

Regents Theological College

Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

Student Disciplinary Policy

Staff-student Relationship Policy

Complaints Policy

Student Values Document

Reviewed October 2025

Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

This is the single comprehensive source of information for the College which sets out our policies and procedures on subject matter relating to incidents of **harassment and/or sexual misconduct**.

Regents Theological College is committed to providing a study and work environment free from harassment, bullying and sexual misconduct and to ensuring all students and staff are treated, and treat others, with dignity and respect.

Harassment (sexual or otherwise), bullying or victimisation of any member of the Regents community is unlawful and will not be tolerated. They may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal and can result in legal liability for both the College and the perpetrator. The College will take active steps to help prevent the harassment and victimisation of all community members. Anyone who is a victim of, or witness to, harassment or bullying is encouraged to report it in accordance with this policy. This will enable us to take appropriate action and provide support.

Harassment

Harassment is unwanted behaviour which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. Harassment can stem from inappropriate behaviour that relates to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, sex, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to sexual harassment. It also includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or that is related to gender reassignment or sex, in the past.

It is important to remember that harassment:

- Depends on the view of the individual on the receiving end of the behaviour
- Does not depend on the severity of the behaviour - a joke or a throw-away comment could be perceived as harassment by anyone who hears it
- Can include behaviour that is heard or seen, even if indirectly

Bullying and victimisation

Bullying is a gradual wearing down process comprising a sustained form of psychological abuse that makes victims feel demeaned and inadequate. Bullying is defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power, which has the purpose, or effect of intimidating, belittling and humiliating the recipient, leading to loss of self-esteem for the victim.

Victimisation includes subjecting a person to a detriment because they have done, or are suspected of doing or intending to do, any of the following protected acts:

- Bringing proceedings under the Equality Act 2010
- Giving evidence or information in connection with proceedings under the Equality Act 2010
- Doing any other thing for the purposes of or in connection with the Equality Act 2010
- Alleging that a person has contravened the Equality Act 2010

Sexual misconduct

'Sexual misconduct' is an umbrella term for behaviours that are sexual, unwanted and cause distress, or that otherwise constitutes harassment, bullying or victimisation that goes against the College's [Student Values](#). Such behaviours may also constitute a criminal offence.

If a student feels that a staff member is behaving inappropriately towards them in the form of sexual misconduct, harassment or bullying, then the student should report this in the first instance to the Vice Principal. The complaint will then be dealt with through the student [complaints policy](#) with the student supported in line with that policy.

Staff – student relationships

A staff member who is in an intimate (or financial) relationship with a student is required to declare this to the Vice Principal of the college.

Any staff member found to be in an undisclosed relationship, or a sexual relationship (where the student is not married to the staff member) would be liable for discipline or dismissal.

See the [Staff – Student Relationship Policy](#).

Reporting an incident of harassment or sexual misconduct

You can report an incident of harassment and/or sexual misconduct directly to a member of the leadership team of the college or by using the [student complaint form](#). This can include an incident that has happened to you or an incident that you have witnessed as a bystander. You can also make a report on behalf of someone else if it is with their knowledge.

If you have a concern or complaint involving harassment or sexual misconduct and do not know where you should raise this or which policy covers this, we will be able to advise you and ensure it is dealt with under the relevant policy or procedure.

You can also contact Student Services on 0345 302 6758 or email academic@regents-tc.ac.uk.

If you are in immediate danger, you should contact the Police on **999**.

If you are not in immediate danger but would like to report to the Police, you can call **101**.

You can also contact [Crimestoppers](#) who are an independent charity that allows people to report a non-emergency crime anonymously.

Student Complaints Procedure

The [Student Complaints Procedure](#) covers:

1. the provision of courses or part of courses of study
2. services or facilities of the College
3. action or lack of action by the College

Student Disciplinary Procedure

The [Student Disciplinary Policy](#) covers matters relating to non-academic misconduct. Procedures relating to matters of academic misconduct can be found in the [Student Handbook](#).

