



Learner Code of Conduct 2025

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Purpose

The Growth Company Education and Skills is committed to creating inclusive, respectful, and effective learning environments where all learners can thrive. Our Learner Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure sets clear expectations to promote consistent, fair behaviour management.

We aim to:

- Ensure all learners feel safe and supported.
- Promote a proactive, consistent approach to behaviour.
- Maintain fairness and transparency across all settings.
- Promote a culture of respect, responsibility, and high standards.
- Empower colleagues to manage and improve learner expectations.
- Encourage learners to contribute positively to GC and wider society.
- Reinforce the importance of diversity, liberty, mutual respect, and the rule of law.
- Build strong relationships that enable effective learning.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners and colleagues, across all learning environments including online platforms, GC premises and hired GC venues, for the full duration of their programme. This includes:

- Full-time study programmes (Education Programmes for Young People)
- Apprentices
- Adult learners

Subcontracted providers, who have their own policies for learner behaviour, must ensure that their policies meet GC required standards. This must be proven to the satisfaction of The Growth Company, Education and Skills.

Definitions

- **GC:** The Growth Company, Education and Skills
- **Learner:** Any participant who is classed as studying on a programme. This extends to apprentices, Study Programme, Adult Learners, Higher Education, Advanced Learner Loads etc.
- **Operational Colleagues:** Colleagues working in operational capacity (Delivery Managers, Tutors, Assessors etc)

1. Legal and Ethical Conduct

- Comply with UK laws, including those related to theft, fraud, violence, sexual abuse, substance misuse, weapons, and intimidation.
- Abide by our zero-tolerance approach to sexual abuse, harassment, bullying, substance misuse, and carrying weapons.
- Promote and uphold British values: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance.
- Challenge behaviour that glamorises violence or extremist beliefs.

2. Respect and Behaviour

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect, regardless of background or identity.
- Avoid offensive language, disruptive behaviour, or any form of discrimination, bullying, or harassment – including online.
- Maintain professional and respectful relationships with peers, tutors and GC colleagues.
- Refrain from wearing caps or hoods unless for religious or medical reasons.



3. Attendance and Participation

- Attend all sessions and appointments on time.
- Follow and abide by the GC Attendance and Punctuality Policy and absence reporting procedures.
- Actively participate in all programme activities.
- Provide constructive feedback to support continuous improvement.

4. Health, Safety, and Security

- Follow all health and safety instructions from staff.
- Wear learner ID or visitor passes when required.
- Take responsibility for personal belongings; items brought on site are at the learners' own risk.
- Report unattended items or suspicious behaviour, which may be investigated under the Prevent Duty.
- Use equipment responsibly and report faults promptly.
- Smoke/vape only in designated areas.
- Eat and drink only in permitted areas.

5. Digital Conduct

- Follow the Acceptable Use of IT Policy.
- Protect personal data and passwords.
- Do not share inappropriate content via social media, email, or online platforms.

6. Classroom and Learning Environment

- Switch off or store mobile phones during lessons, unless permitted by tutors.
- Respect the learning environment and avoid disruptive behaviour.

7. Workplace Conduct

When on placement or in employment, learners must:

- Follow the employer's policies and procedures.
- Maintain high standards of attendance and punctuality.
- Adhere to health, safety, safeguarding, and Prevent guidelines.
- Treat colleagues and staff with professionalism and respect.

8. Off-Site and Online Behaviour

These expectations also apply outside of Growth Company premises and in learners' personal time if behaviour negatively impacts the organisation, its learners, or its reputation – including through social media and other online platforms.

Apprenticeships

Apprentices are subject to both their employer's disciplinary procedures and The Growth Company's Learner Code of Conduct. Failure to comply with workplace policies may result in disciplinary action, including potential dismissal.

Misconduct during training sessions at Growth Company premises will be reported to the employer and may lead to disciplinary measures from both the employer and The Growth Company.

