning of fellow students
- × display or circulate any material which is designed to cause offence or distress to others
- × misuse College property and equipment, including IT or health and safety equipment
- × be intoxicated while at College or be incapable of undertaking their course work because of excessive drinking or use of controlled substances
- × smoke anywhere other than in designated smoking areas, in accordance with the College's smoke-free policy
- × consume, possess or supply toxic, dangerous or controlled substances
- × make or send annoying, obscene, malicious or indecent telephone calls, letters, SMS messages, text messages or emails, or place malicious, offensive or extremist materials on any electronic or social media
- × cause malicious damage to, or theft of, the property of other students, staff or visitors of the College
- × use foul or abusive language
- × gain unauthorised access to, or make modifications to, College files or computer material
- × enter any part of the College which the student is not entitled to access
- × carry any weapon or any other object with the intention or purpose of use in a threatening way
- × falsify College documents
- × submit materials or work for assessment which have not been made or authorised by the individual, or which have been copied from other students or sources without acknowledging or referencing those sources (plagiarism), or allow one's work to be knowingly plagiarised
- × take part in any illegal activity
- × behave in any way which adversely affects the reputation of the College.

Examples of Causes for Concern

STUDY/WORK PERFORMANCE

We will take action if:

- you persistently fail to complete work
- you persistently hand work in late
- you work consistently below the standard which you are felt to be capable of achieving

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

We expect 100% attendance and will take action if you are absent without satisfactory explanation or your attendance causes us concern. An acceptable explanation must be given to your personal tutor or lecturer as soon as possible as to why you were absent.

If you arrive late, you are expected to apologise and take your seat quietly without disrupting the class. An acceptable explanation must be given to your personal tutor or lecturer as soon as possible as to why you were late.

Unexplained absence of 4 consecutive weeks may lead to the presumption that you have withdrawn. Where we are aware of on-going health or personal issues which are causing you to be absent we may keep you on the register, providing there is written evidence of active learning taking place (e.g. e-mail communications, record of contacts, work being completed at home).

Examples of situations where action will be taken are:

- you are absent for unacceptable reasons for more than 10% of any term
- you are absent for more than 3 days at once
- your attendance shows a pattern of decline
- your absences show a pattern e.g. every Monday morning
- you regularly arrive late without good reason.