

Norfolk Institute of Performing Arts

Behaviour and Attendance Policy

Contents

Aims	p.1
Code of Conduct	p.3
Standards of Behaviour	p.4
Rewards	p.8
Sanctions	p. 9
Educational Visits/Offsite Conduct	p.11
Attendance	p.12

Aims

The Norfolk Institute of Performing Arts is dedicated to ensuring that our college environment supports learning and the wellbeing of students and staff through a strong sense of community cohesion. Cooperation, support and respect are the foundations of our community for both students and staff; we work hard to provide a safe environment in which students feel included in every aspect of college life and comfortable to voice their opinions.

This policy outlines what we expect from all our students in terms of their behaviour, the recognition we provide for good behaviour and achievement, and the sanctions that will be enforced if this policy is not adhered to. It extends to all members of our college community. We aim to have a consistent and positive approach to behaviour management and we expect everyone to take responsibility for their emotions and actions, seeking to develop relationships based upon mutual respect.

We aim for every student to be able to work, study, socialise and relax free from abuse, intimidation, harassment, bullying or teasing. Good behaviour and self-discipline have strong links to effective learning, and are vital for students to carry with them both during and after their time at the Norfolk Institute of Performing Arts. All students should be aware of the standards of behaviour that are expected of them, and take responsibility for promoting these standards.

We hope that by encouraging positive behaviour patterns, we can promote good relationships throughout the college built on trust and understanding, and that through the use of this policy we can support all of our students in developing a high level of social awareness. Our aim is to ensure that all our students leave the college with the key skills they need to continue to progress to the best of their ability in all areas of life.

Code of Conduct

The basis of this code of conduct is a need for mutual respect. In our community, everyone is expected to show courtesy, good manners and consideration in caring for others and for the college. Our expectations are clearly expressed as follows:

- Be proud of your college and help to make it a happy place in which to study and learn.
- Be kind, patient and reliable, always treating others with respect and consideration.
- Be polite and helpful. Remember small common courtesies towards your peers and tutors, such as 'please', 'thank you' and 'good morning'.
- Think about your safety and that of others.
- Nobody should use language which is abusive, offensive or rude.
- Respect and look after the college, its facilities, the site and the people in it.
- Be honest and tell the truth.
- Tell someone if you are unhappy or worried so that we can help you.
- College is the place where you come to learn: make sure you always do your best and respect everyone's need to work and learn.
- Attend your classes punctually and enter the classroom or studio quietly, with the correct equipment/uniform.
- Work throughout the class with focus and determination, and speak respectfully.
- At the end of each class, assess what you have learned and achieved; be sure you understand and that you complete assigned work and take any corrections or advice on board.

Standards of Behaviour

The college understands that the first step to promoting good behaviour is to lead by example, which means that all staff, volunteers and anyone else who comes to the college must act responsibly and professionally, and will never denigrate students or colleagues.

We work hard to ensure that discipline is consistent across the college so that behaviour boundaries, sanctions and rewards are clear to all and are applied fairly, proportionately, and without discrimination, taking into account SEN needs and disabilities as well as the additional challenges that some vulnerable students may face. Staff are kept informed of any such needs or challenges and are well informed of the extent of their disciplinary authority.

We want to work with students to understand their behaviour. We believe that, in conjunction with behaviour boundaries and sanctions, good support systems and praise for good behaviour are an important part of building an effective and supportive community. We recognise that, where individual students are engaging in continuing disruptive behaviour, this can be as a result of unmet mental health needs. If such needs are identified, we will do all we can to ensure the student receives appropriate support.

The college will take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff, including protection from bullying. We aim to combat bullying and other harmful behaviour using, amongst others, preventative strategies through the active development of students' social, emotional and behavioural skills. This is covered further in the college's Anti-Bullying policy.

It is the responsibility of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to help ensure that students are using the college grounds respectfully and behaving appropriately at all times when they are at college. The course directors are responsible for ensuring that students understand and adhere to the college's policies and expectations. However, it is the responsibility of all staff to reinforce these concepts with students during or outside class times.

Students are ambassadors to our college even when off college premises and we expect them to act accordingly. They are expected to obey college rules, listen, follow staff instructions, and accept and learn from any sanctions that they receive. This extends to any arrangements put in place to support their behaviour, such as a behaviour agreement contract.

