

Reflect On Academy Policies

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1. Equal Opportunities Policy

Statement of Intent

Reflect On Academy recognises that in society certain groups and individuals are oppressed and disadvantaged by institutional and individual discrimination and prejudice.

Reflect On Academy is positively committed to opposing discrimination against people on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, class, age, disability, having dependants, HIV status or perceived lifestyle. We welcome the enrichment and cultural diversity that would follow as a natural result of this policy. Reflect On Academy recognises that passive policies will not in themselves provide equality of opportunity, and specific and positive programs of action are needed.

Reflect On Academy acknowledges that we have a duty, both moral and legal, to ensure that we do not discriminate unfairly in our employment and management practices, in the work we undertake and in the services and training we provide.

Code of Practice

1. Reflect On Academy is committed to actively oppose oppression and discrimination in all areas of our work, and in relation to trainees, staff, committee members, outside trainers/facilitators and other organisations with whom we work.
2. We will take seriously our duty not to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, class, age, disability, having dependants, HIV status or perceived lifestyle.
3. All policies and practices associated with Reflect On Academy role as an employer and provider of training must be applied with strict observance of (2) above.
4. Reflect On Academy criteria and procedures for selection of trainees, trainers and staff will be monitored and reviewed at least annually. In offering training or employment or in its general dealings, Reflect On Academy will ensure that all individuals are treated with fairness and in line with equal opportunities policy and practice.
5. We will seek to ensure that any outside trainer/facilitator used by Reflect On Academy works within equal opportunities guidelines and we will take seriously any accusation of discrimination by them towards trainees.

6. Discriminatory acts or breaches of the equal opportunities policy by staff will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary action.
7. Trainees, applicants, members and staff who feel they have been discriminated against should use the complaints procedure, complaining directly to the Standards & Ethics Committee.
8. Responsibility for the implementation of the equal opportunities policy lies with the Human resource/Admin Office. The College will monitor and review its policy and practice on equal opportunities annually. S/he will report annually to the Head of College and relevant sub-committees and make suggestions for changes as necessary to continue promotion of equal opportunities in all areas of Reflect On Academy work.

2. Disciplinary & Grievance Policy

Scope of Procedure

The Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure outlined below ("the Procedure") applies to all employees of staff of Reflect On Academy.

Statement of Intent

It is the Employer's intent to create a good working relationship between Employees and management, to promote effective and open communication and to ensure that the required standards of performance attendance and conduct are maintained. The Employer aims to provide a safe forum where Employees may raise problems concerns or grievances.

In some cases, the Employer may need to take formal disciplinary action to address problems such as poor performance, poor attendance or misconduct. At times, Employees may wish to bring to the Employer's attention concerns or complaints in relation to their employment.

It is the Employer's intention to implement just and effective arrangements for handling disciplinary and grievance matters to ensure fair and consistent treatment of all Employees. Disciplinary Procedure

General Principles

This Disciplinary Procedure applies where an Employee's level of conduct attendance or performance has fallen below the standard expected of him / her ("Misconduct"). Examples of Misconduct in respect of which disciplinary action will be taken include (but are not limited to) unauthorised or persistent absence; poor timekeeping; failure to comply with the Employer's rules on notification and evidence of sickness absence; failure to meet required performance standards.

Before taking formal disciplinary action in relation to an Employee, the line manager will consider whether the matter can be resolved effectively through informal action (eg training coaching or counselling), taking into account the nature of the Misconduct and the Employer's size and administrative resources.

No disciplinary action will be taken until a matter has been fully investigated and considered by the Employee's line manager.

Employees will normally receive advance written notice of any disciplinary hearing interview or meeting. In addition, Employees will normally be told in advance (and receive written confirmation) of:

- ⇒ The nature of the complaint / allegation against them; and
- ⇒ Any witness who is called to support such complaint / allegation and what s/he might say; and
- ⇒ Where appropriate, Employees will receive a copy of any written evidence which will be used to support the complaint / allegation against them; and

⇒ The possible outcome of any disciplinary hearing interview or meeting.

At all formal stages of the Disciplinary Procedure, Employees will be given full opportunity to present their case and to put forward evidence in their defence. Provided an Employee makes a prior written request within 5 days of the relevant hearing meeting or interview, s/he may be represented by a fellow Employee or a trade union official during any formal stage of the Disciplinary Procedure.

All warnings will remain on the Employee's personal file indefinitely. Warnings will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after a period of 12 months, except in the case of a final written warning where the period will be 18 months. Time shall start to run from the date of the written notification confirming the relevant warning.

At each stage of the Disciplinary Procedure, an Employee has the right to appeal against the decision. The Employee shall have an opportunity to comment on any new evidence arising during the appeal before a new decision is taken.

As far as is reasonably practicable, the Employer shall keep disciplinary matters confidential.

The Disciplinary Procedure has four stages. The Employer reserves the right to initiate the procedure at any stage or to jump stages depending on the circumstances of the case and the seriousness of the Employee's Misconduct. Except in the case of gross misconduct or conduct which is sufficiently serious to amount to gross misconduct, no Employee will be dismissed for a first breach of discipline.

Stage 1 - formal verbal warning

Where informal attempts to resolve a problem have failed, or a first instance Misconduct is sufficiently serious to warrant formal action, a disciplinary hearing may be called by the Employee's line manager following which s/he may issue the Employee with a formal verbal warning.

A written record of the warning will be kept on the Employee's file. The Employee will be told clearly of the improvements expected of him / her, the timescale within which they have to be achieved and the consequences of failure to do so.

