

## Learner Disciplinary Misconduct Policy and Procedure

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### 1 Introduction

1.1 At Step into Learning, we prioritise maintaining a conducive learning environment that fosters growth and development for all our learners. As part of our commitment to uphold standards of behaviour and ensure fairness, we have established the Learner Disciplinary Misconduct Policy. In reaching decisions reasonable adjustments will be considered at all stages during the disciplinary hearing. This aligns with our commitment to the Equality Act

### 2 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all individuals enrolled as learners at Step into Learning, encompassing both full-time and part-time learners. It governs disciplinary procedures for cases of learner misconduct, ensuring consistent treatment and procedural fairness.

### 3 Definition

3.1 Learner misconduct refers to behaviour that breaches the established standards outlined in Step into Learning's Code of Conduct. This includes actions such as disruptive



behaviour, academic neglect, or gross misconduct, which may jeopardise the learning environment or the well-being of others.

## 4 Policy

Step into Learning's Learner Disciplinary Misconduct Policy operates on the following principles:

- **Procedural Fairness:** All disciplinary procedures will adhere to principles of fairness, ensuring that investigations are thorough, and decisions are made impartially.
- **Promotion of Standards:** The policy aims to encourage learners to meet the expected standards of behaviour outlined by Step into Learning, promoting a respectful and inclusive learning environment.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity:** We are committed to upholding equality, diversity and inclusivity principles, ensuring that all learners are treated fairly regardless of personal characteristics.
- **Clear Communication:** Learners will be informed of the expectations outlined in Step into Learning's Code of Conduct, ensuring clarity regarding acceptable behaviour.
- **Access to Fair Hearing:** Learners have the right to a fair hearing throughout the disciplinary process, including the opportunity to be accompanied by a supporter.
- **Thorough Investigation:** Allegations of misconduct will be investigated thoroughly before any disciplinary action is taken, ensuring that decisions are based on established facts.
- **Progressive Discipline:** Disciplinary actions will be proportionate to the severity and frequency of the misconduct, with a focus on corrective measures and support for positive behaviour.
- **Appeals Process:** Learners have the right to appeal disciplinary decisions, providing a mechanism for review and ensuring accountability.
- **Record-Keeping:** Records of disciplinary actions will be maintained for transparency and accountability, with due consideration for data protection and confidentiality.

## 5 Procedure for Learner Disciplinary Action

### Informal Stage:

Minor misconduct may warrant informal verbal warnings by tutors or staff members, emphasising the Code of Conduct and expected standards.



### **Formal Stage:**

Investigation: A thorough investigation into alleged misconduct is conducted within 5 working days, involving interviews, and gathering evidence.

Outcome and Action: Possible outcomes include no case to answer, counselling, or substantiated allegations, with disciplinary actions based on severity.

Investigation: The investigator, the decision maker and the appeal reviewer will be 3 independent people.

All learners involved in the process will have access to the evidence and an opportunity to respond prior to any decision being made.

### **Disciplinary Framework:**

Recorded Oral Warning: Serious or persistent misconduct may result in a recorded oral warning, with a scheduled disciplinary interview within 5 working days.

First Written Warning: Further misconduct may lead to a first written warning, detailing expectations and consequences, with a right to appeal.

Final Written Warning: Continued misconduct may result in a final written warning or immediate final written warning for serious offenses.

Exclusion: Persistent misconduct despite warnings may lead to exclusion, with clear reasons and appeal rights.

### **Suspension:**

Serious misconduct or threats to the learning environment may require temporary suspension by authorised personnel for a maximum of 5 working days.

### **Appeals:**

Learners have the right to submit written appeals within 10 working days at all stages except for recorded oral warnings, with decisions communicated within 5 working days.

Learner will have the right to a formal hearing prior to any exclusion

Learner will receive written reasons for any action

Learner will always have the right to appeal to a senior independent party

### **Record-Keeping:**

Records of disciplinary actions are retained for 12 months from the last action date, ensuring accountability and monitoring learner conduct.

### **GDPR:**

All data is held in accordance with UK GDPR

