



# QAHE Limited

# Respect for All – Student Disciplinary Policy

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## 1. Introduction

The Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, referred to as "Respect for All," is designed to establish a constructive framework for responding to breaches of the Student Code of Conduct. This policy aims to promote accountability and foster a positive learning environment for all students.

## 2. Our Values

QAHE Limited (QA Higher Education) upholds four core values that guide its community and enhance the learning experience for all students: integrity, respect, inclusivity, and excellence.

**Integrity** emphasises the importance of honesty and ethical behaviour in all interactions, fostering trust among students and staff.

**Respect** encourages a culture of understanding and appreciation for diverse perspectives, creating a positive and collaborative environment.

**Inclusivity** means that every individual, regardless of their background, is welcomed and supported, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued.

**Excellence** drives students and staff to strive for the highest standards in their academic and professional endeavours, pushing the boundaries of knowledge and personal growth.

Together, these values create a strong foundation for a thriving educational community at QA Higher Education.

## 3. Scope

- a) The policy applies to all enrolled students studying at any of our QA Higher Education locations, in London, Birmingham and Manchester, and extends to any applicant applying to study at QA Higher Education or one of our partner universities.
- b) By applying and/or accepting a place, you agree to comply with this policy and the University's regulations. The policy provides a framework, underpinned by and linked to each of the university Student Disciplinary Regulations. The relevant University Regulations will always take precedence when considering any action.
- c) The policy also applies to student conduct in the immediate vicinity of the campus, during work placements, on trips or visits, while representing QA Higher Education or the University in the community, and in the use of social media. Students are expected to uphold QA Higher Education's values in all their online interactions.



## 4. Policy Details

At QA Higher Education, we are committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive community where all members adhere to our shared values and uphold a culture conducive to safety and personal growth. We believe that maintaining high standards of behaviour is essential in helping every student realise their full potential.

To support this mission, we have established the Student Code of Conduct (Appendix 2), which outlines the expectations regarding behaviour and commitment to studies. We encourage all students to embrace these principles.

In the event that a student does not follow the Student Code of Conduct, we aim to address the situation constructively through a clear disciplinary process.

Depending on the specifics of the situation, students may go through either an informal or formal procedure, as detailed in the Student Disciplinary Procedure found in Appendix 1 of this policy.

For serious incidents that may constitute gross misconduct, we may initiate a precautionary suspension, temporarily limiting the student's access to QA Higher Education facilities. This step is taken to ensure a safe environment for everyone.

Additionally, if a student faces legal challenges, such as an arrest and charge by the police, we reserve the right to implement a precautionary suspension while further investigations occur. During this time, we will actively seek opportunities for the student to continue their studies, prioritising their educational journey and wellbeing within the context of the circumstances.

### 4.1. Guiding Principles regarding Good Conduct

QA Higher Education expects all members of its community to uphold standards of behaviour that are in line with its values and commitment to safeguarding and promoting a safe and inclusive culture across the QA Higher Education community, enabling all students to realise their full potential.

We expect all our students will:

Take responsibility for your own learning, attend regularly and punctually

Always try to communicate in English

Engage fully with all lectures and seminars, giving their full attention and participating actively. This applies equally to online and in-person sessions. It is expected that students do not engage in other activities (e.g. travelling, working) whilst attending online sessions.

Keep their cameras turned on during online sessions and take an active role in class. This includes contributing to class discussion verbally and/or via the chat function, using the reactions buttons, participating in polls/quizzes and taking part in breakout groups with other students. Good 'netiquette' should be demonstrated, and background noise should be



kept to a minimum. Students must inform the Learning Support Team of any issues affecting their ability to use their camera and/or engage fully in online sessions.

Engage fully with your personal tutor, studies advisor, academic team and support services.

Comply with any requests to provide feedback through the completion of surveys and providing comments to help us enhance our courses and services.

Engage fully with any feedback opportunities and to submit assessment on time, completed to the best of your ability.

Behave responsibly and respect other students, staff and the local community both on and off campus.