Stage 2 - first written warning

In the event of further Misconduct, or where previous attempts at resolving a problem have failed, or a first instance Misconduct is sufficiently serious to warrant action at an advance stage of the Disciplinary Procedure, a disciplinary hearing may be called by following which s/he may issue the Employee with a first written warning.

The Employee will be given a copy of the warning which will also confirm in clear terms the improvements expected of the Employee, the timescale within which they have to be achieved and the consequences of failure to do so. A copy of the warning will be kept on the Employee's file.

Stage 3 - final written warning

In the event of more serious or further Misconduct, failure to comply with the terms of a previous warning, or a first instance Misconduct which is sufficiently serious to warrant more than a first written warning but is not sufficiently serious to justify dismissal, the

director responsible for the Employee's division may call a disciplinary hearing following which s/he may issue a final written warning to the Employee.

The Employee will receive a copy of the final warning which will detail in clear terms the improvements required from him / her, the timescale within which they have to be achieved and the fact that failure to do so may result in further disciplinary action and dismissal. A copy of the warning will be kept on the Employee's file.

Stage 4 - dismissal

If Misconduct persists following the issue of a final written warning or conduct attendance or performance remains unsatisfactory, or if the offence is sufficiently serious to amount to gross misconduct, a disciplinary hearing will be held following which the Employee may be dismissed.

If the Employee is dismissed, s/he will be given a written confirmation of the dismissal, the date of termination of the employment and a notice of his / her right of appeal as soon as is reasonably practicable. Action at this stage may only be taken by the Employer's managing director.

Summary Dismissal

The Employer will only dismiss an Employee summarily in the event of gross misconduct or some other serious breach of the Employer's rules or the Employee's contract of employment which amounts to gross misconduct.

An Employee who is dismissed summarily will not be entitled to notice or pay in lieu of notice. In each case before dismissing the Employee, the Employer will take into account the gravity of his / her conduct and any individual mitigating circumstances.

Examples of gross misconduct include but are not limited to:

- Theft or attempted theft fraud or deliberate falsification of records or expense claims;
- Dishonesty;
- Violent behaviour or fighting at work;
- Negligence capable of causing unacceptable loss, damage or injury;
- Deliberate damage to property;
- Disloyalty or breach of confidence (subject to the Public Interest (Disclosure) Act 1998);
- Serious acts of sexual, racial or disability harassment;
- Downloading and / or circulation of pornographic abusive or defamatory material;
- Unauthorised operation of software on the Employer's equipment;
- Being unfit to work through the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- Behaviour likely to damage the image or interests of the Employer to a material extent;
- Serious insubordination or wilful refusal to comply with the Employer's lawful instructions / rules.

Appeals

At any stage of the Disciplinary Procedure (including dismissal), an Employee has a right to appeal against the decision. The Employee should inform the person who made the decision of his / her intention to appeal and the grounds for doing so. Notification must be in writing, within 5 days of receipt of a written confirmation of the outcome of the disciplinary hearing.

The Employer will take all reasonable steps to deal with any appeal within 10 days.

Where practicable, appeals will be heard by a more senior level of management than that taking the disciplinary action. An appeal against dismissal shall be conducted as a rehearing.

The person hearing the appeal may uphold the decision reached in the disciplinary hearing; agree with the Employee's appeal and direct that the Employee's disciplinary record be amended accordingly; decide that a lesser penalty be substituted for that imposed following the original disciplinary hearing.

The Employer will confirm to the Employee in writing the results of the appeal and will outline the reasons for its decision. A decision following an appeal shall be final within the Employer's organisation. Grievance Procedure

General Principles

Wherever possible, Employees are encouraged to raise their concerns as soon as possible informally with their line manager. The Employee's line manager shall act promptly to investigate the Employee's grievance speedily efficiently and impartially. If necessary, s/he shall take appropriate action. If the Employee is not satisfied with the result of an informal action, s/he may lodge a formal grievance.

This Grievance Procedure may not be used for appeals against any decision reached under the Disciplinary Procedure.

At all formal stages of the Grievance Procedure which deal with a complaint in relation to the Employer's duties to its Employees, the Employee may be accompanied by a fellow Employee or a trade union official, provided s/he makes a prior written request within 5 days of a hearing meeting or interview.

As far as practicable, the Employer will keep grievance complaints confidential.

Stage 1 - formal complaint to a member of staff

If the Employee wishes to make a formal complaint, s/he should do so in writing to his/her line manager. If the complaint relates to the Employee's line manager, the Employee should write to his / her head of department.

The Employee's line manager shall act promptly to investigate the grievance speedily thoroughly and objectively. If the grievance is contested, the line manager will arrange a meeting within reasonable time. In the meeting, all persons involved will be able to put their case forward. The line manager shall inform the Employee and all other persons involved of his/her decision following the meeting.

Stage 2 - formal complain to a senior member of staff

If the Employee is not satisfied with his/her line manager's decision, s/he may make a written complaint to the Employer's managing director. The Employer's managing director shall take the necessary steps to investigate the Employee's grievance speedily efficiently and impartially. If s/he considers it appropriate, s/he shall call a meeting within reasonable time. In the meeting, all persons involved will be able to put their case forward. The Employer's managing director shall inform the Employee and all other persons involved of his / her decision following the meeting. This decision shall be final within the Employer's organisation.

Anyone who requires further information or has a question in relation to this Procedure

should contact Reflect On Academy Director.