Learners with SEND and/or EHCP

In line with The Growth Company's statutory duties under the SEND Code of Practice (2015), the Equality Act (2010), and the Children and Families Act (2014), we are committed to ensuring that no learner is discriminated against, harassed, or victimised due to disability. We are legally required to make reasonable adjustments to prevent learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) from being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

Holding learners with SEN and/or EHCPs to the same behavioural expectations as their non-SEN peers—without consideration of how their needs may directly impact behaviour—may constitute discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.



Therefore:

No learner with SEN and/or an EHCP may be placed on any stage of the disciplinary process without prior notification to the Head of Inclusion. The Inclusion Coordinator, in collaboration with the Head of Inclusion, will:

- Review whether the learner's additional support needs have been accurately identified.
- Assess whether appropriate interventions and reasonable adjustments have been implemented and continuously reviewed.
- Ensure that learning support records, including referral documentation and learner action plans, are complete and reflect the learner's current needs.
- Liaise with delivery staff to evaluate the accessibility and inclusivity of programme materials and resources.
- Coordinate with external agencies and local authorities where relevant, particularly for learners with EHCPs.
- Make arrangements for specialist assessments and access arrangements where needed.

All colleagues involved in the learner's programme delivery or support must proactively collaborate with the Inclusion Coordinator, providing timely and accurate information, engaging in reviews, and implementing recommended adjustments. This includes responding to requests for documentation, participating in support planning, and attending relevant meetings or reviews.

The Head of Inclusion will review the extent and quality of this collaboration as part of their assessment of whether statutory and legal obligations have been met. If satisfied, they will support the setting of appropriate disciplinary stages.

If deficiencies in support or adjustments are identified, the Inclusion Coordinator has the authority to halt disciplinary proceedings immediately and initiate a review of practice. Outcomes of such reviews may include additional staff training, revision of support strategies, or the implementation of Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) to ensure compliance and best practice moving forward.

Roles and responsibilities

The below outlines the specific roles and responsibilities of all participants in relation to behaviour.

Learners

- Comply with UK laws and uphold GC's zero-tolerance approach to sexual abuse, harassment, bullying, substance misuse, carrying weapons, and other criminal behaviours including theft, fraud, violence, and intimidation.
- Promote and uphold British Values: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance.
- Challenge behaviour that glamorises violence or extremist beliefs.
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect, regardless of background or identity.
- Avoid offensive language, disruptive behaviour, and any form of discrimination, bullying, or harassment – including online.
- Maintain professional and respectful relationships with peers, tutors, and GC colleagues.
- Refrain from wearing caps or hoods unless for religious or medical reasons.
- Attend all sessions and appointments punctually.
- Follow the GC Attendance and Punctuality Policy and absence reporting procedures.
- Ensure cameras remain on at all times during online learning sessions. Any issues must be reported ahead of time to the course tutor.



- Engage positively in all programme activities.
- Provide constructive feedback to support continuous improvement.
- Follow all health and safety instructions from staff.
- Wear learner ID or visitor passes when required.
- Take responsibility for personal belongings; items brought on site are at the learner's own risk.
- Report unattended items or suspicious behaviour, which may be investigated under the Prevent Duty.
- Use equipment responsibly and reports faults promptly.
- Smoke/vape only in designated areas.
- Eat and drink only in permitted areas.
- Follow the Acceptable Use of IT Policy
- Use IT responsibly, protect personal data and passwords.
- Avoid sharing inappropriate content via social media, email, or online platforms
- Switch off or store mobile phones during lessons unless permitted by tutors.
- Respect the learning environment and avoid disruptive behaviour.
- Follow employer policies and procedures during placements or employment.
- Adhere to health, safety, Safeguarding and Prevent guidelines.
- Uphold these expectations outside GC premises and during personal time if behaviour negatively impacts GC, its learners, or its reputation – including via social media and other online platforms.
- Follow the Learner Code of Conduct across all settings, including online and in the workplace.

