

Student Disciplinary Policy

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Department / Function: Academic / Student Experience

Owner: Academic Dean, Dr Manoj Ponugubati

Oversight committee: Academic Board / Academic Quality & Progress Panel

Approving body: Academic Board (recommendation) / Board of Governors (final approval)

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Regulatory Alignment with Office for Students (OfS) Conditions

The Student Disciplinary Policy forms a core part of the London Academy for Applied Technology's (LAAT) student governance and behavioural framework. It ensures that non-academic misconduct is managed fairly, consistently, and transparently, safeguarding the student experience and institutional integrity.

The Policy supports OfS Condition B1 by maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment. It aligns with Condition C1 by providing clear and accessible information regarding student behaviour expectations and disciplinary procedures. It ensures fairness and consistency under Condition C5 through structured investigation and decision-making processes. It supports governance and accountability under Conditions E1 and E2 through defined roles, oversight mechanisms, and secure record-keeping.

This Policy is informed by the UK Quality Code, the OIA Good Practice Framework, and Plymouth Marjon University's expectations.

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

This Policy defines the standards of behaviour expected of students and sets out how breaches of the Student Code of Conduct will be managed. It ensures that disciplinary matters are handled fairly, transparently, and proportionately.

Purpose Statement

LAAT is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive academic environment. This Policy ensures that student misconduct is addressed consistently and fairly, protecting individuals and the institution.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All students enrolled on LAAT programmes
- All modes and locations of study

It applies to behaviour:

- On campus
- During academic activities
- Online environments
- Off-campus where LAAT may be affected

Academic misconduct is excluded and addressed separately.

3. Definitions

3.1 General Definitions

3.1.1 Student Misconduct

Student misconduct refers to any behaviour that is inconsistent with LAAT's values, Student Code of Conduct, or institutional regulations, or which fails to demonstrate respect for LAAT, its staff, students, or its academic and operational activities. Misconduct includes actions that have the potential to cause harm, damage, disruption, or risk, regardless of whether such harm ultimately occurs.

3.1.2 Reporting student

A reporting student is a student who has raised a formal concern or report regarding the conduct of another student under this Policy.

3.1.3 Responding Student

A responding student is a student who is the subject of an allegation or disciplinary investigation under this Policy.

3.1.4 Witness

A witness is any individual who has relevant factual knowledge or credible information relating to an incident under investigation.

3.1.5 Character Reference

A character reference is a statement provided by an individual who can comment on the conduct, behaviour, or character of a student involved in a disciplinary process.

3.1.6 Representative

A representative is a person who may provide advice or make submissions on behalf of

a student during formal stages of the disciplinary process. Representatives may include student representatives or advisors but do not normally act in a legal capacity.

3.1.7 Support Person

A support person is someone who accompanies a student to meetings or hearings to provide pastoral or emotional support. A support person does not normally speak on behalf of the student or participate directly in proceedings.

3.1.8 Minor Restrictions on Activity

Minor restrictions refer to limited and proportionate measures placed on a student's activities or access, which do not affect their student status or substantially restrict access to learning opportunities. Examples may include:

- No-contact instructions
- Adjustments to timetable or teaching arrangements
- Restricted access to certain facilities or activities

3.1.9 Exclusion

Exclusion refers to a restriction placed on a student's access to specific premises, facilities, or activities, as determined by LAAT.

3.1.10 Suspension

Suspension refers to a temporary prohibition on attendance at LAAT, access to its premises, or participation in academic and related activities.

3.1.11 Expulsion

Expulsion refers to the permanent termination of a student's registration at LAAT.

3.2 Types of Misconduct

3.2.1 Categories of Misconduct

The following non-exhaustive categories provide examples of behaviours that may constitute misconduct:

a. Breach of Regulations and Policies

Failure to comply with LAAT policies, procedures, regulations, or lawful instructions issued by staff.

b. Disruption and Interference

Behaviour that disrupts, obstructs, or improperly interferes with teaching, learning, assessment, administrative processes, or institutional activities.

c. Deceptive or Dishonest Behaviour

Any form of dishonesty, including fraud, falsification of information, impersonation, or misrepresentation. Academic misconduct is addressed separately under the Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policy.

d. Damage, Misuse, or Theft of Property

Unauthorised use, damage, or theft of LAAT property, facilities, equipment, or digital systems.

e. Health and Safety Risks

Actions that pose a risk to health, safety, or wellbeing, including failure to comply with reasonable instructions or safety requirements.

f. Unacceptable Behaviour Towards Others

Behaviour that a reasonable person would consider inappropriate, unwanted, intimidating, or offensive towards others, including harassment or bullying. Consideration will be given to freedom of speech within lawful boundaries.

g. Physical Misconduct

Physical violence, threatening behaviour, or unwanted physical contact.

h. Sexual Misconduct

Any unwanted or non-consensual sexual behaviour, including inappropriate contact, communication, or conduct of a sexual nature.

i. Criminal Behaviour

Conduct that constitutes a criminal offence under UK law or other applicable jurisdictions. LAAT will not normally reinvestigate criminal matters but may take appropriate action based on available evidence.

j. Reputational Damage

Behaviour that brings, or is likely to bring, LAAT into disrepute or undermines its values, community, or reputation.