3. Concerns & Complaints Procedures

There may be times when we get things wrong or may make a mistake on this course. If you are feeling dissatisfied, we would like to know about it before it grows into something which is bigger and possibly harder to address. We will formally seek your views each year when we evaluate your learning experience. If you feel dissatisfied at any other time you need to let your tutor know. Very often they will be able to help you or if they cannot will direct you to someone who can.

Basic Principles

The Reflect On Academy Concerns & Complaints Procedure (September 2017 Edition) is designed to allow learners to resolve issues surrounding all aspects of their course and surrounding other learners in a clear, equitable and timely manner. It is also designed to allow Reflect On Academy to resolve issues surrounding learners in a similar manner.

The following Basic Principles of the Procedure should be borne in mind:

1. With the exception of a complaint of abuse all concerns and complaints should, where possible, be resolved through an **informal process of discussion**. Informal discussion is entirely appropriate for the profession of counselling and allows all sides the chance to resolve issues in a satisfactory manner. For this reason, it is compulsory for concerns and complaints to be addressed via informal discussion before Reflect On Academy will accept a formal, written complaint. The procedures for this are set out below.
2. Complainants are expected to address their own anxieties, issues and transference in advance of expressing a concern or making a complaint and to honour this procedure as a potential part of their therapeutic development.
3. Reflect On Academy may terminate the complaints procedure if the complainant is hostile or discourteous towards staff.
4. **Issues of refund policy and amounts are dealt with in the Personal Training Agreement and are not subject to these procedures.**
5. Learners are contractually bound to honour this procedure and any complaint not doing so will be dismissed.
6. Complaints must be made individually and under no circumstances by groups of learners or by a learner claiming to act "on behalf of" other learners.
7. All complaints are strictly confidential between the complainant and Reflect On Academy except where a formal written complaint is made about a third party (e.g. a tutor or fellow learner) the third party has the right to view the complaint and to respond. Any learner aware of a breach of said confidentiality must notify Reflect On Academy.
8. Complaints must be **started within seven days of the concern first occurring or they will not be heard.**
9. Learners are legally and contractually bound to follow these procedures before taking any further action.

THE PROCEDURE FOR LEARNERS

1. (a) If you have a concern or complaint, **first address this orally to your tutor** in the hope of achieving a resolution of the concern, **within seven days of the issue arising**. You are advised to arrange a time to telephone them outside of class in order to resolve the issue, and to ensure that you cover all the points that you wish to. At the end of the conversation, your tutor will ask you if you feel that the matter has been resolved and you should indicate accordingly. If your tutor is unable to resolve your complaint they will direct, you to someone

who can. The tutors have been asked to listen to complaints and ensure that you receive the attention you need.

(b) If your complaint is about your tutor, or you feel that your tutor will be unable to help with your complaint, you should proceed with (2) below.

You should note that **your tutor cannot respond to complaints in writing.**

2. If step 1 does not resolve your complaint, or 1(b) applies, please **call the Learner Support on 0208 660 6283. If no-one answers you will be able to leave a message and should do so. Your call will normally be returned within one working day.**

A telephone conversation will then be arranged in which you can raise your concerns and Reflect On Academy will attempt to address these. You will be asked at the end of the conversation if the matter has been resolved and you should indicate accordingly.

3. If for whatever reason your complaint cannot be resolved you will be encouraged to put your complaint in writing so that we understand exactly what is left to be resolved and can select a member of the tutor team, or someone external to the team as appropriate, to provide further investigation and suggest if Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in the form of mediation is an option. If mediation is agreed to be a useful way forward it will be arranged in a timely manner. If either party are not happy about ADR, then a formal complaint procedure will be followed.

(a). Your written complaint will be copied to all parties relevant to the complaint to allow them right of reply.

4. **Only if you have followed steps 1-3** and you are still dissatisfied, you may make an external appeal to the primary accrediting **body relevant to your course (if the course is accredited) or the Validating Awarding Body.** Reflect On Academy will provide you with the relevant details. Once an external appeal commences, no further correspondence can occur direct between Reflect On Academy and the complainant. Reflect On Academy will be bound by the decision of the primary accrediting body.

N.B. Complaints falling outside of this procedure breach your contract with Reflect On Academy.

THE PROCEDURE FOR Reflect On Academy

1. Your tutor, or any Reflect On Academy member of staff, may ask to speak with you to informally raise a complaint or concern.
2. If the complaint or concern is not resolved to the satisfaction of Reflect On Academy by step 1 (or you are unobtainable), the Course Co-ordinator or designated officer will write to you outlining the points of concern or complaint. You will be required to respond in writing **within seven days.** At its discretion, at any time during this procedure Reflect On Academy may suspend your studies.
 - 2(a) if the concern or complaint has been raised by another learner, or by your tutor or a third party, the procedure will commence at Step 2 and the learner's, tutor's or third party's written complaint will be forwarded to you for response.
3. After your response, or in the case of non-response, **within seven days,** the Course Co-ordinator or designated officer will write to you outlining the remedy Reflect On Academy feels appropriate to your situation together with a formal ruling. You must either accept or reject this ruling in writing **within seven days.**

4. If you accept the remedy, the procedure has reached a satisfactory conclusion. If you do not respond, your studies will be suspended. If you disagree, you should go to step 5.
5. **Within seven days**, write a letter headed “Appeal to Ruling” to the Principal itemising your concerns.
6. Within 28 days, the Principal will respond in writing in response to your Appeal and will either uphold or overturn the Ruling.
7. The decision of the Principal shall be final.

**EXCEPTIONS – ABUSE, PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT & HEALTH AND SAFETY,
REASONABLE TIME DELAYS**

If you wish to make a complaint of abuse, you should commence your complaint at step 3.

