

Student Harassment and Bullying Policy

SUMMARY

This policy ensures a safe, supportive environment by protecting OELS students from harassment and bullying, providing clear reporting procedures and dedicated support services.

PART ONE: Preliminary information

1. INTRODUCTION

At OMNES Education London School (OELS), we are dedicated to creating a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. Our policy protects against harassment and bullying, ensuring everyone can learn without fear of discrimination or intimidation.

Harassment and bullying are defined as behaviours that harm a person's dignity or create a hostile environment. This includes actions based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or other characteristics as defined below.

We have clear procedures for reporting and addressing incidents, with confidentiality and support assured. We encourage students to report any concerns and utilize our support services.

Together, we aim to maintain a respectful and inclusive campus community.

2. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This policy applies to all students of OMNES Education London School. We have a firm commitment to equality and diversity, and we will not tolerate the harassment or bullying of a member of our community by others.

The purpose of this policy is to promote the development of a working and learning environment in which harassment and bullying are considered unacceptable and where individuals feel comfortable reporting harassment and bullying. Members should trust that their concerns will be dealt with in an appropriate, fair, and timely fashion. The policy outlines procedures to be followed if students feel they are being harassed or bullied during their period of study at OELS.

The relevant policies and guidance that support the School's commitment to ensuring students do not suffer from harassment and bullying are as follows:

- Welfare and Wellbeing Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Mitigating circumstances Policy
- IT Charter
- Appeals and Complaint Policy

3. DEFINITIONS

Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to harassment.

It also includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to such behaviour in the past.

Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), or it may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Harassment is unacceptable even if it does not fall within any of these categories.

Harassment may include, for example:

- unwanted physical conduct or "horseplay", including touching, pinching, pushing, or grabbing;
- unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive as harmless);
- offensive e-mails, text messages, photographs, digital content or social media content;
- mocking, mimicking, or belittling a person's disability or other personal characteristic.

A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended "target". For example, a person may be harassed by racist jokes about a different ethnic group if the jokes create an offensive environment.

Bullying is repeated offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority, but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.

Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. Bullying may include, by way of example:

- Physical or psychological threats.
- Overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision.
- Inappropriate derogatory remarks about someone's performance or personal characteristics.

- Purpose and for a sustained period of time ignoring, blanking or excluding someone for invalid reasons.

Sexual harassment is unwanted and unwelcome words, conduct or behaviour of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, embarrassing, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient. It can include but is not limited to:

- catcalling;
- following;
- making unnecessary and unwanted physical contact;
- sexual jokes, innuendo and comments;
- giving unwelcome personal gifts;
- wolf-whistling;
- leering;
- derogatory gestures and comments;
- unwelcome comments about a person's body or clothing;
- asking unwelcome questions about a person's sex life and/or sexuality;
- engaging in unwelcome sexual propositions, invitations, and flirtation;
- making somebody feel uncomfortable through displaying, requesting sexual favours (including with implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats concerning present or future employment status);
- sharing sexual material such as calendars, photographs, or videos. Sexual harassment does not necessarily occur face-to-face – it can be in the form of emails, visual images (such as sexually explicit pictures on walls in a shared environment), social media, phone, text messages, and image-based sexual abuse such as revenge porn and up-skirting. The IT Charter must be followed and is available on the student portal and on the OELS's website.

PART TWO: Policy

1. OUR COMMITMENT

As part of our commitment to equality and diversity, as detailed in our EDI Policy, we believe that every student has a right to work and study in an environment which encourages harmonious relationships. OMNES Education London School is committed to preventing harassment and bullying.

Every student is also personally liable under the Equality Act 2010 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. Allegations of harassment and bullying will be treated very seriously by OELS and could result in disciplinary action being taken against the perpetrator.

We will ensure that any student raising a genuine concern about this policy is not victimised as a result.

