

PARENT/CARER CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

QAC expects that parents, carers, guardians and family members will act in the best interests of all students, clients and staff members. It is expected that anything they communicate about others is fair and truthful. They will not engage in malicious, judgmental, or aggressive behaviours. The diversity of the QAC organisation is valued and the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals and their families are to be respected. Differing points of view are acknowledged and respected and therefore it is expected that parents, guardian, step-parents, grandparents, extended family, caregivers, must refrain from actions and behaviour that constitute harassment, discrimination or vilification of any kind. QAC staff are expected to report any unacceptable behaviour to a senior manager.

All of QAC's services provide support for young adults with learning difficulties or disabilities. The culture of the QAC organisation is therefore different to that which parents/carers may have experienced before at schools. QAC is purposefully an adult culture as this is an important part of our students and clients' preparation for life after College.

QAC welcomes a mutually positive and constructive relationship with families and carers and encourages relationships based on an ethos of openness and trust. Parents and carers can expect QAC staff to demonstrate the College and FREDIE values of enabling, collaboration, excellence, respect, integrity, engagement and inclusion. Students and clients at QAC learn and develop to the best of their ability when there is a positive partnership between home and College. Whilst every effort will be made to work with parents/carers this will only be possible if this is mutually driven arrangement.

Duty of Care

The QAC organisation has a duty of care to operate safe provision in which students and clients can learn, live and develop as adults. QAC has a duty of care to its employees, to keep them safe in their working life. QAC's duty of care applies to all sites that QAC operates from and is not limited to the Harborne campus. QAC utilises a number of sites for learning and development - Harborne campus, Pinewood campus, Umberslade campus, Worcester Arena, the Albion Foundation venues and the Community Service Hub. This Code of Conduct is applicable across all sites.

Guidance for parents and carers

Parents and visitors are reminded:

- To show due regard for QAC's ethos and values.
- Be supportive of the adult culture of QAC services.
- To ensure they comply with the rules of access to any campus.
- To approach educational, residential and community service staff for help to resolve any issues in an appropriate manner.
- To treat all members of the educational, residential and community service staff with respect, using appropriate language and behaviour.
- That staff are not expected to respond to emails outside of college working hours and this includes student holidays.

QAC will not accept:

1. Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of QAC's operation or activities (including at residential properties).
2. Threatening in any way, a member of college staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer, student or client. Types of behaviour that are considered serious and would result in a zero-tolerance approach may include:
 - Shouting at members of staff either in person or over the telephone
 - Verbally or physically intimidating a member of staff or threatening to harm a member of staff
 - The use of loud offensive language, shouting, swearing, cursing in any form
 - Pushing, hitting, slapping, punching, spitting or kicking a staff member or insinuating this action will happen so much as to make a staff member feel it could
 - Racist, sexist or discriminatory homophobic comments
 - Accusatory language and/or refusal to engage in respectful conversation with a staff member.

The list above is not exhaustive but provides illustrations of unacceptable behaviour.

3. The entering of any premises used for learning or development activities without following rules of access or without the permission of a senior manager. In the case of residential settings, without agreement of the student/client and residential senior team.
4. Parents/carers arranging collection or drop off away from the agreed, designated areas for safety and wellbeing reasons.
5. Approaching someone else's son/daughter in order to discuss or chastise them because of that young person's actions towards their own son/daughter. Communication channels at QAC need to be followed.
6. The sending of abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications to anyone in the QAC community.

7. Staff being approached outside of working hours whether on college sites or out of the college premises regarding an ongoing concern.
8. The use of defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about QAC or any students/clients/parents/staff on social media sites.
9. Damaging or destroying QAC property.
10. Smoking, taking illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol on College premises.
11. The possession of an offensive weapon or anything deemed to be offensive if used incorrectly.
12. Immediate requests to see staff members without prior appointments (unless the Designated Safeguarding Lead/a Senior Manager deems the meeting urgent in light of safeguarding concerns relating to immediate threat to wellbeing)

Should any of the above occur, QAC will where appropriate, take action by contacting appropriate external authorities or agencies. QAC will investigate any concerns and will consider banning an individual from sites used by QAC. Such behaviour can also lead to breach of Independence Plus clients' tenancy agreements.

Our aim is the protection, welfare, safety and wellbeing of our students, clients and staff.

Inappropriate use of social media and cyber bullying

Any inappropriate use of social media is not acceptable. In the event that any parent/carer is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on any social network sites about QAC students, clients or staff or the College itself, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the media site. The College will consider its legal options in such cases. All social networks have clear rules about acceptable content and they provide strong mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. The College would expect any parent/carer to remove such comments immediately should they contravene such rules.

QAC takes cyber bullying seriously where a parent/carer has publicly humiliated another by inappropriate use of social media. We will treat such action as a serious incident of bullying and harassment and follow our policies accordingly, which can result in notification being given to the relevant external authorities.

Any concerns you may have as a parent/carer about social media and your son/daughter must be made through the appropriate channels at QAC. This can be through informal discussions with staff, notifying the designated safeguarding lead or if required, via our formal external complaints policy (available on the QAC website).

Actions that will be taken by QAC following threatening, dangerous or disruptive behaviour

- Staff will not continue discussions if the adult/s including parents, guardians, step-parents, grandparents, extended family, caregivers continue to behave in an unacceptable manner and this will be, politely, made clear.
- The parent or visitors behaving in such a manner may be asked to leave the college site or a telephone call terminated.
- Unacceptable behaviour may result in the Police being informed of the incident.

QAC will always act, without exception, when behaviour is unacceptable.