



## *FE Learner Probationary Period Policy*

### **1. Scope and Purpose**

- 1.1. This policy is created to manage learners who fail to achieve minimum expected requirements as Loughborough College Group learner, within the first 6 weeks of their chosen programme. This process may result in withdrawal from study programme, or deferral until a later date. This sits outside of the Student Behaviour Management Policy due to restricted time frames; however disciplinary and interventions meetings may still take place where appropriate. All cases will be reviewed by an independent panel and will rely on factual evidence and appropriate use of processes.
- 1.2. This policy applies to all Loughborough College Group Further Education learners aged 16-19 and adult learners, studying full time or part time at levels entry, 1–3. This policy applies to progressing and returning learners. References to the Group or College refer to all parts of the group.
- 1.3. The Learner Probationary Period Policy (LPPP) is intended to guide staff in taking a fair and consistent approach in the matters of standards and expectations of learners.

### **2. Policy Statement**


- 2.1. Loughborough College Group has an inclusive culture and will ensure that everyone in our student community will have the opportunity to develop education and skills to the highest level attainable for them.
- 2.2. Where appropriate reasonable adjustments can be made and access to support can be signposted, depending on the individual circumstances and the learner's ability to meet the agreed learning outcomes on study programme. Occasionally, continuation on the course is not in the best interest of all parties.

### **3. Impact Assessments**

- 3.1. This policy/procedure has undergone an impact assessment process during review to ensure that any foreseeable risks and implications have been appropriately considered.
- 3.2. Equal Opportunities: The policy has been reviewed to uphold principles of equality and non-discrimination in accordance with equal opportunities legislation, ensuring fair treatment for all individuals.
- 3.3. Data Protection: All personal data processing activities governed by this policy have been assessed for risk and are fully compliant with current data protection laws. Privacy-by-

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design has been embedded as a core approach, with safeguards implemented to protect data subjects.


- 3.4. Safeguarding, Health & Safety, and Environmental Sustainability: Relevant aspects of safeguarding, health and safety, and environmental sustainability have been impact assessed to support a secure, inclusive, and responsible working and learning environments for all.

#### **4. Policy**

- 4.1. Mandatory attendance is required for all learners during induction, when all rules and regulations including Student Agreement and College Code of Conduct is delivered by the curriculum team. Once read and understood, learners demonstrate they understand the code of conduct by checking the "I have read" item on learner ILP or complete the equivalent processes across each Loughborough College Group site. Those learners who start late will complete the above on their first day as a Loughborough College student.
- 4.2. Where a learner has not met the minimum standard as defined by Student Agreement and College Code of Conduct and are failing to demonstrate satisfactory improvement, they are then subject to the possibility of being withdrawn from their course through the Probationary policy.
- 4.3. Students and parents / carers for any student under the age of 18 or 25 and under where they have an EHCP are informed verbally and in writing via email or letter to home address in the case of non-attendance and non-compliance with Student Agreement and College Code of Conduct. This is documented on the learner ILP, or equivalent system. Learner evidence, and steps taken by the curriculum team will be made readily available to the Probationary Panel, for decisions to be made.
- 4.4. Where a learner, parent / carer cannot be informed verbally, they must be informed via email or letter to home address that the learner is in breach of the Student Agreement and College Code of Conduct and is not meeting minimum expected requirements.
- 4.5. Where non-attendance occurs due to medical, mental health or pro-longed health purposes, curriculum, the Fitness to Study policy/procedure will be used.
- 4.6. Curriculum teams will consider the individual learner circumstance and make appropriate adjustments i.e. changes to group if feasible and appropriate.
- 4.7. Where learners with Educational Health Care Plans or High Needs have not met the minimum standard as defined by Student Agreement and College Code of Conduct and are failing to demonstrate satisfactory improvement, all relevant parties must be informed using the same procedures. Learner Support must be notified via email to

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initiate the emergency review process meetings with parents / carers, local authority and other relevant bodies.