Apprentices are subject to both their employer's disciplinary procedures and GC's Learner Code of Conduct. Failure to comply with workplace policies may result in disciplinary action, including potential dismissal.

Misconduct during training sessions at GC premises will be reported to the employer and may lead to disciplinary measures from both the employer and GC.

Tutors

- Create structured, engaging learning environments.
- Model and reinforce positive behaviour.
- Always Promote and uphold the Learner Code of Conduct.
- Challenge non-compliance to the Code of Conduct with Learners and colleagues.
- Build respectful relationships and establish clear routines.
- Respond to low-level disruption appropriately.
- Identify and report safeguarding concerns.
- Record behaviour and interventions in Smart Assessor.
- Log safeguarding issues in Cura and Liaise with DSL/DSO

Operational Management

- Support tutors in applying behaviour and safeguarding policies consistently.
- Ensure tutors have followed correct procedures, including issuing support contracts and verbal warnings.
- Issue written warnings where tutor-led steps have been completed and documented correctly.
- Monitor and quality assure behaviour management and disciplinary processes.
- Challenge any non-compliance or procedural gaps.
- Coordinate communication with parents/carers where appropriate.
- Investigate, with input from DSO and DSL, breaches of the Code of Conduct.
- Review and escalate cases for potential withdrawal only when tutor and manager processes have been followed correctly.



- Assure all steps of the support and disciplinary process have been followed and evidenced, challenge any non-compliance.
- Embed a consistent, proactive behaviour culture across Education and Skills.
- Ensure fairness, transparency, and coherence in policy implementation.
- Lead Safeguarding strategy and ensure statutory compliancy.
- Oversee use of Smart Assessor and Cura systems for behaviour and safeguarding records.
- Monitor behaviour trends and drive continuous improvement.

Procedures

There are four stages to the disciplinary procedure which are set out below:

- Supportive Intervention
- Verbal Warning
- Formal Written Warning
- Final Written Warning

If a learner acts in a way that is dangerous and/or threatening towards another learner or staff member, they will be subject to instant dismissal from the programme due to behaviour.

Supportive Intervention

1. Purpose

The supportive intervention is designed to help learners address emerging issues affecting their behaviour, engagement, or progress, in a constructive and supportive way.

2. Identifying Concerns

- Learners who display repeated minor breaches of the Code of Conduct, low engagement, or attendance issues are identified for intervention.
- Colleagues use standard classroom or workplace management strategies to address initial concerns.

3. Expectations and Support Contract

- Learners are issued an Expectations and Support Contract, which clearly sets out:
 - Specific targets for improvement.
 - Support measures available (e.g., mentoring, study support)
 - Review points, typically after 6 weeks, to assess progress.
- Learners are made aware that serious incidents during this period will be handled through the formal disciplinary process.

4. Parental/Carer and Employer Involvement

- Parents, guardians, or carers are informed and involved throughout the process.
- For apprentices, the employer is kept updated where relevant.

5. Monitoring and Review

- Progress is reviewed at the agreed points in the contract.
- Targets may be updated, extended, or escalated if improvement is not demonstrated.
- Support remains available throughout the period, and further guidance is provided as needed.

6. Escalation for Serious or Ongoing Issues

- Any serious incident or persistent failure to meet the agreed targets may result in progression to the formal disciplinary procedure.



Verbal Warning

1. Initial Behaviour Issue

- Learner breaches the Code of Conduct (e.g. persistent disruption, poor attendance despite support, inappropriate behaviour).
- Colleagues apply standard behaviour management techniques

2. Escalation

- If behaviour continues or significantly impacts others, colleagues report the incident(s) to a designated manager.

3. Issuing the Verbal Warning

- The manager meets with the learner to issue a Verbal Warning.
- The purpose of the warning is to clearly explain:
 - What behaviour is unacceptable.
 - What improvement is expected.
 - What will happen if behaviour does not improve.

