

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

Learning and Teaching Committee - 06 May 2026

Draft Learner Behaviour Policy & Student Disciplinary Procedure

Report by Assistant Principal - Performance, Planning & Student Experience

1. Introduction

This paper provides Academic Board with an update on the review and revision of the Learner Behaviour Policy and Student Disciplinary Procedure, both of which reached their scheduled review dates. While these documents are closely connected, they serve distinct purposes, and the revision process has sought to clarify that distinction for staff and learners.

The Learner Behaviour Policy sets out the standards of behaviour expected of learners, and the values and principles that underpin behaviour management across the College. The Student Disciplinary Procedure outlines the process by which formal disciplinary action may be taken when behaviour falls significantly below those expectations. The revised documents are designed to be considered together.

The updated Learner Behaviour Policy is attached as Appendix A for approval.

The updated Student Disciplinary Procedure is attached as Appendix B for approval.

The paper also includes a brief report summarising incidents for which the current disciplinary procedure has been implemented during the last four academic years. This data was used to inform the review of policy and procedure.

2. Rationale for Review & Amendments

The Learner Behaviour Policy, approved in May 2024, and the previous Student Disciplinary Procedure were both due for review under the College's standard review cycle. In addition to routine review, recent operational experience identified the need to address a number of practical and strategic issues.

In particular, the review sought to:

- Ensure the documents remained current and legally robust
- Respond to staff feedback regarding risk management following serious incidents
- Strengthen clarity around accessibility, inclusion and reasonable adjustments for vulnerable learners
- Ensure the process is efficient and dynamic enough to ensure disciplinary incidents can be managed timeously
- Clarify roles and responsibilities

3. Summary of Changes

Learner Behaviour Policy

The revised Learner Behaviour Policy retains the core purpose of setting expectations for learner conduct, but introduces a number of important changes, including:

- clearer articulation of the policy as an expectations-setting framework, rather than a mechanism for imposing sanctions
- clearer alignment with equality and inclusion principles, including consideration of additional support needs and reasonable adjustments
- explicit reference to trauma-informed and restorative approaches to managing behaviour
- enhanced recognition of learner voice and the role of student feedback in shaping behavioural expectations

The rationale for these changes is to support positive behaviour proactively, reduce unnecessary escalation into formal disciplinary processes, and ensure that behaviour expectations are applied consistently and inclusively across the College. In further support of these aims, it should also be noted that all teaching staff have now had the opportunity to attend bespoke training in Creating A Culture of Positive Classroom Behaviour, delivered by March Training.

4. Student Disciplinary Procedure

The revised Student Disciplinary Procedure focuses on strengthening the workability, clarity and timeliness of the disciplinary process, while committing the College to providing appropriate support in the aftermath of serious incidents. Key changes include:

- explicit guidance on post-incident risk management, enabling measures to safeguard learners and staff following serious incidents
- strengthened guidance on accessibility, including reasonable adjustments for vulnerable learners during hearings and throughout the process
- changes to, and clearer definition of, the roles and responsibilities of staff at each stage of the disciplinary process, including delegated authority for chairing hearings and applying precautionary suspensions
- clearer procedural stages to support more consistent and timely handling of incidents
- updated guidance on record-keeping, data retention and GDPR compliance.

The rationale for these changes is to address ongoing logistical challenges identified by staff, reduce delays and ambiguity in the handling of incidents, and strengthen assurance that formal disciplinary powers are exercised fairly, consistently and lawfully.

5. Context: Summary of Disciplinary Procedure Usage 2022/23 – 2025/26

Over the last four academic years, use of the Student Disciplinary Procedure has remained broadly stable, averaging around 30–35 cases per year. This suggests no significant upward trend in serious disciplinary matters, but continued, consistent reliance on the formal procedure for a relatively small cohort of learners.

Across all years, the most common incidents relate to physical or threatened abuse and wilful disruption of college activities. Breaches of College policy also feature prominently, particularly in 2024/25. In contrast, reported academic dishonesty and document-related offences are

relatively rare. The data therefore indicates that disciplinary escalation is predominantly associated with behavioural and safety-related concerns rather than academic misconduct.

The majority of cases involve learners on NQ and lower-level provision, with concentrations in subject areas such as Sport & Fitness, Employability/Transitions/Youth Work, Care-related programmes and Creative Industries. This aligns with the emphasis in the revised policy framework on early intervention, trauma-informed approaches and proportionality, particularly for younger and more vulnerable learner groups.

Outcomes show a clear preference for warnings or no further action, with exclusions and suspensions used sparingly. Appeals remain low, with very few decisions overturned, providing assurance around procedural fairness. Overall, the data underlines the importance of clearer thresholds, improved consistency and better post-incident risk management, directly supporting the changes proposed in the revised Student Disciplinary Procedure.

The full data report is available in Appendix C.

6. Risk & Assurance

The revised documents reduce institutional risk by clarifying roles and thresholds for escalation, strengthening procedural safeguards, and addressing gaps in post-incident risk management. Together, they support a more consistent, efficient and defensible approach to learner behaviour and discipline.

7. Resource Implications

There are no negative resourcing implications arising from the revision of the Learner Behaviour Policy or the Student Disciplinary Procedure. The revised Student Disciplinary Procedure clarifies roles and delegated authority, which is expected to improve efficiency and reduce delays in the management of disciplinary incidents. Some limited staff time may be required to familiarise relevant managers and staff with the revised documentation.

8. Equality

Equality, diversity and inclusion considerations have been strengthened across both documents. The revised Learner Behaviour Policy embeds inclusive, trauma-informed principles at the level of behavioural expectations and early intervention, recognising that behaviour may be influenced by disability, additional support needs, or wider personal circumstances. The Student Disciplinary Procedure, provides clearer guidance on reasonable adjustments for vulnerable learners, including adjustments to communication, hearing arrangements and support during the disciplinary process. Together, the revised documents better support compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and reduce the risk of disproportionate or inconsistent outcomes for learners with protected characteristics.

9. Risk and Assurance

The review and revision mitigate a range of potential risks, including by clarifying thresholds for escalation from informal behaviour management to formal disciplinary action; improving assurance by streamlining disciplinary processes and clarifying staff roles and delegated authority; addressing identified gaps in managing risk following serious disciplinary incidents, and strengthening legal and reputational assurance through clearer procedural safeguards and improved alignment with equality and data protection requirements.

10. Data Protection

The revised Student Disciplinary Procedure provides clearer guidance on the recording, retention and secure storage of disciplinary records, ensuring alignment with UK GDPR and the College's Data Retention Schedule.

11. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- Approve the revised Learner Behaviour Policy (April 2026).
- Approve the revised Student Disciplinary Procedure (April 2026).

12. Further Information

Members can obtain additional information on the contents of this report from John Clarke, Assistant Principal: Performance, Planning & Student Experience

Glasgow Kelvin College
JC
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