- 4.8. Expectations of students and the probationary period will be made clear to all students and parents / carers where applicable. Students with declared learning difficulties or disabilities who need further support to understand the policy will be provided with this.
- 4.9. Where a learner is in breach of Student Agreement and College Code of Conduct and not meeting minimum expected requirements, the Curriculum Manager or equivalent, will make a request to the Head of Department or equivalent, in writing for consideration of withdrawal via the Probationary Panel. All evidence will be readily available at this stage.
- 4.10. Learners, parents and carers will be informed by phone call and writing that the learner is being referred to the Probationary Panel for consideration of withdrawal from the course. This will be followed up via email or letter to the home address.
- 4.11. Evidence for withdrawal may include but is not limited to;
- Non or poor (below 95%) attendance on any subjects enrolled on including English, Maths and main study programme.
  - Poor punctuality to any timetabled lessons.
  - Non-completion of college work, homework or independent study.
  - Non-compliance with PPE, uniform and Health and Safety breaches.
  - Lack of engagement in online and onsite lessons.
  - Disruptive behaviour or poor attitude to learning, peers and staff.
  - Student Behaviour Management Policy breaches.
- 4.12. The Probationary Panel will consist of impartial managers from the Wider Management Team. The panel will review all evidence and make a judgement based on individual circumstances; progress made to date and compliance with Student Agreement and College Code of Conduct.
- 4.13. Learners, parents and carers will be informed of outcomes in writing.
- 4.14. Where the decision is made that a learner is withdrawn, they will be signposted to guidance support on careers and advice.
- 4.15. Learners, parents and carers have the right to appeal.

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## 5. Appeals

- 5.1. At each stage of the LPPP, it is important that learners are given the right to appeal and are informed that they may seek advice on any support requirements from Learner Services and from the LSU.
- 5.2. All appeals must be made by email to the Director of Governance & Legal Services ([appeals@loucoll.ac.uk](mailto:appeals@loucoll.ac.uk)) and must state the grounds for the appeal (e.g. new evidence not considered by the panel, conduct or fairness of the original procedure, disagreement over sanction applied). Any appeal must be made within 5 working days of receiving the outcome letter.
- 5.3. The Director of Governance & Legal Services or nominated representative will review the appeal submitted to ensure that it includes grounds of appeal. The Director of Governance & Legal Services may request further information from the person appealing. Where an appeal is submitted without valid grounds of appeal, the Director of Governance & Legal Services may dismiss the appeal without further review. In exceptional circumstances, the Director of Governance & Legal Services in consultation with the relevant College Principal can uphold the appeal without further review. In all other cases where a valid appeal has been submitted and acknowledged, an Appeal Meeting will be convened. This will be recorded as an "Appeal Meeting." on Pro-Monitor.
- 5.4. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Director of Governance & Legal Services or nominated representative will acknowledge the appeal in writing via email and log it for review. All probationary appeals will then be referred to a senior manager and a member of the Wider Management Team (WMT) who has had no prior involvement in the matter.
- 5.5. The appeals panel will undertake a desk-based review within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal. There is no opportunity for the learner or their parent/carer to attend the desk-based review; however, the panel may contact them if further information or clarification is required. An outcome letter will be sent within 5 working days and logged onto ProMonitor. The letter will normally be sent by email to the student's personal account and to the parent/carer for learners under the age of 18. Requests can be made for the letter in other formats.
- 5.6. Following the desk-based review, the appeal can be upheld or dismissed. If the appeal is upheld, the staff member can amend the sanction applied at the original Probationary Panel meeting.
- 5.7. The decision of the appeal panel is final and the end of the Learner Probationary Period appeal process. No further right of appeal will be granted.

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## 6. Safeguarding

- 6.1. There may be occasions where breaches of the 'Learner Probationary Period Policy' immediately relate to or later raise a safeguarding issue. In these circumstances, safeguarding must be given a priority. All cases need to be treated on an individual basis and the normal safeguarding procedures will apply. At no time should the impending outcome of a disciplinary process delay the reporting of a safeguarding issue. If unsure, seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## 7. Location and Access

- 7.1. This document can be found here:
- The Loughborough College Group's Website
  - The Loughborough College Group's SharePoint

## 8. Linked Policies and Procedures

- 8.1. You may wish to view the following policies:
- Student Behaviour Management Policy
  - Fitness to Study Policy
  - Safeguarding Policy

## 9. Change Log

Date	Version	Details of Change	Reviewer	Reviewer Title

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