Familiarise yourself with QA Higher Education, University rules, policies, and regulations.

Pay all fees and charges due when required and that you settle any outstanding debts prior to graduating.

### **When Accessing and Using Campus facilities**

Observe fire alarms and related procedures and evacuate buildings when alarms sound. This is to ensure the health and safety of everyone.

In the event of a fire alarm all students must leave the building immediately, following instructions of the Fire Wardens.

To ensure a safe evacuation, we ask that you do not take your belongings and move swiftly to leave the building.

You will be directed to the Fire Evacuation meeting point, and you should remain there until further instructions are given. Please do not wander off.

For health and safety reasons there will be no access for up to 1 ½ hours while we make all safety checks to allow students to re-enter the building.

Students will be required to present their Student ID card before being permitted to enter the building.

As noted above failure to respond to a fire alarm in an orderly manner or to respond to instructions given by QA Higher Education staff during such events can be deemed misconduct.

Always wear your Student ID card whilst on campus. If you do not have your ID card, you will be denied access to the campus, and you will be required to report to Student Advice and Support Centre to obtain a temporary ID pass.



Your Student ID card is for your use only, and it should not be used to permit fellow students or visitors to gain entrance through the barriers.

You should not permit fellow students or visitors to tailgate you through the barriers, and you should alert Security immediately.

Be mindful that Security staff are responsible for the overall safety of everyone on campus, and any instructions given by them must be adhered to. They should be treated courteously and must not be impeded in their duties.

Refrain from consumption of food and drink (excluding water) during on-campus lectures, seminars, and meetings unless advised otherwise.

When bringing onto QA premises non-QA students (family members, children or friends) they will only be permitted for a maximum of 30 minutes. Guests are not permitted to attend any classes and should only be permitted onto the campus if the student is accessing one of the support services (e.g. Student Advice and Support Centre or Welfare). All visitors under 18 years of age must be accompanied at all times. Any guests must be signed in at Reception. QA Higher Education reserve the right to refuse entry to any guests.

### When attending Lectures, Seminars, Meetings

- Students are encouraged to arrive on time for lectures and seminars, as punctuality is key to creating a focused and respectful learning environment for everyone.
- Students should commit to maintaining an atmosphere where disruption is minimised, allowing all students to fully engage and benefit from each session.
- To ensure that our learning experiences are meaningful, the use of mobile phones and electronic devices for calls, messages, or recording is not permitted during lectures and seminars, with special permission granted only in exceptional circumstances
- Audio recording of lectures, seminars, one-on-one sessions, meetings, and campus activities must only take place with explicit consent from the lecturer or staff member involved, or with prior authorisation from the Learning Support Team when an adjustment to learning is necessary. For comprehensive guidelines, please refer to our Guidelines for Recording Guidelines for the recording of lectures and seminars. (appendix 4)
- To foster effective communication and enhance the learning environment and your learning experience, students are required to communicate exclusively in English during lectures, seminars, and meetings.



## 5. Reporting an Incident

If you are a victim or a witness of an incident that you feel violates the Student Code of Conduct (Appendix 2), please know that your voice matters. We encourage you to complete the incident form using our online reporting tool so that we can understand and address the situation together.

We understand that coming forward can be difficult, and while anonymous reports are usually not accepted, we want to assure you that if you have strong reasons and supporting evidence, we will consider them for investigation.

### How to report a concern where you are in immediate danger on campus

If you are on campus and find yourself in immediate danger, please reach out for help from the **Security team**, the **Student Advice and Support Centre**, or the **Safeguarding, Student Life, and Wellbeing team**. We are here for you, and your safety is our utmost concern.

If you are off campus and are in immediate danger, please don't hesitate to contact the police by calling 999. Taking these actions helps us work together to create a safer community for everyone.