How we handle sensitive information

We recognise that disclosures of harassment and/or sexual misconduct are very sensitive, and we therefore aim to maintain confidentiality throughout the investigative process as far as practicable, sharing information on a need-to-know basis for the purpose of conducting the investigation. Any information you provide will remain confidential unless we believe there is a serious threat or safeguarding concern. Disclosed information via a reported concern will only be used for the purposes of an investigation, if necessary. All parties to a complaint must treat the complaint and related documentation confidentially. All records, letters and correspondence in relation to any complaint will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. All interviews and hearings under the [Student Disciplinary Procedure \(full version\)](#) will be conducted fairly and impartially by an interviewer and/or Chair of a hearing. An individual against whom a complaint is made is entitled to see or hear the complaint and to respond to it.

Policy and procedure for investigating incidents

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, the Vice Principal (or Principal where warranted), will investigate the allegation.

If an allegation is made against a student, the [Student Disciplinary Policy](#) applies. This policy is applicable in any circumstances and in any location in which the student has been granted access by virtue of his or her status as a member of Regents or is acting as a representative of the College. This includes social media and IT networks.

A member of the Leadership Team shall investigate the allegation. Under no circumstances will the College tolerate any behaviour which amounts to misconduct against another person.

Our approach to decision-making following an investigation

Any sort of abuse, assault, sexual assault or sexual violence, discrimination or harassment of any kind, irrespective of whether it is verbal, online or physical, will be regarded as serious and be dealt with expeditiously.

A Disciplinary Panel will be scheduled, and the accused student will be informed of the process and their rights in writing by the relevant member of the leadership team.

Any student accused of assault, sexual assault or sexual violence may be asked to leave student accommodation, or the campus, whilst any investigations are ongoing. This decision is to protect the members of the college community in general, or a particular member or members, and will be taken by the vice principal where they are of the opinion that it is urgent and necessary to take such action.

Support available for incidents

Any student involved in a disciplinary panel may bring a fellow registered student or member of the Student Union with them to the panel to support them throughout the process.

Any student who experiences harassment of any kind or is involved with any investigation or disciplinary procedure will be encouraged to meet with a college chaplain for wellbeing support. College chaplains will be kept removed from any disciplinary or investigative processes unless they were directly named in the allegation.

How staff are trained to deal with incidents

We provide training to all our staff on sexual harassment to ensure there is a clear understanding of:

- what sexual harassment is, how it may occur and that it will not be tolerated
- expected levels of behaviour
- how they can report any incidents of having been sexually harassed or having witnessed it
- how acts of harassment will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure, which can potentially result in dismissal.

We ensure that all levels of management are trained on implementing this policy, including preventing and managing sexual harassment in the College and the procedure to follow if an allegation is reported.

Staff likely to be involved in receiving disclosures about incidents of harassment and/or sexual misconduct, undertaking investigations, and making decisions about disciplinary cases will be trained to ensure that staff have a clear understanding of the relevant policies and procedures, which results in appropriate practical application.

We will regularly review the effectiveness of our training and provide refresher training as appropriate. In addition, all staff will be trained in relation to freedom of

speech principles to ensure that they have a proper understanding of relevant free speech rights and responsibilities.

Non-disclosure agreements

An NDA is a legal contract. It sets out how you share information or ideas in confidence. Sometimes people call NDAs confidentiality agreements.

Regents does not and would not use NDAs in cases of harassment and/or sexual misconduct.

Freedom of speech

We value freedom of speech in the College community and are committed to promoting and encouraging free debate and academic freedom of enquiry. We therefore accommodate a wide range of views, political as well as academic, even when they are unpopular, controversial or provocative.

We are also committed to ensuring a welcoming, inclusive, safe and supportive community for all staff, students and visitors. This requires that free and open discussion takes place in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance, with acceptable standards of behaviour upheld by all.