



Myerscough College

INSPIRING EXCELLENCE

Staff and Student Personal Relationship Policy

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1.0 Approval

Author:	People Team
Owner:	People Team
Reviewer(s):	
Authorised by:	CLT

2.0 Amendment History

Version	Amendments	Approver	Date
1.0	Creation	CLT	28.07.2025

3.0 Abbreviations & Definitions

Term	Definition
The College	Myerscough College – also referred to informally throughout this document as ‘us’ and ‘we’.
The Corporation	Myerscough College
You/ Your	The term is used in reference to any employee of the College.
HR	Human Resources
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
Personal data	Any information that relates to a living individual who can be identified from that information. Processing is any use that is made of data, including collecting, storing, amending, disclosing or destroying it.

4.0 Purpose

The College recognises that positive professional relationships can support collaboration, teamwork, and a healthy working and learning environment. However, it is essential to maintain appropriate professional boundaries to avoid any potential conflicts of interest or misuse of position, and to safeguard both students and staff.

This policy supports the College’s commitment to providing a safe, respectful, and professional environment for all. It sets out the College’s approach to managing personal relationships, ensuring appropriate conduct and protection for both students and staff.

Any terms used throughout this policy are defined in section 6

5.0 Applications & Scope

This policy applies to all employees and students of the College. It sets out the expectations regarding personal relationships between staff and students.

The policy covers current intimate personal relationships, as well as relationships that have ended, where the student remains enrolled at the College.

6.0 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the term "Staff" includes:

- Current employees of the College;
- Individuals who have received a formal offer of employment;
- Employees serving their notice period;
- Teaching and support staff;
- Members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT);
- Members of the Board of Governors;
- Agency workers;
- Secondees;

- External contractors, consultants or assessors; and
- Casual or ad hoc workers (excluding current students).

Students who undertake occasional paid work for the College are not considered Staff for the purposes of this policy unless they hold a formal employment contract.

The term "Students" refers to all learners and apprentices enrolled on any College programme, including full-time, part-time, adult education and work-based learning.

"Relevant Staff Members" are Staff who hold direct teaching, support, or decision-making responsibilities for a Student with whom they may have or wish to have an Intimate Personal Relationship. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Teaching staff, including lecturers, tutors, assessors or trainers;
- Personal tutors or mentors;
- Staff involved in grading or assessing students' work;
- Safeguarding leads;
- Student support staff (e.g. welfare, careers, or learning support);
- Staff involved in allocating bursaries, grants or financial support;
- Staff managing student conduct, complaints or appeals;
- Pastoral or behaviour support staff;
- Senior leaders or managers with oversight of student outcomes; and
- Security or site services staff with regular student contact.

An "Intimate Personal Relationship" refers to any relationship involving:

- Physical intimacy, including isolated or repeated sexual activity; or
- Romantic or emotional intimacy beyond a professional or platonic connection.

"Excluded Relationships" are ongoing Intimate Personal Relationships that:

- began before the College implemented this policy; or
- existed before the member of Staff became a Relevant Staff Member in relation to the Student.

The College acknowledges that platonic friendships between Staff and Students may exist, especially where they have prior personal connections. Unless such relationships involve elements defined as "Intimate Personal Relationships", they are not considered Intimate Personal Relationships under this policy.

Staff and Students may share involvement in clubs, societies or extracurricular activities. If any conflict of interest arises due to this shared membership, it must be disclosed to a relevant manager.

Before starting a new Intimate Personal Relationship, Staff are expected to take reasonable steps to check whether the individual is a current Student at the College.

If a member of Staff is unsure whether a relationship is covered by this policy, they should seek advice from the People Team.

"Abuse of Power" refers to a situation where someone uses their professional authority or influence inappropriately, potentially pressuring another person into a relationship or making them feel unable to say no.

If two existing Students are in an Intimate Personal Relationship and one of them later becomes a member of Staff in a Relevant role, the relationship is treated as an Excluded Relationship under this policy.

Where two Staff members are in an Intimate Personal Relationship and one of them enrolls on a course at the College, that relationship is also treated as an Excluded Relationship, provided it predates the enrolment.