### How to report all other concerns

Welfare Team

Email: [qahe.welfare@qa.com](mailto:qahe.welfare@qa.com)

Phone number: 0203 921 0163

On campus: Monday – Friday 9:00am-6:00pm (Friday 5:30pm)

Report online – [Your Safe Space: Report + Support](#)

## 6. Welfare of students and cases involving mental illness or other disability

QA Higher Education understands that, while addressing cases of student conduct, issues relating to a student's wellbeing may arise. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that these issues are handled with sensitivity.

Where concerns are raised about a student's wellbeing, the matter may be referred for consideration under QA Higher Education's and the University's Fitness to Study policies and procedures. We also understand that some students may act in a way which could be construed as constituting misconduct because of a disability or mental health issue. If a student is aware that they have such a disability they are encouraged to make it known to the Welfare Service as soon as possible.



## 7. References/Signposting

Related policies informing this policy:

Student Disciplinary Procedure (appendix 1)

Student Code of Conduct (appendix 2)

Use of Social Media Guidelines (appendix 3)

Guidelines for the recording of lectures and seminars (appendix 4)

QAHE Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

QAHE Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Relationship Abuse

QAHE Freedom of Speech Policy

QAHE Fitness to Study Policy

QAHE Equality and Diversity Policy

London Metropolitan University Student Code of Conduct

Solent University Disciplinary Procedure

Ulster University Ordinance and Regulations

## 8. Equality and Diversity

The Policy is designed to support all students while fully honouring the principles of the Equality Act 2010.

To ensure an inclusive environment, students with disabilities or those for whom English is a second language will have access to qualified members of the QA Higher Education community or external agency representatives. This support will be available throughout the disciplinary process, promoting fair and equitable treatment.

We encourage all students to reach out to the Safeguarding, Student Life, and Wellbeing Service for guidance and assistance at any stage.

In instances where a student may be considered vulnerable, we will proactively engage with their next of kin, leaving care team personal advisor, social worker, mental health worker, or probation officer, as appropriate. This collaborative approach ensures that support systems are in place to aid the student effectively.



## 9. Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Student Disciplinary Procedures

Suspected student non-academic misconduct should be reported to the Safeguarding, Student Life and Wellbeing Service

An Investigating Officer, usually the Student Conduct and Resolutions Officer, will be assigned to the case. The role of the Investigating Officer is to obtain all evidence and make recommendations as to whether a precautionary suspension is required, and/or whether the matter needs to be referred to a Disciplinary Panel for formal proceedings. The Investigating Officer will take one of the following steps:

Determine that the allegation does not constitute non-academic misconduct, or that there is no case to answer, and take no further action. In this case, no entry regarding the matter will be entered on the student's record.

If the matter is considered to constitute non-academic misconduct the Investigating Officer may:

- Issue a written warning
- Refer the allegation to a Disciplinary Panel for consideration.
- Refer the allegation to the University. If the case is referred to the University, the University's policies and procedures will be followed.

#### Precautionary suspensions

In all cases, the safety of victims and the QA Higher Education community will be the primary consideration, when making any decision to suspend.

If the incident has occurred at the campus, individuals may be sent home pending a full investigation. See section Automatic removal from campus for further information.

If the incident has occurred during an online learning environment, individuals may be asked to leave the session and dependent on the circumstances, may not be permitted to attend online sessions, pending a full investigation.

A precautionary suspension should not be seen as presumption by QA Higher Education of misconduct having taken place. This is determined during the investigation. However, a suspension may be used as a precaution to allow sufficient time for a full investigation and review to take place, whilst keeping both the individual concerned and our campus communities safe.



## QA Higher Education Disciplinary Panel

If the Investigating Officer determines that the case should be considered by a Disciplinary Panel, they will invite the student to a disciplinary meeting, giving no less than three days' notice and including a copy of any relevant information gathered during the investigation. The student will be advised of the following:

Details of the allegation that has been received

That the allegation is being considered by a Disciplinary Panel

That the student is entitled to bring a supporter

The names of the attendees at the meeting.

The disciplinary panel will ordinarily have senior representation from the academic and operational teams. In the disciplinary meeting the allegation will be discussed with the student giving them an opportunity to respond. At the end of the meeting the Panel will determine one of the following:

That there is insufficient evidence to conclude that a breach of the Student Code of Conduct has occurred, in which case there will be no further action.