If Reflect On Academy utilises its procedures related to an accusation of abuse or professional misconduct, or in the interests of health and safety, it will commence said procedures at step 2.

Should any member of Reflect On Academy staff relevant to this procedure be on holiday or on sick leave then this procedure may be subject to reasonable delay, of which all parties shall be given due notice.

The outcome of all complaints and investigations will be reported in confidence to the College Leadership Team and in writing to the complainant. The Executive Office will keep a log of all complaints received. These will be analysed and presented regularly to the Leadership Team as part of the evaluation of the course.

4. Reflect On Academy Appeal Policy and Procedures

Formal appeals must be made within 15 working days of the Assessment result.

1. Informal Process Preceding a Formal Appeal

Students wishing to query the outcome of a **written assignment** may do so informally through the Head of Department. At this stage written work will be sent to a third marker, normally the external examiner who will consider the assessment and give feedback. An amicable resolution will be sought where possible. If this is not possible, the student should follow the formal assessment procedure below.

Informal discussion with the Head of Department is encouraged. Discussions may include a member of the examination. The external examiner may also be consulted at this time. This provides an opportunity for open communication and resolution.

2. Frivolous or vexatious appeals

The College may reject an appeal at any time if, in the opinion of the Director of Academic Services, or nominee, the appeal is frivolous or vexatious.

A frivolous or vexatious appeal can be characterised in a number of ways

- Appeals which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious
- Insistence upon pursuing unmeritorious appeals and/or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason.
- Insistence upon pursuing meritorious appeals in an unreasonable manner
- Appeals which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance
- Demands for redress which lack any serious purpose or value.

If a student's appeal is considered frivolous or vexatious, the Director of Academic Services, or nominee, will write to the student explaining that the College is terminating further consideration of the appeal, setting out the reasons for doing so, and issue a Completion of Procedures letter. The appellant will also be referred to the student disciplinary procedures.

3. Unacceptable behaviour

The College is committed to providing a fair, consistent and accessible service for all students. However, the College must also provide a safe working environment for staff, and ensure that work is undertaken in an efficient and effective manner. Whilst all students have the right to be heard, understood and respected, staff have the same rights. The actions of appellants, or their nominated representative, who are angry, demanding, or persistent may result in unreasonable demands on, or unacceptable behaviour towards, staff. It is these actions or behaviour that is considered unacceptable and are managed under this guidance. These behaviours are set out below:

Aggressive, offensive or abusive actions or behaviour

Examples of actions or behaviour grouped under this heading include any actions or behaviour that may have the potential to cause staff to feel intimidated, threatened or offended. These include, but are not limited to: threats, physical violence, personal verbal abuse, derogatory remarks, and rudeness. Inflammatory statements and unsubstantiated allegations can amount to abusive actions or behaviour. Violence is not restricted to acts of aggression that may result in physical harm. It also includes behaviour or language, whether oral or written, that may cause staff to feel afraid, threatened or abused.

Unreasonable demands or persistence

Examples of unreasonable demands may include: requesting responses within an unreasonable timescale; insisting on seeing or speaking to a member of staff; continual phone calls, emails, or letters; demanding answers to an unreasonable, or an excessive number of, questions about the way in which staff would normally discharge their responsibilities or seeking their personal opinions on matters; repeatedly changing the substance of an appeal; or raising unrelated concerns.

When the actions or behaviour of an appellant is unacceptable they will be told why it is unacceptable and given the opportunity to modify their actions or behaviour. If the unacceptable actions or behaviour continue, the College will take appropriate measures, including referring students to the disciplinary procedures and terminating consideration of their appeal.

4. Academic Judgment

Appeals cannot be made on matters of academic judgment of examiners, for example claiming that the marks awarded were too low. Neither can a student appeal on the grounds that he or she did not understand, or was not aware of, the College's regulations or procedures

5. Grounds on which an appeal can be made

There are only two sets of circumstances in which the decision of either a properly convened and constituted Course Assessments Board acting within their approved terms of reference, may be changed by a higher authority within the College.

6. Grounds on which an appeal can be made

6.1 Mitigating circumstances not known to the Assessment Board

A student's performance in an assessment suffered through illness or other possible extenuating circumstances about which the student was unable, or for valid reasons, unwilling, to inform the Head of Training. The student's appeal must be supported by medical certificates or other acceptable documentary evidence which both verify the reasons for not previously divulging the circumstances and also substantiate the original mitigating circumstances. Feelings of embarrassment is not an acceptable reason for not divulging mitigating circumstances, since all mitigating circumstances are considered in confidence by a small panel of individuals and are not disclosed beyond those judging the merits of the claim and the impact on a student.

6.2 Material error or irregularity

There was a material administrative error in the management of the assessment. Example might include that the assessment was not run in accordance with the programme of study regulations.

7. Procedure

7.1 The Appeals Procedure will be signposted from the Student to ensure that students are aware of their rights of appeal. Authoritative guidance on the operation of the procedure may be sought from the Director of Academic Services, or nominee. The procedure is conducted in three stages and students can only progress to the next stage after they have completed the preceding stage. Students must submit requests for assessment decisions to be reviewed within the timescales set out within each stage of the procedure. Only exceptionally, and where there are reasonable grounds for such, would

the procedure be varied, at the discretion of the Director of Academic Services, or their nominee.