4. Documentation

- A formal letter is issued to the learner confirming the verbal warning.
- A copy is sent to the learner's home address.
- If the learner is under 18, the letter is addressed to their parent, guardian, or carer,
- If the learner is an apprentice, their employer is informed.

Note, if the learner is studying a programme at the Trafford Skills Centre, the Cause for Concern additional process also applies, and Pastoral Manager will be included in this process.

Formal Written Warning

If a learner's behaviour does not improve following a verbal warning, a Formal Written Warning, will be issued. The learner – and parents/carers if under 18 – will be notified in writing. The warning will outline the expected behaviours required to remain on programme and the potential consequences of continued misconduct.

A formal written warning may also be issued immediately, pending investigation by a manager, in cases of serious misconduct. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Use of inappropriate or offensive language.
- Intentional damage to property.
- Any behaviour that breaches UK law, or GC's zero-tolerance approach to sexual abuse, harassment, bullying, substance misuse, or carrying weapons.

Final Written Warning

If a learner's behaviour does not improve following a Verbal Warning and a Formal Written Warning, The Growth Company will proceed to issue a Final Written Warning. This decision will be confirmed in writing to the learner and, where applicable, their parents/carers (if under 18).

The learner will be invited to attend a formal meeting, conducted by a manager. Parents/carers will also be invited if the learner is under 18. During this meeting, the learner's conduct will be reviewed, and clear expectations will be set regarding the improvements required to remain on programme.

Failure to agree to or meet these expectations may result in immediate dismissal from the programme.



Instant suspension, pending investigation, potentially leading to dismissal:

Instances of gross misconduct/ suspected criminal behaviour such as:

- Distribution of illegal substances
- Under the influence of substances where you will be expected to operate machinery and use tools putting yourself and others at risk of harm.
- Sexual misconduct (harmful behaviour & harassment)
- Physical violence/ or serious threats of violence/threats of terrorist activity
- Inciting/encouraging violence.
- Directed, verbal abuse and/or behaviour towards learners and/or staff, that has caused distress.
- Any abuse relating to a protected characteristic:
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sexual orientation
 - Sex Gender reassignment
 - Disability
 - Age
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Marriage and civil partnership

Investigation Process

The aim of an investigation is to establish what happened before any action against a learner(s) is agreed. The investigation must be carried out as soon as possible after the incident is reported and must be conducted by a named individual with no vested interest in the case, as directed by a manager or other senior member of staff.

1. An investigation will be carried out to establish the facts of the alleged behaviour prior to any action agreed, and the investigator must consider the following factors:

- Individual and inclusion needs.
- Safeguarding concerns and multi-agency involvement: any safeguarding concerns which become apparent through the investigation should be reported through our internal safeguarding reporting procedures.

2. Statements should be taken from incident witnesses: where learners are being suspended pending investigation, statements should be taken prior to learner(s) leaving the premises:

- a. In an incident involving more than one learner, witnesses should be separated, and statements taken on an individual basis.
- b. Statements can take the form of notes taken by the investigating officer which are signed by the witness or a signed written statement from the witness.

3. The investigator should review all evidence and produce a summary report of the outcome and recommendations, referencing any safeguarding concerns. Agreed actions must be agreed with a Senior Manager prior to the final decision.

4. If the outcome of the investigation is that the allegation is upheld, a letter will be sent to the learner (and/or their parents/carers if under 18) advising them of the outcome and dismissal from the programme.



Monitoring and review

This policy requires review no later than 12 months from publication date.

Related documents

- [Acceptable Use of IT Policy](#)
- [Plagiarism and Academic Integrity](#)
- [Appeals Procedure](#)
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy (TBW)

Related legal and regulatory frameworks

- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#)
- [Health and Safety Act 1974](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

Version control

Version number	Approval date	Review date	Author	Change log
1.0	01/09/2025	01/09/2025	Jack Higson / Quality of Education Manager	
1.0	14/10/2025	01/09/2025	Helen Stevenson-Miller / Quality Director	