That there is sufficient evidence to conclude that a breach of the Student Code of Conduct has occurred in which case a sanction may be applied:

- Formal warning
- Request the student to write a letter of apology to the affected party.
- That the case should be referred to the University.

The Chair will make a written record of the meeting and will inform the student in writing of the decision, giving reasons and details of any penalties to be applied, normally within 7 days.

The student will be informed of their right to appeal under the appeals procedure of the university partner.

### International students

In the case of international students, sponsored by the University, where misconduct is proven an immediate referral will be made to the QA Higher Education Head of Compliance to consider the impact on an individual's immigration status.



## Criminal proceedings

Where there is a concern that misconduct that may also constitute a civil or criminal offence QA Higher Education may recommend to the University to defer or suspend any misconduct investigation or proceedings at any time where it believes that an investigation by the police or any other authority is ongoing or contemplated.

Where a student is alleged to have committed a criminal offence, it is normally for the victim of the alleged offence to decide whether to report the matter to the police. The victim can request the Safeguarding, Student Life and Wellbeing team assist in making a report.

Students who are victims of crime are encouraged to report the crime to the Police. However, there may be cases where a victim does not wish a crime to be reported to the police and in those cases QA Higher Education should only, in exceptional circumstances, report the alleged crime without the consent of the victim, for example, when the victim is unconscious, or where a crime is witnessed or where the crime has implications for others beyond the primary victim (e.g. Safeguarding and/or Prevent concerns).

Where conduct by a student is either subject to an investigation by the Police as a suspected criminal offence or where a student has been charged with a criminal offence and is awaiting trial, QA Higher Education will review such incidents on a case by case basis looking at the best interests of all parties concerned in determining whether any additional investigation under this Code is appropriate or necessary, or whether a suspension is appropriate pending the outcome of the criminal investigations, or proceedings.

Students may be requested to take an interruption of studies.

## Automatic removal from campus

The QA Higher Education Security team reserve the right to remove any student from campus who are involved in any of the following offences:

- Physical fight on campus
- Threatening behaviour
- Discriminatory behaviour
- Intoxication
- Possession and/or use of illegal substances
- Sexual misconduct
- Theft
- Damage to property
- Inappropriate use of Wi-Fi
- Any behaviour where there is a risk of escalation and concerns for safety of others

QA Higher Education also reserves the right to contact the Police, where there a concern that a student has been involved in criminal offence.



## Appendix 2 – Student Code of Conduct

This section outlines conduct that is considered unacceptable and in breach of QA Higher Education expectations for all students.

### Classroom Behaviour

QA Higher Education expects students to maintain a respectful and focused academic environment. The following behaviours are not permitted:

- Arriving late or leaving early in a manner that disrupts classes or learning activities.
- Engaging in side conversations, disruptive noise, or inattentive behaviour during lectures or seminars.
- Using mobile phones, tablets, or laptops for non-academic purposes during instructional time.
- Recording lectures, staff, or students without prior consent.

### Harassment, Bullying, and Discrimination (please also refer to the Prevention of Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Relationship Abuse policy)

All students have the right to study in an environment free from hostility and intimidation. QA Higher Education strictly prohibits:

- Using language or behaviour that is discriminatory, derogatory, or demeaning on the basis of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, or other personal characteristics.
- Threatening, bullying, or intimidating others, whether in person or through digital communication.
- Engaging in persistent, unwanted contact or behaviour, including stalking.
- Displaying or distributing offensive, inflammatory, or discriminatory material in any format.
- Deliberately excluding or isolating individuals based on identity or background.

### Sexual Misconduct (please also refer to the Prevention of Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Relationship Abuse policy)

Sexual misconduct is treated with utmost seriousness. The following behaviours are strictly prohibited:

- Making sexually explicit or suggestive comments, jokes, or gestures that are unwelcome.
- Engaging in any form of physical contact of a sexual nature without clear, informed, and ongoing consent.
- Pressuring, coercing, or manipulating others into sexual activity.
- Sending, requesting, or displaying sexually explicit material without consent.
- Sharing intimate images or videos without the full and informed permission of all parties involved.
- Making objectifying remarks about an individual's appearance or clothing in a sexual context.