7.2 Stage 1- raising a concern or query

Before submitting a formal appeal, students are required to discuss any concerns or queries with their Senior Tutor or Course Manager or, if unavailable, the Head of the College. Students are encouraged to raise any concern or query as a matter of urgency as any formal appeal, undertaken as part of stage 2, must be submitted **within 14 days of the notification of the assessment decision.**

7.3 Stage 2 – formal appeal against the decision of an assessment or academic misconduct panel or placement panel

If the student decides to submit a formal appeal, s/he should complete an academic appeals form (appendix 1, attached) and send it to the Head of Training. It is important that all sections of the form are completed within the time period allowed for appeals to be submitted. The written appeal must be received in the appeals **mailbox within 14 days of the date that the results were released to the student.** The appeal form should be supported by all available written evidence to substantiate the claims made. The appellant is responsible for providing any evidence that they wish to be considered. Claims which cannot be substantiated with independent evidence are likely to be dismissed.

On receipt of a formal appeal, which will be acknowledged by email, the Director of Academic Services, or nominee, will investigate. The Director of Academic Services, or nominee, will normally take one of the following decisions and notify the student accordingly:

- a) to reject the appeal if there is evidence that the Course Assessments Board, Academic Misconduct Panel, Placement Panel has already taken proper account of the points in the appeal, that the regulations and procedures have been properly implemented, or, for example, that there is no sound reason why mitigating circumstances could not have been revealed before the meeting of the relevant body, or the appeal claim was submitted beyond the published time limit
- b) if the investigation reveals clear evidence that there has been a material error or irregularity, the Director of Academic Services, or nominee, may uphold the appeal on behalf of Academic Board, without recourse to referring the matter back to the relevant decision making body;
- c) request additional information or seek clarity on unclear or contradictory evidence from the student and from others relevant to the investigation, as considered necessary by the Director of Academic Services, or nominee, in order to make a well informed judgement on the claim and conclude with an appropriate outcome;
- d) to refer the appeal back to the relevant decision making body that made the original decision, to consider that it reviews and confirms or amends its original decision, in the light of the evidence collected during the investigation;
- e) to apply any combination of (a) to (d) flexibly, if the circumstances of the claim and associated investigations merit such, including the provision for partially upheld appeals, in relation to some, rather than all, aspects of a claim and the requested outcomes.

7.4 If the appeal investigation and internal proceedings have not been concluded before the start of the next academic year or next stage of the course, or the next round of assessments, the student will normally be permitted to continue provisionally on his or her course pending the outcome of the appeal.

7.5 The outcome of an appeal will be notified to the appellant, in writing, **within 28 days of receipt of the appeals form, advising not only the outcome of the appeal but also outlining the reference points and written evidence, including that received from interested parties used in forming a judgement.** There might be occasions where

the requirements of a professional, statutory or regulatory body also need to be taken into account in determining the outcome of the appeal against the decision of a course assessment board.

7.6 Stage 3 – review stage

If a student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of a formal appeal, they may request a review of the decision. They should write a letter, **within seven days of the date of the appeal outcome, clearly headed, ‘Request for Review of Appeal Outcome’ and send it to the college.** It will be considered by an appropriate nominee, against at least one of the following three reasons, which the appellant must specify clearly, with supporting explanation and evidence:

- that the procedures at the formal stage did not follow appropriate arrangements;
- that the outcome was unreasonable, in the circumstances;
- new material evidence has become available which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.

If the appropriate nominee considers that there are grounds for the appeal decision to be revised, in the light of the evidence presented, they will refer the matter back to the Director of Academic Services, or nominee, for further consideration. The Director of Academic Services, or nominee, will reconsider the evidence presented and take advice from other relevant senior staff where necessary. **The final outcome will be advised to the appellant in writing within 20 days.**

8. Completion of Procedures

Once the College’s appeals procedure has been exhausted, the student will be issued with a ‘Completion of Procedures’ letter, which confirms that the College’s internal procedures are completed. At this stage, outcomes in relation to award or progression are implemented. Students are advised to contact the College External Independent Adjudicator (CEIO) for Higher Education if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the final stage of the complaints procedure. The CEIO will determine whether the student’s complaint is eligible for consideration under its rules.

9. Confidentiality of proceedings and reporting

The proceedings of an appeal investigation shall be confidential to the parties involved, including those called upon to provide written witness statements or other statements substantiating a student’s appeal claim. A report on the outcome of all appeals is prepared annually for the consideration of Academic Board but this does not refer to individuals.

10. Retention of records

All data pertaining to academic appeals is retained, in confidence, by the Director of Academic Services, or nominee, for a period of six years after a case has been settled.

11. Monitoring and review of appeals

The Director of Academic Services, or nominee, will prepare an annual review of student appeals across all awards, wherever programmes are based, for the consideration of the College’s Academic Board, with a view to identify whether there is a need to revise policy or practices relating to the curriculum, student support or assessment.

5. Withdrawal Policy 2021/22

Any offer of a place made to you by Reflect On Academy is on the basis that in accepting such an offer you agree to the following terms and conditions, which form part of the contract between you and Reflect On Academy.

• **Our Contract With You**

- The following contract constitutes the terms and conditions of study in 2021/22 on a non-funded programme.
- These terms and conditions and all college procedures or policies referred to in them together with:
 - Any offer communication from the College ('offer');
 - Any communication issued by Reflect On Academy that confirms acceptance of the offer ('confirmation letter');
 - The College's confirmation of enrolment communication form the contract made between the student and the College (the "Contract").
- Enrolling on the Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling programme at Reflect On Academy and/or accepting the offer signifies that the student accepts the terms of the Contract. Reflect On Academy is committed to improve student retention and maintain accurate student records for internal and external submissions. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students receive appropriate advice, before the withdrawal process is initiated. The policy provides guidelines for staff on how to process requests for withdrawal in a timely manner.