7.0 Principles

With the exception of Excluded Relationships, staff who are considered a Relevant Staff Member for an individual student must not establish, or attempt to establish, an Intimate Personal Relationship with that student.

Where a conflict of interest—whether real or perceived—may arise, the College will implement appropriate measures to remove or manage the conflict. Protecting students from any actual or potential conflict of interest or abuse of power, and maintaining the integrity of teaching, support, and assessment processes, is essential.

8.0 Roles & Responsibilities

With the exception of Excluded Relationships, staff must never establish, or attempt to establish, an Intimate Personal Relationship with a student at the college, or who is considered a vulnerable adult at risk (as defined in the College's Safeguarding and Prevent Policy).

Failure to comply with this requirement will be treated as a potential breach of the College's Safeguarding and Prevent Policy and Procedure. This may result in disciplinary action, including possible dismissal, and referral to external authorities such as the Police or relevant safeguarding bodies.

9.0 Declaring a Personal Relationship

Staff who are not Relevant Staff Members must declare an Intimate Personal Relationship with a student where a conflict of interest exists or where there is potential for one to arise.

Where an Excluded Relationship exists and there is an actual or potential conflict of interest, the staff member is also required to declare that relationship.

Declarations must be made to the staff member's line manager (or, where appropriate, their manager's manager).

This requirement also applies if the relationship has ended but the individual is still a student at the College.

The manager receiving the declaration should speak with the student to confirm the relationship and request that both the staff member and student complete the Relationship Declaration Form. If the relationship ends, the staff member must inform their manager.

Once a declaration has been made, the College will take appropriate steps to manage or remove any actual or potential conflict of interest or abuse of power. A risk assessment will be carried out by the line manager to ensure all actions are transparent and clearly communicated. Actions may include (but are not limited to):

- Allocating another member of staff to undertake tasks where a conflict could occur;
- Adjusting work duties or line management arrangements;
- Enforcing any necessary safeguards or restrictions related to the working relationship.

Where it is not possible to adjust duties within the current role, the staff member may be placed on the redeployment register.

If suitable redeployment cannot be arranged, further action may be taken in line with the College's Disciplinary or Dismissal Policy.

Any actions taken must not disadvantage the student. The student must not be required to change programme, class, or be negatively affected as a result of the measures put in place.

Any breaches of this policy will be treated as misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, in line with the College's disciplinary procedures.

10.0 Reporting Concerns

Staff and students are encouraged to report any concerns about a potential or actual breach of this policy. Concerns can be raised with a relevant line manager or the People Team.

All reports will be treated as confidential. However, information may be shared—either in part or in full—with relevant colleagues where necessary to take appropriate action under this policy or related College procedures. This includes situations where there are safeguarding concerns affecting any individual involved.

11.0 Confidentiality/ Record Keeping

The College will maintain a confidential record of all disclosed Intimate Personal Relationships between staff and students. This record will be securely held and managed by a restricted group of staff within the People Team (HR), in line with data protection requirements

All documentation will be treated as personal data and only shared where it is appropriate to do so. We collect and process personal data relating to our employees' conduct to manage the employment relationship.

Information about Intimate Personal Relationships will be handled sensitively and will only be available to those who have a need to know the information

Information will be retained on your electronic personal file, which is held in a secure location on SharePoint, only accessible by the People Team.

12. Monitoring

Each policy will be subject to internal audits and reviews. By carrying out an audit it enables us to identify whether the processes and documentation are being followed or if other improvements can be made. This is to ensure that the process is being followed and that it remains the most suitable and applicable process for use by the College.

11. Records

Record Title	Ref No	Retained By	Owner	Stored (Location)	Period
Staff and Student Personal Relationship Policy	HR/DOC/			Intranet/ HR Page HR Network	3-yearly review

12. Equality

All Myerscough College Policies are subject to screening for Equality Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a negative impact on grounds of: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, sex or sexual orientation

We not only fulfil our legal position in relation to current and future equality legislation, but additionally go beyond compliance in providing and promoting “Opportunities for all to succeed”, free from any aspect of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

You have a duty of care to look after the interests of and support your colleagues. *This policy takes account of our commitment to eliminating discrimination, identifying and removing barriers and providing equal opportunities for our learners, staff and visitors to ensure that no one feels excluded or disadvantaged.*