Note: Consent must be freely given, reversible, informed, enthusiastic, and specific. Silence or lack of resistance does not constitute consent.

### **Dress and Presentation**

Students are expected to dress in a way that is respectful of the academic setting. The following are deemed inappropriate:

#### On Campus:

Wearing clothing that displays offensive, discriminatory, or violent messages or imagery. Attire that is excessively revealing or inappropriate for a professional and academic environment.

Wearing clothing or accessories designed to provoke, intimidate, or harass.

#### In Online Sessions:

Appearing on camera in sleepwear, inappropriate attire, or in an unprofessional setting. Using virtual backgrounds that are offensive, distracting, or inappropriate for academic purposes.

### **Use of QA Higher Education Property and Facilities**

Respect for the university's physical and digital environment is essential. The following actions are not acceptable:

Vandalism, defacement, or misuse of QA Higher Education property or resources.

Theft or unauthorised possession of QA Higher Education or personal property.

Accessing restricted areas or systems without proper authorisation.

Leaving litter or creating an unsanitary environment in classrooms or shared facilities.



## Online Conduct and Use of Technology (please also refer to Use of Social Media Guidelines)

Students are expected to use technology and digital platforms responsibly. The following behaviours are prohibited:

Sending abusive, harassing, or threatening messages via email, messaging platforms, or social media.

Posting or distributing defamatory, discriminatory, or sexually explicit content.

Misrepresenting oneself as a QA Higher Education staff member, official, or another student.

Engaging in cyberbullying, coordinated harassment, or online stalking.

Sharing copyrighted or confidential materials without authorisation.

### Other Prohibited Conduct

Students must avoid conduct that endangers the community or undermines QA Higher Education or the university's reputation, including:

The use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs on QA Higher Education property.

Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol in a way that impairs judgment or disrupts QA Higher Education activities.

Possession of weapons or dangerous items on campus.

Causing disruption during official QA Higher Education events or ceremonies.

Ignoring university safety protocols or emergency procedures.

Acting in any way that damages the reputation or safety of the QA Higher Education community.



## Appendix 3 - Use of social media guidelines

These guidelines aim to empower students to engage responsibly on social media, promoting free expression while valuing respect and inclusivity, in line with the Equality Act 2010 and principles of Freedom of Speech.

### 1. Fostering Respectful Dialogue

We encourage students to engage with one another in a spirit of respect and kindness. Always communicate in a way that upholds the dignity of others, steering clear of hate speech, harassment, or discriminatory remarks based on attributes such as race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and religion.

Building a vibrant and inclusive online community is essential, so it essential that our student community promote positive discussions and celebrate diverse perspectives.

### 2. Embracing Freedom of Speech

In accordance with the Freedom of Speech Act, students have the right to express their opinions and engage in discussions freely. We encourage you to share your thoughts and views thoughtfully, understanding that responsible dialogue enhances the educational experience.

Engaging in healthy debates is encouraged, and differing viewpoints should be welcomed as opportunities for growth and learning.

### 3. Upholding Academic Integrity

Ensure that the information shared on social media is accurate and responsibly presented. Be diligent about citing sources and upholding the integrity of the academic community.

Respect intellectual property rights when sharing content created by others, fostering an environment of trust and collaboration.

### 4. Prioritising Privacy and Confidentiality

Respect the privacy of your peers, faculty, and staff by refraining from sharing personal information without consent.

Strive to maintain a clear boundary between personal opinions and professional representation on social media.

### 5. Thoughtful Posting Practices

Before posting, take a moment to consider the potential impact of your message on others and your own personal brand.

Aim to create a positive online presence by avoiding content that could be perceived as harmful or offensive. Embrace constructive dialogue and discourage harmful 'cancel culture' behaviours.