Scope and Purpose

Reasons for Student Withdrawal

5. Students decide to withdraw or are withdrawn from their academic programme and the College for a variety of reasons:
 - a) Student wishes to withdraw from their programme, hereafter referred as 'Self Withdrawal Request';
 - b) Student is required to withdraw due to academic failure;
 - c) Student is permanently excluded as the outcome of a student disciplinary process, a criminal convictions panel or for academic misconduct;
 - d) Student is required to withdraw as an outcome of the fitness to study/practise processes;
 - e) Student is required to withdraw due to failure to abide by college regulations (e.g. non-payment of fees);
Student fails (or ceases) to attend their programme, according to Academic Regulations;
 - f) Student fails to arrive or enrol for their studies in the academic year;
Death of a student.
6. In the event of a Self-Withdrawal Request, if following advice, the student wishes to proceed with withdrawal – students are required to provide reasons for their decision - If you withdraw but do not inform us you may be charged for the full course fee.
7. Once a student has been withdrawn from the College, either through Self Withdrawal Request or other reasons cited above in Section 5, they don't normally have access to College systems and are not permitted to submit coursework or continue with clinical practicum.

Student Withdrawal Process

8. The Student Withdrawal Process is based within Registry to ensure that accurate student records are maintained at all times. With the exception of Self Withdrawal Requests from students, all other forms of withdrawals are initiated by formal procedures such as, Student Disciplinary Process etc.
9. A student who considers withdrawing from the college under the Self Withdrawal Request, is required to inform us in writing (an email is acceptable).
10. All Self Withdrawal Requests received shall be forwarded to the respective Tutor/Head of College, normally within 3 days of receiving the email.
11. The Head of College will be responsible to ensure that they meet with the student within three working days of receiving the email request. At this meeting, they shall discuss with the student their reasons for considering withdrawal, offer them with advice on pastoral and financial support available (if applicable) to them and discuss other options available within Reflect On Academy (if applicable), if their choice of programme is not suitable.
12. All information provided by the student in the Withdrawal Letter should be treated with utmost confidentiality as it may contain information pertaining to sensitive individual circumstances.
13. At these meetings, Head of College will be expected to keep a written account of the discussion with the student and the options offered to them to help come to a decision.
14. The student can also seek further information on the impact of their decision on their financial liability (discuss Bursary (if applicable)).
15. After the meeting both student and the Head of College will be required to sign the Withdrawal Form.
16. Once the form is received, the system will be updated, and the student will be notified of the withdrawal.

Student Debtors

The College reserves the right to cancel this Contract (contract between the college and the student) and the enrolment and/or terminate the registration of any student who has failed to pay tuition fees in accordance with the terms of the College's Fees Policy.

If at the end of an academic year of any programme, the student has not paid all or part of any outstanding debt, the student will not be allowed to enrol on to any programme for the next academic year, or graduate if they are in their final year.

Financial Implications

If you withdraw from Reflect On Academy prior to the start of the course, or before the end of the first week of a term, you are eligible for a 100% tuition and fee refund.

If you withdraw after the start of the second week of a term, you are eligible for a refund of tuition and fees based on the following schedule:

- Withdraw before the end of week two: 80% refund
- Withdraw before the end of week three: 60% refund
- Withdraw before the end of week four: 50% refund
- If you withdraw from a class or all classes after week four, there will be no refund

Cancellation by Reflect On Academy

Whilst every effort is made to avoid changes to our courses, the college reserves the right to withdraw any course. If for any reason the college cancels a course, or the course has been cancelled within three weeks of its start date, all course fees will be returned in full.

6. Conflict of Interest Policy

Definitions

“a situation in which the concerns or aims of two different parties are incompatible”

or

“a situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity”

Introduction

Reflect On Academy has an obligation to identify and manage potential perceived conflicts of interest within the College. This policy applies to all staff of Reflect On Academy.

The College will, wherever possible, protect the privacy of individual members of staff as far as is reasonable and possible. All investigations will be transparent and clear processes will be followed at all times.

The following statements will help to determine if a member of staff or their actions could result in a Conflict of Interest:

- Relationships between members of staff
- Relationships between staff and students
- Relationships between/involving a supervisor and/or line manager
- Relationships involving a Governor or a Member of the Senior Management Team of the College
- Relationships involving members of staff and suppliers of goods or services

Relationships between members of staff

Personal relationships are not a bar to employment at Reflect On Academy. However, members of staff are required to declare formally any personal relationships with:

- existing members of staff
- existing students
- individuals with links with the college, e.g. suppliers, contractors
- Register of Interest needs to be completed and filed with the College Administrator.

Relationships requiring disclosure include:

- immediate or wider family
- business/commercial/financial
- • sexual/intimate

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other types of personal relationships which may have the potential to cause a conflict of interest

Register of Interest

To ensure good governance practices are upheld the College holds a register of interests in relation to all staff and their families and of any other persons with whom they have a close connection. Examples are

- all staff whose role involves the ability to commit the College to a level of expenditure
- members of certain committees
- members of staff working in key areas
- members of staff with connections with the College's other companies/sites

Benefits

Members of staff are not permitted to receive benefits without first gaining the written permission of the Senior Management Team.

