

Quick guide to the Student Discipline Policy

Why does the College have a Student Discipline Policy?

The College encourages staff and students to engage positively with the College, and aims to keep all staff and students safe when participating in College activities. The Student Discipline Policy provides a mechanism for the College to deal with students whose behaviour is contrary to these expectations. The Policy has three stages.

Who does the Student Discipline Policy apply to?

The Student Discipline Policy applies to applicants, registered students, students on a break in study, students undertaking assessments without attending classes (exam only), students on writing up, alumni, former students who left the College without completing their studies, and anyone else who can reasonably be defined as a student.

What kind of behaviour can be investigated under the Student Discipline Policy?

Any suspected misconduct can be investigated under the Student Discipline Policy. This includes, but is not limited to:

- physical misconduct (such as slapping, punching, shoving);
- abusive behaviour (such as swearing, (cyber)bullying, making racist or otherwise inappropriate remarks);
- sexual misconduct (such as making unwanted sexual remarks, sexual assault, engaging in sexual intercourse without consent);
- damage to property;
- unauthorised use or taking of property (such as entering College buildings outside of normal hours; stealing College property; taking property belonging to another student);
- failure to follow College procedures (such as refusal to identify yourself to College staff when requested; disrupting College activities; falsifying documentation provided to you by the College);
- actions that may cause reputational damage to the College

You may wish to consult the College's [Principles of Dignity at Work and Study](#) for more information on the expected behaviour of all members of the Birkbeck community.

When and where does the Student Discipline Policy apply?

Students are expected to adhere to the Student Discipline Policy at all times when they are on College premises, and in the context of College activities. This means you should also behave appropriately when attending classes in non-Birkbeck buildings; when on placements, study abroad schemes or field-trips; and online when engaging with other students or staff of the College.

What can I do if I believe another student has breached the Student Discipline Policy?

If you believe another student has breached the Student Discipline Policy, you should submit a complaint via the [Student Complaints Policy](#). If you have been subject to misbehaviour from another student which may also be a criminal offence, you are encouraged to also report this to the Police.

If you need support due to the impact of the behaviour of another student, please access the College's wellbeing services via the [Student Services](#) team.

What happens if I am alleged to have breached the Student Discipline Policy?

College action depends on how serious the breach is. If it is minor, staff may conduct local action, such as excluding you from a teaching room for the rest of the class, or asking you to

leave a certain area of the College (like the Library). If this is not appropriate, a Department or Service may complete a local investigation into your conduct, and invite you to a meeting to discuss this or issue you with a warning.

If the allegation is serious, the matter will be referred to the Academic Registrar who may decide to have a College-level investigation, or convene a College-level hearing to consider the case.

Can the College suspend my access to College buildings?

Yes – any member of staff can ask you to leave a certain area of the College premises for a specified period. For example, a student who behaves disruptively in a seminar can be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the evening. If you are being investigated for a breach of the Student Discipline Policy, you may be suspended from using College estates or facilities, if the College deems there is a risk of harm. Any such suspension will be reviewed at least every four weeks, and you can appeal the College's decision to place this suspension on you.

The College will make every effort to ensure you still have access to support and advice even if your access is suspended; this may include being given permission to attend prearrange appointments with Student Services. Please note that under licensing laws, the staff at the George Birkbeck bar may take action to suspend you from the bar without going through the Student Discipline Policy.

Which sanctions can the College apply?

The College can apply different sanctions, depending on how serious a breach of the Student Discipline Policy has occurred. Sanctions can range from a formal warning to the termination of your registration as a student. The College may also bar you temporarily or permanently from (parts of) the College Estate. Examples of sanctions can be found in Appendix A of the Student Discipline Policy.

Can I appeal sanctions applied under the Student Discipline Policy?

You can appeal any sanction placed on you as a result of stage 1 proceedings by writing to the Academic Registrar within 14 days of receiving the stage 1 decision. If you are unhappy with the outcome of a stage 2 proceeding, you can request a review of the decision under stage 3 of the Policy. If you exhaust the College's internal procedures and remain dissatisfied you will be given a Completion of Procedures letter which enables you to pursue the matter with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE), should you wish to do so.

Further Advice

Birkbeck Students' Union has a dedicated advice service for students and can provide guidance and help with submitting casework (including assessment offence panels, disciplinary hearings, academic appeals and student complaints). You can reach a Student Advisor by email at su-advice@bbk.ac.uk or by telephone on 020 7631 6655.