3.2.2 Non-Exhaustive Nature

The categories above are indicative and not exhaustive. Other behaviours may be considered misconduct where they conflict with LAAT's values, policies, or expectations.

3.2.3 Repeated Behaviour

Misconduct may arise from:

- A single serious incident; or
- A pattern of repeated behaviour

Repeated minor breaches may collectively be treated as more serious misconduct.

3.2.4 Aggravating Factors

When determining severity and outcomes, LAAT will consider aggravating factors, including:

- Repeated misconduct
- Evidence of intentional or premeditated behaviour
- Impact on individuals or the wider community
- Behaviour directed towards individuals based on protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

4. Principles

The Policy is guided by:

- Fairness and proportionality
- Transparency
- Timeliness
- Evidence-based decisions
- Confidentiality
- Student wellbeing

5. Governance and Oversight

The Academic Board oversees disciplinary arrangements.

A Disciplinary Panel handles serious cases.

The Board of Governors receives assurance on institutional risk and conduct.

6. Policy Statement

6.1 Promoting Positive Behaviour

LAAT will:

- Communicate expectations clearly
- Promote respectful behaviour
- Provide support and guidance

6.2 Disciplinary Process (Overview)

The disciplinary process includes:

- Stage 1 – Incident reported
- Stage 2 – Initial review
- Stage 3 – Formal investigation
- Stage 4 – Disciplinary Panel
- Stage 5 – Appeal
- Stage 6 – External review

A detailed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is provided in Appendix A.

6.3 Sanctions

Sanctions may include:

- Warning
- Behavioural agreement
- Restrictions
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Sanctions are applied proportionately.

6.4 Safeguarding and Risk

Where necessary:

- Immediate action may be taken
- Safeguarding procedures apply
- External authorities may be involved

7. Monitoring, Compliance and Review

Monitoring is undertaken through:

- Case registers
- Governance reporting

Compliance is mandatory.

The Policy is reviewed annually.

8. Responsible People and Roles include

- **Dean (Policy Owner): Dr Manoj Ponugubati**
Overall accountability for policy implementation, governance oversight, and regulatory alignment.
- **Programme Leader: Mr Amarjeet Singh**
Conducts initial case review and manages student communication.
- **Academic Quality Lead: TBC**
Oversees processes, maintains records, and produces institutional reports.
- **Safeguarding Lead: Mr Jay Sharda**
Manages safeguarding concerns, risk assessment, and external escalation.
- **Data Protection Officer: Ms Tripura Gollapalli**
Ensures GDPR compliance, data security, and proper records management.

List of people and contact

Role	Name	Contact email
Dean	Dr Manoj Ponugubati	manoj@laat.ac.uk
Programme Leader	Mr Amarjeet Singh	Amarjeet.singh@laat.ac.uk
Academic Quality Lead	TBC	TBC
Safeguarding Lead	Mr Jay Sharda	Jai.sharda@laat.ac.uk
Data Protection Officer	TBC	Dpo@laat.ac.uk

9. List of Document

- Disciplinary Incident Report Form
- Investigation Report Template
- Panel Outcome Letter
- Appeal Form
- Completion of Procedures Letter
- Student code of conduct
- Student complaint policy
- Safeguarding and prevent policy
- Equality, diversity and inclusion policy

10. Evidence

Evidence includes:

- Case records
- Reports
- Training documentation
- Monitoring and governance reporting

Mapping table for evidence items related to ofs conditions

Evidence Item	Purpose / What it Demonstrates	Relevant OfS Condition(s)
Case Records	Provide documented evidence of disciplinary cases, decisions, and outcomes, ensuring transparency, consistency, and audit trail of decision-making	C1 (Consumer Protection), C5 (Fair Treatment), E2 (Management and Governance)
Reports	Demonstrate institutional oversight, trend analysis, and continuous improvement in student conduct management	E1 (Governance), E2 (Management and Governance)

Training Documentation	Shows staff and student awareness of conduct expectations and disciplinary procedures, ensuring consistent and fair implementation	C1 (Transparency), C5 (Fair Treatment)
Monitoring and Governance Reporting	Provides assurance to Academic Board and Governors on disciplinary trends, risks, and effectiveness of processes	E1 (Governance), E2 (Management and Governance), E3 (Accountability)

Appendix A – Student Disciplinary Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Overview of Process Stages

- Stage 1 – Incident Reported
- Stage 2 – Initial Review
- Stage 3 – Formal Investigation
- Stage 4 – Disciplinary Panel
- Stage 5 – Appeal
- Stage 6 – External Review

Stage 1 – Incident Reporting

Incidents may be reported by:

- Staff or students
- Complaints
- Safeguarding concerns

Evidence may include:

- Written statements
- Digital records
- Witness accounts

Stage 2 – Initial Review

The Programme Leader or Student Experience Lead:

- Assesses severity
- Determines next steps
- Escalates where required

Stage 3 – Formal Investigation

The Investigating Officer:

- Reviews evidence
- Invites student response
- Conducts meetings
- Produces a report

Stage 4 – Disciplinary Panel

Panel considers:

- Evidence
- Student response
- Appropriate sanction

Stage 5 – Appeal

Grounds:

- Procedural error
- New evidence
- Unreasonable outcome
- Bias

Stage 6 – External Review

Students may escalate to the OIA.