



Personal Relationships Between Students and Staff Policy

POLICY DETAILS	
Policy Category:	HR
Version Number:	V2
Approving Authority:	Executive Board
Approval Date	17 September 2025
Date Reviewed:	6 Sep 2025
Date of next review:	1 August 2026
Author:	Lorna Smith
Owner (if different from above):	Principal
Version History	1. Updated and added policy details at the beginning. 2. Added a Purpose section and integrated the introduction. 3. Added a Scope section. 4. Renumbered the policy. 5. Rewrote the Procedure to align with the updated Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy and OfS Condition E6. 6. Added page numbers.
Related Policies / Procedures	Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy Conflict of Interest Policy Safeguarding Policy Disciplinary Policy Grievance Policy Student Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Procedure
Effective Date:	18 September 2025

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy sets out to protect the integrity of teaching, learning and assessment by preventing conflicts of interest arising from personal relationships between staff and students. It ensures fairness, safeguard student welfare and maintain professional boundaries.

1.2 A personal relationship of a sexual or other intimate nature between staff and students, with whom that member of staff also has a professional connection, gives rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest.

1.3 Such a relationship creates or may reasonably be perceived to create a risk of favouritism or abuse of authority. It also undermines the relationship of trust and confidence which is intrinsic to interactions between staff and students.

1.4 Members of staff are under a duty to act with integrity and not to place themselves in a position of actual or apparent conflict. A personal relationship in the circumstances described above is strictly prohibited (refer to Sexual Harassment and Misconduct policy).

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of staff, whether permanent, fixed-term, temporary, or agency. It also applies to all students enrolled on a course of study, including those registered on franchised programmes.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Member of staff: includes any person who is engaged by the college as an employee or worker and/or who holds a college office or post, as well as any person to whom the college makes available any of the privileges or facilities normally afforded to its employees. Where undergraduate students are working for the college, this policy will apply to them.

Student: includes any person pursuing a course of study leading to the award of a degree, diploma, or certificate of the college.

Professional connection: means any arrangement where a person in their capacity as a member of staff has any academic, pastoral, or administrative or similar responsibility for a student, including for supervising, tutoring, teaching, selecting, assessing, protecting, safeguarding, or providing a reference for, the student.

Personal relationship: means any association, however brief, of a sexual or other intimate nature, either in person or remotely (for example, via social media, email, or text messaging).

4. Procedure

4.1 In line with the Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy, the College prohibits personal relationships of a romantic, sexual, or intimate nature between staff and students who are currently enrolled.

4.2 This prohibition applies to all categories of staff, including academic, administrative, temporary, and visiting. It applies to all enrolled students.

4.3 Where a pre-existing relationship exists (for example, where a staff member's partner enrolls as a student), the staff member must disclose this immediately to their line manager or Programme Lead and to HR. HR will put in place a conflict-of-interest management plan, which may include changes to teaching, assessment, supervision, or reporting lines.

4.4 If a member of staff is unsure whether a relationship with a student should be disclosed under this policy, the member of staff *should* disclose it.

4.5 Following disclosure, the person to whom the disclosure has been made will ensure that appropriate safeguarding and conflict-of-interest measures are in place, and that the student is supported.

4.6 Any failure to declare a pre-existing relationship, or any attempt to conceal or misrepresent a relationship, will be treated as misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

4.7 Allegations or disclosures of staff–student relationships will be investigated by HR or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, depending on the circumstances. Investigations will be conducted confidentially and in line with safeguarding principles.

4.8 Students who knowingly engage in such a relationship may be referred to the Student Disciplinary Panel under the Student Code of Conduct.