Unacceptable Behaviour, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy

Responsibility of:	PerpetuityARC Training
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Scope

This policy sets out Perpetuity Training's commitment to protecting students and staff from unacceptable behaviour, harassment and sexual misconduct and applies to all members of Perpetuity Training including current students, staff, contractors, suppliers and visitors, in compliance with Perpetuity Training, University of West London and the Office of Students E6 condition.

Purpose

The main purpose of this policy is to educate both students and staff in the prevention of all forms of unacceptable behaviour, harassment, and sexual misconduct. This policy ensures a single source of information, and upholds that processes and procedures are clearly outlined in the event of any such event occurring.

Perpetuity Training is fully committed to providing a positive experience for all students and staff and cultivating an environment where everyone is treated with courtesy and consideration. Perpetuity Training is committed to ensuring that all differences are valued and diversity is respected. All students and staff have the right to live, study, work and relax in an environment where they feel safe and protected.

Perpetuity Training, together with UWL's senior leadership team, supports the promotion of a culture where the whole community works towards having an environment where unacceptable behaviour, harassment and sexual misconduct (in all forms) is not tolerated. Perpetuity Training ensure that there are arrangements in place to listen to and support all students and staff who experience any form of unacceptable behaviour. Support will be offered to both the Reporting Party and the Responding Party.

Expectations

Perpetuity Training expects the highest standards of behaviour from all members of the Perpetuity Training community, whether on Perpetuity Training premises, while undertaking Perpetuity Training activities externally, its online platforms including Virtual Learning Environment e.g. Moodle and Perpetuity Training social media accounts in line with the Perpetuity Training's Student Code of Conduct and Staff Policy. All members should be aware of their own behaviour and how it impacts others. This policy sets out the standards of behaviour expected from students and staff, guidance on what is and what is not acceptable and how unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with.

Members of Perpetuity Training recognise the significant impact of all experiences of unacceptable behaviour, harassment and sexual misconduct and acknowledge the potential detrimental impact it may have on a person's wellbeing, studies and employment, regardless of when the experience occurred.

Members of the Perpetuity Training will respond to all reports received in relation to unacceptable behaviour, harassment or sexual misconduct. Whilst recognising that some experiences may constitute a criminal offence, we will ensure that, in all cases,

reports are carefully and sensitively managed by relevant staff members through a transparent process with clear communications. Perpetuity Training will also respect the right of the individual disclosing an incident to choose how to take forward a disclosure.

In exceptional circumstances, however, where there is a serious criminal offence and/or there is significant risk to the individual or our community, Perpetuity Training may report the matter to the police and/or may investigate it internally. In such instances Perpetuity Training would always keep the individual fully informed of the proposed action to be taken before doing so. In some circumstances, it may be necessary for Perpetuity Training to progress a reported incident even if the staff member or student wishes to withdraw from the formal process.

Timescales

Perpetuity Training normally expects allegations of unacceptable behaviour, harassment and sexual misconduct within 3 months of the incident taking place to allow for the most effective investigation to take place. However, Perpetuity Training recognises that there may be circumstances where it may take longer for a student or staff member to disclose an incident. Where a disclosure is received more than 3 months from the date the incident is alleged to have taken place; the disclosure will be taken seriously and where possible, reasonable attempts will be made to obtain relevant information to determine the appropriate response.

Where disclosures are made which fall within the scope of this policy, they will be dealt within a timely manner. Where it may be necessary for matters to be referred to Perpetuity Training's Student or Staff Disciplinary Procedure, the timescales set out therein will apply as far as it is reasonable and possible to do so.

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

Perpetuity Training will annually evaluate the effectiveness of this policy through:

- A record of the number of reports received
- Categories of misconduct reported (Formal)
- Outcomes of investigations by type
- Evaluate the effectiveness of this policy through feedback
- Identify areas for improvement
- Report on compliance with Condition E6 to the governing body
- Review and update the policy annually.

Definitions

The definitions listed below are there to inform the reader's understanding of both Perpetuity Training's perspective and / or drawn on statutory definitions.