As allegations of harassment and bullying are very serious, OMNES Education London School treats any such allegations proven to be malicious, very seriously, and these are also likely to be the subject of disciplinary action.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

OMNES Education London School is committed to preventing incidents of bullying, harassment, or sexual misconduct where reasonably possible and to provide educational and preventative training programmes regarding such behaviours. OMNES Education London School also commits to make timely support available for those who have been affected by such behaviours; and to provide prompt and equitable methods of investigation and resolution to stop bullying, harassment, and sexual misconduct, to remedy any harm and to prevent its recurrence.

All staff and students have a responsibility to ensure a working and studying environment where everyone is treated with equal respect and dignity. Each member of staff and each student is expected to contribute to preventing unacceptable behaviours, including harassment, bullying, or sexual misconduct through self-awareness, by modelling positive behaviour for others, and raising any concerns.

3. PROCEDURE AS A VICTIM OF HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

If you are being harassed or bullied, consider whether you feel able to raise the problem informally with the person responsible. You should explain clearly to them that their behaviour is not welcome or makes you uncomfortable. If this is too difficult or embarrassing, you should speak to a member of staff who can provide confidential advice and assistance in resolving the issue formally or informally. All members of the staff have been trained to deal with this type of situation. In particular, our Psychological Coach & Counsellor is available for counselling sessions.

If informal steps are not appropriate, or have not been successful, you should raise the matter formally under our Appeals and Complaints Policy and fill the appropriate form as linked in the Appeals and Complaints Policy.

OELS recognizes the importance of providing safe and confidential avenues for reporting incidents of harassment and bullying. To encourage reports from individuals who may fear retaliation or wish to protect their identities, OELS facilitates anonymous reporting through existing internal mechanisms that ensure the anonymity of the reporter. Individuals can report incidents of harassment or bullying via an anonymous form: [Report Form](#). Students are not required to disclose their names or any identifiable information. All anonymous reports are treated with the highest degree of confidentiality. Only a limited number of authorized personnel have access to the contents of these reports to ensure that anonymity is strictly preserved. The procedure for handling anonymous reports includes a careful review to determine the credibility and specificity of the information provided, ensuring that even without direct personal contact, appropriate actions can be initiated to investigate and address the issues raised.

We will investigate complaints in a timely and confidential manner. The investigation will be supervised by the OELS Director unless he/she is involved in the complaint (in this case the investigation will be supervised by the Chief Academic Officer of OMNES Education). Details of the investigation, the names of the person making the complaint and the person accused must only be disclosed on a "need to know" basis. We will consider whether any steps are necessary to manage any ongoing relationship between you and the person accused during the investigation. We will make sure that you will be protected while the matter is being investigated (e.g. no contact between bully and victim, moving one of them to a different class group, justified absences to classes).

Once the investigation is complete, we will inform you of our decision. If we consider you have been harassed or bullied, the matter will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Committee Procedure as a case of possible misconduct or gross misconduct.

4. PROTECTION AND SUPPORT FOR THOSE INVOLVED

Anyone who makes complaints or who participate in good faith in any investigation must not suffer any form of retaliation or victimisation as a result. OELS will take all necessary steps to ensure that individuals who report retaliation or participate in investigations are protected from further retaliation and their identity shielded, where feasible. Support measures, such as counselling and adjustments to academic or work settings, may be provided to safeguard the well-being of those involved. Anyone found to have retaliated against or victimised someone in this way will be subject to disciplinary action under our Disciplinary Committee Procedure. In cases where the investigation determines that a retaliation claim was made maliciously or knowing it to be false, the complainant may also be subject to disciplinary action.

Record-keeping

Information about a complaint by or about a student may be placed on the student's personal file, along with a record of the outcome and any notes or other documents compiled during the process. These will be processed in accordance with our Student Privacy and Data Protection Policy.

5. SUPPORT AVAILABLE ON CAMPUS

Ms Vanessa Semmanda, Campus Coordinator & Administrator who holds a Mental Health First Aider certificate, vsemmanda@omneseducation.com.

Mrs Clotilde de Cacqueray, Psychological Coach & Counsellor, available for one-to-one appointments on Wednesday afternoons, as well as online appointments for any urgent bookings outside of the Wednesday one-to-one slots.

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