## 6. Whatsapp and other messaging services

Students should adhere to the same standards of respect and professionalism as they would in other online and in-person communications.

Be mindful of the volume and timing of messages, keeping discussions focused and relevant.

Avoid overwhelming group chats with unrelated content or excessive notifications. Encourage everyone in the group to contribute while being aware of different comfort levels regarding participation. Not all students may be comfortable with using WhatsApp, so alternative communication methods should be available.

## 7. Understanding Consequences

Remain mindful that consistently negative or harmful behaviour on social media may lead to appropriate actions by the university, reflecting its commitment to a respectful community.



## Appendix 4 - Guidelines for the recording of lectures and seminars

8. **Permission for recording**

Students are not permitted to record audio or video on QA Higher Education campuses or during external trips without prior written permission from QA Higher Education. Students wishing to record on campus should contact [qahe.welfare@qa.com](mailto:qahe.welfare@qa.com).
9. **Accommodations for Disabled Students**

QA Higher Education allows disabled students to audio record lectures and seminars if this is deemed a reasonable adjustment. Students requiring reasonable adjustments should contact [qahe.learningsupport@qa.com](mailto:qahe.learningsupport@qa.com).
10. **Prohibition of Video Recordings**

Under no circumstances are video recordings allowed. Students found to have made video recordings of lectures or seminars may face disciplinary action.
11. **Small Group Teaching**

In small group teaching settings involving substantial student participation, routine recordings are not permitted without the knowledge and explicit permission of all group members. If permission is not granted, reasonable adjustments must be implemented for any disabled students to ensure equal access to the information discussed.
12. **Lecturer Discretion**

Where a student has reasonable adjustments, lecturers should generally allow students to record lectures unless there is a justifiable reason for not doing so. Valid reasons may include concerns over copyright, data protection, commercial intellectual property rights, or if the lecture contains sensitive material.

In circumstances where recording cannot be permitted, any alternative arrangements or adjustments will be discussed and agreed in consultation with the Learning Support team, the relevant academic team, and the student, to ensure appropriate support remains in place.
13. **Use of Recordings**

Recordings made by students, with reasonable adjustments, may only be used for personal study and must not be reproduced, shared with others (except for transcription in relation to the student's studies), or posted on external websites, including social networks.
14. **Admissibility in Complaints or Appeals**

Recordings will only be admissible in any complaint or appeal process at the discretion of QA Higher Education and/or the University.
15. **Ownership of Recorded Materials**

The information contained in any recording remains the property of the lecturer, and QA Higher Education, and any other parties connected with the content.
16. **Destruction of Recordings**



Students must destroy any recording once its purpose has been fulfilled, typically before leaving the QA Higher Education and the University, and generally by the end of the semester in which the recording was made.

**17. Discreet Recording Methods**

The method used for recording must be discreet and not intrusive to other participants in the lecture.

**18. Attendance Requirements**

Recording a lecture does not substitute for attendance. A student must be present to record unless the module leader has granted permission for a recording to be made in the student's absence.

**19. Referencing Recorded Content**

Any use of recorded content in assignments must be appropriately referenced to avoid allegations of plagiarism, which is considered a serious disciplinary offence.

**20. Unconsented Recordings**

If there is suspicion that a session is being recorded without appropriate consent or in violation of this policy, staff may confiscate the recording equipment for the duration of the session, and the student may face disciplinary action.

**21. Sharing Recordings**

Sharing any recorded material through any medium is a breach of this policy and may lead to disciplinary action.

**22. Staff Authority to Stop Recordings**

A lecturer may request that any recording be stopped at any time, particularly if other students are uncomfortable or if sensitive material is being discussed. In such cases, the lecturer should inform all students at the beginning of the session. Alternative access to the material can be requested and will be provided when feasible as a reasonable adjustment for disabled students.

**23. One-to-One Supervisory Sessions**

The recording of one-to-one supervisory sessions is not covered by these guidelines. This arrangement should be agreed upon between the individual lecturer and student directly.