Perpetuity Training also recognises that there are potentially additional types of behaviour that will constitute a breach of this policy and may be considered under any other relevant internal disciplinary policies and regulations.

Reporting Party is the person who is making an allegation or complaint against another person.

Responding Party is the person who the allegation or complaint is made against

What is unacceptable behaviour, harassment and sexual misconduct?

Unacceptable behaviour may involve actions, words or physical gestures that could reasonably be perceived to be the cause of another person's distress or discomfort. This behaviour does not necessarily have to be face-to-face, and may take many forms such as written, telephone, text or email communications, or on social media. Some examples are included below, but this list is by no means exhaustive:

- Violent, aggressive, or abusive behaviour, such as shouting or personal insults
- Spreading malicious rumours or gossip
- Threats of or actual physical violence
- Offensive or indecent comments or body language
- Displaying offensive material or graffiti relating to an individual
- Innuendo or spreading gossip based on sexual orientation or gender identity
- Inappropriate initiation or 'hazing' ceremonies for sports teams or other societies
- Using social or other on-line media to harass or communicate harassing statements about students or staff
- Creating a hostile environment through comments about, for example, race, disability, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Victimisation, treating someone badly because they have made a complaint about discrimination.

Harassment: Perpetuity Training adopts the definition of harassment under the Equality Act 2010 and Protection from Harassment Act 1997 (only applicable to the UK). The Equality Act 2010 section 26 defines harassment as:

'harassment, including sexual harassment, includes unwanted behaviour or conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment because of, or connected to, one or more of the following protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.'

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as:
'a course of conduct conducted on at least two occasions that harasses one other person, or a course of conduct that harasses two or more persons at least once each. References to harassing a person include alarming the person or causing the person distress.'

For students Perpetuity Training adopts the test to be applied in determining harassment used by the Courts and recommended by the Office for Students. Staff should refer to Perpetuity Training's Staff Policy.

Test (for students only)
Whether conduct is considered as 'harassment', Perpetuity Training will consider:

1. The perception of the person who is at the receiving end of the conduct;
2. The other circumstances of the case; and
3. Whether it is reasonable for the conduct to have that effect.

What Does This Mean?

Test

1. Perception of the person who is receiving the conduct
   This is a subjective test and depends on whether the individual themselves regard the conduct as violating their dignity or creating an intimidating environment for them.

2. Other circumstances of the case
   The University will take into account relevant circumstances of the case. This can include the personal circumstances of the person on the receiving end of the conduct, their health (including mental health), mental capacity; cultural norms; or previous experience of harassment.

3. Whether it is reasonable for the conduct to have that effect
   This is an objective test. It is based on the principle about whether another person would reasonably consider the conduct to be unacceptable. Where this is not found to be the case, it is unlikely that such conduct would be considered to satisfy a finding of 'unwanted conduct'.

Sexual misconduct refers to a range of inappropriate and unwanted behaviours and offences of a sexual nature. It covers all forms of sexual violence, including but not limited to,

- Intimate partner violence
- Coercive controlling behaviour
- Stalking
- Non-consensual sexual touching (including groping)
- Sexual harassment (unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which violates a person's personal boundary, dignity and consent; makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated or creates a hostile or offensive environment)
- Abusive or degrading remarks of a sexual nature
- Distributing private and personal explicit images or video footage of an individual without their consent (as defined by the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2025)
- Sexual Assault (as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003)
- Rape (as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003).

Sexual misconduct is a serious public health issue within society and is not specific to higher education, but evidence suggests disclosures by the student community are increasing.

Sexual misconduct is known to have significant negative effects on a student's mental health and well-being and can have long lasting impact on their sense of safety within Perpetuity Training and external environment. It can also impact their academic progress. We use a whole-University approach to ensure staff and students feel safe, valued and respected and will work towards having an environment where sexual misconduct, in all forms, will be eliminated. Perpetuity Training is committed to supporting anyone making a disclosure as well as anyone receiving the disclosure and take all disclosures seriously.

Incidents of sexual misconduct and violence also constitute a criminal offence under English law. Such incidents may be addressed through criminal proceedings, internal disciplinary proceedings, or in some cases, both.