Benefits include:

- gifts (small thank you gifts from students are acceptable)
- discounted fees on goods and/or services
- free training
- preferential treatment
- employment

Reporting Conflicts of Interest

- If a member of staff or a learner believes there is a conflict of interests they should report this to their Head of College. If the conflict is with their Head of College then they should report this to they should report it to the **Learning and Quality Assurance**.
- All discussions will be recorded and logged
- A copy of all discussions will be kept on file.

Actions regarding a Report of Conflict of Interest

- Record details of the discussion and decisions made
- Record details of the conflict of interest but no further action is taken
- If appropriate adjusting line management structure
- If appropriate adjust decision-making powers
- If appropriate adjust budget control powers

All discussions and decisions will be recorded and filed in the Learning and Quality Office.

To ensure compliance with this policy a declaration will be completed by Heads of College (countersigned by the Assistant Head) on an annual basis. The declaration will confirm that there is no current or potential conflict of interest for the current academic year.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

There are no current or potential conflicts of interest within my Curriculum Area	
Head of College signature	
Date	
Assistant Head signature	
Date	

Name	
Curriculum Areas	
Potential conflict of interest	
Preventive actions to be taken	
Monitoring strategy	
Head of College signature	
Date	
Assistant Head signature	
Date	

7. Information About Counselling E-Portfolio System

As you advance in your studies, your counselling knowledge and skills will grow in a variety of different areas. To help you recognise and reflect on that growth, you will use Qualls e-portfolio to monitor your learning (at the start of your studies).

The purpose of this guide is to provide you with instructions on how to access and navigate Qualls E-portfolio. It has been designed to offer different levels of permission. To login, you will require a username and password. Each user will have their own individual accounts, as this will assist in audit tracking and increase the security of student data. You will be provided with a unique password.

Section Overview This part of the guide will show you how to login to the E-portfolio system and how to navigate around the homepage as a student. It will also explain what each of the menu functions allows you to do as a user and what all of the icons represent (see [Quick Start Guide for Learners.pdf](#) (quals-direct.co.uk)).

How are e-portfolios useful?

E-portfolios are a unique tool that allows you to track your own growth as a student. You can use your portfolio to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and growth. The college use these portfolios as a tool to assess effectiveness, which is beneficial for tutors, placement providers, and for students.

It is incredibly rewarding to see your hard work paying dividends via your abilities to converse fluently about psychological theories and findings, evaluate and produce psychological research, communicate your ideas clearly and professionally, and so on.

Our portfolio is centered around the five goals, which includes the BACP Guidelines for trainee counsellors - Knowledge Base in Counselling, Inquiry and Critical Thinking, Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World, Communication, and Professional Development. The portfolio is designed to help you demonstrate these outcomes. Specific requirements and suggestions are detailed in the Handbook.

Making your e-portfolio work for you.

The course offers you a wide range of possible experiences, from the classes, to the experiential learning opportunities you have (e.g., role-plays, experiential process, group, placement, conferences and workshops). Your e-portfolio should be a reflection of your unique experiences, framed in terms of your specific values, interests, and goals.

You have great flexibility in what you choose to include. We ask that you include the required assignments (detailed in your handbook), but beyond that, you simply need to provide some form of evidence—from any source you think is most relevant (creative artwork, journals etc.)—**in each of the 5 areas discussed below, and a short reflection detailing how and why that evidence demonstrates what you know and what skills you have.** The requirements described below refer to what your **completed** portfolio should include (by the end of the Course).

What do I need to include in my e-portfolio?

Overall structure: Evidence + Reflection. In each of the learning outcomes(criterion) represented in your portfolio, you should include evidence of your learning (e.g., assignments: essays, case studies, reports, presentations, lit review, research proposal, learning reviews, excerpt, a description of an experience in a an practicum (clinical portfolio)), and a corresponding reflection in which you articulate how and why this showcases your learning. Please be specific in your reflections; make sure that the person reading it can not only get a sense of your knowledge, but also your ability to articulate what you know and why it's valuable and relevant to your

personal goals and interests. **(See the last page of this document for examples of how to present and reflect on evidence of your learning.)**

1. **Discipline knowledge.** You will graduate with knowledge of the theories of psychological therapy - In this section of your E-portfolio, you should provide evidence of knowledge in at least two psychological domains (cognitive, social, biological, and developmental).

o **Submission requirements:**

- Evidence illustrating your learning (**essays, case studies**)
- Reflection in which you discuss how the assignment/experience demonstrates your knowledge in that domain (**reflective learning journal (termly)**).
- This will allow you (and others) to see the growth you experienced throughout the program.

2. **Inquiry skills/Critical thinking.** In addition to the content of psychological therapy, students are expected to graduate with an exceptional understanding of the methods of the discipline. This includes the ability to critique (**book or lit review**) and the ability to design a **research proposal (unit 5)**, and to explain how you would interpret and evaluate psychological findings.

o **Minimum submission requirements:**

- Research proposal paper demonstrating your knowledge (can be from Research Seminar)
- Final essay paper demonstrating your research skills
- Accompanying reflections on how these excerpts demonstrate your inquiry skills.
- **Additional suggested content:** Excerpts/descriptions of your experience of other settings (e.g., a practicum or workshop attended) that demonstrate your inquiry skills and critical thinking, as this will demonstrate growth as you work through the course.

3. **Ethical reasoning.** By the time you graduate, you will have had a variety of experiences—in classes and beyond—that relate to your ability to reason about ethical conduct, and make decisions ethically.

o **Minimum submission requirements:**

- An assignment that demonstrates your ability to apply ethical principles to solve problems or navigate novel situations (unit 3 assignment)
- Accompanying reflections on how the ethics seminar and other assignment/experience facilitated your ability to reason and make decisions ethically. Again, this evidence, will allow you to demonstrate growth.