Relationship abuse: a pattern of abusive and/or coercive behaviours (such as threats, isolation and intimidation) used to incite fear, maintain power and control over a former or current intimate partner or family members. Relationship abuse can be perpetrated by people who are 'personally connected' including partners/former partners, family members and people sharing responsibility of a child.

The abuse can be:

- Emotional
- Financial
- Sexual
- Physical

- Psychological
- Forced marriage
- Female genital mutilation

Coercive and Controlling behaviour: a form of domestic abuse and an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten the person. This controlling behaviour is designed to make a person dependent by isolating them from support, exploiting them, depriving them of independence and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Consent of sexual activities is when all people agree to and are comfortable engaging in the behaviour, there is mutual consent; both parties must be free to, and have the capacity to, make this choice.

- Capacity to consent: Free consent cannot be given if the individual does not have the capacity to give consent. Incapacitation occurs when an individual is asleep, unconscious, semi-conscious, or in a state of intermittent consciousness, or any other state of unawareness that a sexual act may be occurring. Incapacitation may also occur on account of a mental or developmental disability, or as the result of alcohol or drug use.

- Alcohol and/or Drug Use: Incapacitation arising from alcohol or drug consumption should be evaluated on the basis of how the alcohol/drugs have affected the individual; signs of incapacitation may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following: slurred speech, unsteady gait, bloodshot eyes, dilated pupils, unusual behaviour, blacking out, a lack of full control over physical movements, a lack of awareness of circumstances or surroundings, and/or an inability to communicate effectively. Intoxication is never a defence for committing an act of sexual violence and misconduct, or for failing to obtain consent. If there is any doubt as to the level or extent of one's own or the other individual's capacity to consent, the safest approach is to not engage in a sexual act.

- Consent videos: It is important that individuals understand consent. Here are three videos explaining consent.

  Consent - Cup of Tea
  Consent - Can I wear your hat?
  F.R.I.E.S. What is Consent

Further information about consent is available here.

Unwanted conduct is conduct which is 'unwelcomed' or 'uninvited'.

It covers a wide range of behaviour. It can include:

- spoken words
- written words
- banter

- posts or contact on social media
- imagery
- graffiti
- physical gestures
- facial expressions
- mimicry
- jokes or pranks
- acts affecting a person's surroundings
- aggression
- physical behaviour towards a person or their property.

This list is illustrative and not exhaustive examples of unwanted conduct.

What Does Unwanted Conduct Mean?

It is not necessary for a person to say that they object to the conduct for it to be unwanted.

The person's objection will be considered in the determination of whether conduct is unwanted together with whether it is reasonable for the conduct to have that effect on the person.

Unwanted conduct amounts to harassment if the unwanted conduct has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere.

For example, where conduct violates a person's dignity it will be considered as unwanted conduct.

Bystander intervention

Bystander intervention is when someone witnesses an event and steps in to stop harm before it happens, ensuring their own safety at all times. Unlike a **passive** bystander who takes no action, an **active** bystander chooses to challenge inappropriate or threatening behaviour.

For further information please view : Be an Active Bystander - Stand Up & Step In

UWL's goal is to work towards educating staff and students to help prevent events or situations of unwanted behaviours occurring and to enable them to feel confident in addressing a situation if it does, and that they are supported if they do report or intervene.

This is in line with the Perpetuity Training's mandatory training for students and staff.

Complicity is defined as any act that knowingly helps, promotes, or encourages someone else to behave inappropriately or illegally.

Vexatious reporting involves the persistent and repetitive reporting of allegations, which are unsubstantiated, without merit, frivolous, unreasonable and unwarranted.

Malicious reporting occurs when an individual makes allegations that they know lacks a basis in fact, is inaccurate or misleading, that is made recklessly, or knowingly or deliberately for the purpose of undue advantage or causing harm to a person or Perpetuity Training.