4. **Oral and written communication.** You will be require you to write research proposals or reports, literature reviews, and other forms of professional writing, as well as creating presentations. You may even participate in an independent study, and write a paper of your project. Choose the best exemplars of your professional writing and presentation skills for your e-portfolio.

o **Minimum submission requirements:**

- Assignments demonstrating written communication skills (will usually be your proposal from Research Methods) An excerpt demonstrating oral communication skills (e.g., description of an oral presentation).
- Reflections that analyse the strengths showcased in these pieces of evidence (e.g., What in particular is strong about the writing example you chose? What aspects of oral communication did you refine in the presentation you included/described?)
- **Additional suggested content:** Learning review that would help readers to see growth in these domains

5. **Professional development.** Throughout your college education, you should be actively connecting the knowledge and skills you acquire with long-term professional goals. Your e-portfolio is designed to tell the story of who you were when you arrived at Reflect On academy College, who you want to be when you leave, and how your experiences here helped you to progress toward your goals.
6. **Experiential Learning.** Elaborate on your applied or experiential learning to demonstrate your professional development. You can list out your experiences and then create separate pages for experiences you would like to elaborate upon. (you can create subtitle for your use on the portfolio template (weekly journal), Include excerpts, reflections, pictures, etc. that showcase experiences you have had in classes, practicum, and so on that have brought you closer to your professional goals.

When should each of these pieces be completed?

You will add pieces of evidence to your e-portfolio (see handbook for submission dates). Upload the required assignment for marking, once marked, you will be notified of your progress (we'll check on your progress throughout the programme).

Where can I go if I have questions about my e-portfolio?

If you're having trouble figuring out how to navigate or add to your e-portfolio, or if you have any questions about the psychology department's requirements, feel free to check out the e-portfolio resources on the psychology department's website, or contact the psychology department's e-portfolio fellow. Their contact details, including

Examples of How to Present and Reflect on Evidence of Your Learning

Example 1: Using an Assignment Excerpt to Demonstrate Knowledge of Biological Psychology

Class: Health Psychology

Professor: Dr. Smith

Semester: Fall 2010

Assignment Description: Term paper on the relationship between psychosocial stress and the metabolic syndrome.

Paper Excerpt:

"Chronic stress impacts the efficacy of the satiety hormones leptin and insulin (Andrews & Walker, 1999; Darmon et al., 2006). Specifically, it contributes leptin insensitivity (i.e., the release of leptin from fat cells no longer produces feelings of satiety, as it normally would) and insulin resistance (i.e., insulin is no longer able to effectively regulate blood glucose levels), both of which have a number of harmful consequences. First, because leptin is directly released from fat cells, high leptin levels (indicating large amounts of stored energy) normally inhibit further feeding (Harris, 2000), and also prevent further energy storage in the form of adipose tissue (Friedman & Halaas, 1998). However, for someone experiencing leptin insensitivity, the body does not properly interpret this signal, and consequently believes that it is "starving," despite high levels of circulating leptin. It thus continues to signal hunger, and to store glucose as adipose tissue, thus contributing to excess accumulation of abdominal fat. Additionally, leptin resistance produces an inflammatory response in adipose tissue to accommodate the expansion of fat cells and thus prevent damage to the cells (Hamilton, Pagila, Kwan, & Deital, 1995). This too contributes to adiposity, due to the fact that the fat cells expand past the point that they normally would." **Reflection:**

This paper required me to write a comprehensive literature review regarding the multifaceted ways in which psychosocial stress interacts with physiological systems to impact health. I reviewed

indirect ways in which these variables are related (e.g., effects on eating, exercise, and other health-related behaviours), as well as several direct links (e.g., the effects of elevated cortisol). Reading about and writing an integrative review on this topic facilitated a deep understanding of a number of physiological systems (e.g., endocrinology, satiety mechanisms) and their reciprocal relationships with psychological and social function. Given that the interplay between mental and physiological states is of core interest within biological psychology, my ability to write fluently about these concepts clearly evidences my mastery of foundational concepts within this area.

Example 2: Using an Experience Description to Demonstrate Knowledge of Developmental Psychology

Class: Evolutionary Psychology

Professor: Dr. Jones Semester: Fall 2009

Assignment Description: A class presentation on the topic of incest avoidance mechanisms.

Description:

For this assignment, I was required to find empirical research articles relevant to the topic of how humans avoid close kin as mates, and to give a 45-minute presentation summarizing the key theoretical reasons for incest avoidance, and the empirical evidence for a particular adaptation that humans have evolved to avoid incest. The research that I reviewed and integrated into my presentation demonstrated that humans seem to use close association early in life as a mechanism to distinguish close kin; when a child lives with or has extensive contact with another child prior to the age of 10, they tend to consider them undesirable as a mate later in life. This assignment required me to learn about critical periods in development in which these preferences solidify, and to integrate findings from several articles into a clear presentation for my classmates.

Reflection:

While EP wasn't a "developmental psychology" class, it did draw on fundamental concepts in developmental psychology (e.g., how early life events impact people later, critical developmental periods). This presentation in particular required me to learn about a particular developmental process, a sort of "reverse imprinting" that seems to take place in young children that functions to help us avoid genetically related others as mates. Researchers tend to think about this as an example of a "critical period" in human development, during which a child's experiences influence their psychology later in life. In this way, I gained mastery in an area of research that is underpinned by explicitly developmental concepts.