Behaviour towards others

In line with Perpetuity Training's Student Code of Conduct and Perpetuity Training's Staff Disciplinary Policy expect:

All Perpetuity Training staff, students and visitors should be treated with courtesy, and respect everyone's right to work, study and live in a safe, secure environment, free from anxiety, fear, intimidation and harassment.

Everyone should behave in a manner compatible with Perpetuity Training's Equality and Diversity Policy and not discriminate or harass anyone based on their age, disability, gender re-assignment, marital status, pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

No-one should use abusive, threatening or violent language or behaviour in person or through Perpetuity Training's online platforms, or by email, texts or social media.

Staff / Student relationships

Staff-student relationships must be built on trust and impartiality. Personal relationships risk compromising this and may affect students' experience or the perception of fairness.

Staff are strongly discouraged from forming personal relationships with students due to the inherent power imbalance. This applies to all students, regardless of course or level. Relationships with students under 18 are considered a safeguarding concern and may constitute a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2000.

It is considered unprofessional for staff to initiate or pursue personal relationships with students. Any behaviour that undermines the professional relationship—such as inappropriate messaging, socialising, or requests of a personal nature—may result in disciplinary action. Serious misconduct (e.g., requesting sexual favours) will be dealt with firmly.

If a personal relationship exists or develops between a staff member and a student, it must be disclosed to the Line Manager. The Line Manager and Senior Management Team will review arrangements to ensure the student's interests and fairness are safeguarded.

Freedom of Speech

This policy is implemented consistently with Perpetuity Training's obligations to uphold freedom of speech and academic freedom. This applies specifically to the requirements on UK higher education providers under the Higher Education Freedom of Speech Act

2023. For provision taking place overseas or for overseas providers, local freedom of speech regulation may override the provisions within the UK Act.

Exposure to lawful academic content, discussion of controversial ideas, or participation in open debate, even if upsetting to some, does not constitute harassment unless it is targeted, personal, and unlawful.

This policy does not restrict student and staff rights to express themselves in accordance with freedom of speech provisions. Perpetuity Training supports all stakeholders' rights to freedom of speech within the law, academic freedom and tolerance for controversial views within an educational context.

Perpetuity Training 's Freedom of Speech Policy sets out the Perpetuity Training 's approach.

Training and awareness: To support preventative measures mandatory training for all students will be provided online via Blackboard via the module 'Consent Matters' by UWL. This training will be available pre and post enrolment and all training materials are evidenced based and reviewed regularly for effectiveness.

To support preventative measures mandatory training for all staff will be provided by the parent company – Mitie PLC via modules on staff platform.

Staff in specialist roles will receive enhanced training.

PROCESS

Reporting unacceptable behaviour, harassment or sexual misconduct

This policy is intended to support students who feel they've experienced inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour, whether from fellow students or staff. If you believe you've been affected, we encourage you to reach out for support.

Unacceptable behaviour includes actions, communication, or gestures—delivered in person or through digital means (such as email, social media, or messaging)—that may reasonably cause someone distress or discomfort.

Confidentiality

We respect confidentiality wherever possible. During investigations, we protect the identities of all involved and ask participants to maintain discretion. However, in cases involving safeguarding, criminal disclosures, or serious risk, we may be legally or ethically required to act.

We do not use confidentiality to silence victims. Individuals may speak about their experiences after investigations conclude. Where appropriate, we share anonymised outcomes to support transparency, learning, and accountability.

Reporting Options

If you feel unsafe, targeted, or uncomfortable due to another person's behaviour:

For students:

- Address it directly: If you feel safe doing so, let the individual know how their behaviour is affecting you—they may be unaware.
- Seek informal help: If direct conversation doesn't work or isn't possible, speak with a staff member within the Support Team or someone you trust in the organisation. Informal solutions, such as mediation, may be available.
- Raise it formally: If the issue persists or feels serious, submit a complaint in writing or via our Student Complaint Form. Contact us at training@linx-group.co.uk to begin this process.
    - The MSc Coordinator will investigate the complaint and discuss with you and any other relevant parties.
    - The MSc Coordinator will reply with a resolution or if resolution is not able to be reached, will escalate to:
        1. Senior Manager
        2. Director
    - A meeting/s will be arranged with you and the relevant parties, to discuss the complaint and possible resolution further.
    - You will be contacted in writing by email once a resolution has been agreed.

For staff:

- Address it directly: If you feel safe doing so, let the individual know how their behaviour is affecting you—they may be unaware.
- Seek informal help: If direct conversation doesn't work or isn't possible, speak with your Line Manager or someone you trust in the organisation.
- Raise it formally: If the issue persists or feels serious, please refer to the Staff Grievance Policy.

Reporting Party	Informal Reporting	Formal Reporting	Anonymous Reporting	Support
Students	Support Team	Student Complaints Procedure	Can trigger wider safeguarding reviews or pattern recognition, but direct action may be limited unless sufficient information is provided.	Perpetuity Training's Support Team. Ayesha Asavla – Ayesha.juddoo@linx-group.co.uk
Staff	Line Manager or HR	Staff Grievance Policy	Can contribute to trend analysis and wider safeguarding interventions but may not result in individual action without identifiable details.	Line Manager HR Trade Union Representative
Bystanders	Confidential advice from Support Team or HR	Support to assist affected individuals with reporting	Information only but may inform targeted awareness campaigns or proactive prevention measures.	Support Team Line Manager HR

Appendix A

Support

There is a wide variety of support available to both students and staff, internally and externally.

Internally:

For Students:

Who	Where	Detail
Support Team	650 Pavilion Drive, Northampton Business Park, Northampton, NN4 7SL	training@lincx-group.co.uk 0116 277 3313
TogetherAll	Offers online anonymous peer to peer support. Available 24 hours/day. Includes self-help courses and resources, self-assessment questionnaires and articles to improve wellbeing	Togetherall Register for free using your UWL student details.

For Staff

Who	Where	Detail
Line Manager	See Staff Grievance Policy	See Staff Grievance Policy
TogetherAll	Offers online anonymous peer to peer support. Available 24 hours/day. Includes self-help courses and resources, self-assessment questionnaires and articles to improve wellbeing	Togetherall

Externally:

Who	Support	Detail
The Samaritans	Offers emotional support 24 hours/day and 365 days/year, nationwide	116 123

The Havens	Specialist London centres for people who have been raped or sexually assaulted	0203 299 6900
Rape Crisis (SARC)	Information of the nearest sexual assault referral centre	SARCs | Rape Crisis England & Wales
Papyrus	Offers advice and support for young people considering suicide	0800 068 4141
Victim Support	Offers support for victims of crime and traumatic incidents	0808 168 9111 Home - Victim Support
Support Line	Confidential emotional support	01708 765200 Support Line
Suzy Lamplugh	Offers advice for victims of stalking	0808 802 0300
Revenge Porn	Offers support for adults who are experiencing intimate image abuse	0345 6000 459
Galop (Hate Crime)	Offers support for LGBT+ people who've experienced hate crime, domestic abuse or sexual violence.	020 7704 2040 (hate) 0800 999 5428 (domestic abuse)
Sharan	Offers culturally sensitive advice on a range of practical and support services for Asian women.	0844 504 3231

For a full list of charities and organisations that can support students and staff on a range of issues, please refer to the appendix on the cause for concern policy.

APPENDIX B

Relevant Policies

POLICY	HYPERLINK
Code of Conduct (Students)	Student Code of Conduct 2025.pdf
Complaints procedure policy (Students)	Perpetuity Training MSc Complaints Procedure.pdf
Disciplinary regulations (Students)	Non-Academic Disciplinary Issues Policy.pdf Unacceptable Behaviour Policy.pdf
Disciplinary policy and procedure (Staff)	Staff Disciplinary Policy.pdf Staff Grievance Policy.pdf
Equality, Diversity and inclusion	Equality and Diversity 2025 .pdf
Fitness to study (Students)	Fitness to Study Policy.pdf
Freedom of Speech	Freedom of Speech Policy 2025.pdf
Safeguarding policy	Safeguarding Policy 2025.pdf
Staff/student relationships policy	Staff-Student Relationships Policy 2025.pdf