The following rules and expectations apply at all times, to staff, students and visitors:

- Always be on time.
- Keep your appearance smart and tidy.
- Be considerate of your peers, tutors and the community.
- Do not shout out or interrupt others' learning.
- Be polite and respectful at all times.
- Take care of your environment, both on the college site and outside, and keep it tidy. Do not litter and do not vandalise property in any way.
- Health and safety equipment is only for use in emergency situations and should not be tampered with under any circumstances.

All behaviour takes place on a spectrum. Understanding where a student's behaviour falls on a spectrum is essential to being able to respond appropriately to it. The college recognises the importance of distinguishing between problematic and abusive behaviour. Suitable sanctions will be considered in instances of bullying, abusive behaviour or peer on peer abuse up to and including permanent exclusion. The nature of the incident and the wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases and appropriate support will be provided to both the victim and the perpetrator as required on a case-by-case basis.

Taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions – they can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary. The Norfolk Institute of Performing Arts is committed to a whole college approach to ensure the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of peer on peer abuse and bullying behaviour within our college and beyond. In cases where peer on peer abuse is identified, the college will follow its student protection procedures, taking a contextual approach to support all young people who have been affected by the situation as detailed in the college's Safeguarding policy.

The following behaviour is regarded as completely unacceptable and will result in higher level disciplinary action and possibly in exclusion, depending on the circumstances:

- verbal abuse to students, staff and others
- posting negative comments about the college or staff on the internet
- sending or posting derogatory texts/emails/photographs/ sexting/ electronic communications or engaging in any form of cyberbullying
- the use of rude, derogatory, racist, sexist or defamatory language
- physical abuse to/attack on staff, students and others
- indecent behaviour
- damage to property
- misuse or supply of illegal drugs or other substances
- theft
- serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff
- any form of sexual harassment, abuse or assault
- carrying an offensive weapon
- arson
- unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which college sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the student's behaviour

Rewards

The Norfolk Institute of Performing Arts believes that it is important to encourage good conduct throughout the college by celebrating and rewarding good behaviour. Verbal praise from a tutor is an important reward for good behaviour or work. At NIPA, we strive to verbally acknowledge and reinforce positive behaviour whenever possible. Written feedback also indicates achievement, effort and means of further improvement. Rewards are also given in the form of public and private verbal acknowledgements, when students demonstrate such behaviour as:

- Exceptional piece of work produced
- Improved level of work in class
- Consistently well prepared for class
- Working consistently hard in class
- Random act of kindness witnessed by staff
- Supporting another student in need
- Working beyond staff expectations

Students who make an outstanding positive achievement or consistently accomplish positive achievements are rewarded with a written letter from the course directors, recognising their good work.

Sanctions

How we react as adults determines how students will respond and behave. Verbal strategies are often the most effective sanctions and are used frequently to discuss a student's behaviour, help him or her get back on track and put things right.

Staff should:

- respond constructively and calmly;
- do not shout;
- separate the behaviour from the person;
- discuss with colleagues and take advice;

It is not possible to have an in-depth conversation with a student during class and it is never advisable to confront a student in front of his or her peers. It is much more effective to arrange to see the student outside of the lesson to discuss behaviour and positive ways forward.

Poor behaviour should always be followed up in some manner, with the severity of the behaviour determining the level of response. It may be suitable for a tutor to have an informal discussion with the student after class. If the tutor feels it necessary, they may opt to include a course director in this conversation or hold a formal behavioural meeting.

Behaviour Agreement Contracts may be used in the case of more persistent or ongoing issues. This is an agreement between the college and the student about expected behaviour. This contract is signed by the student, the course directors and any relevant tutors.

Reacting In The Moment To Negative Behaviour

If a student is defiant:

- look at the student,
- use his or her name,
- be positive,
- express dissatisfaction with the behaviour,
- remind him or her of the consequences,
- re-direct e.g. by moving to another student,
- stay friendly and praise for settling back to work.

If a student is aggressive:

- be calm,
- look relaxed,
- stand still,
- look at the student,
- use his or her name,
- acknowledge feelings,
- offer choices,
- agree to tackle the problem,
- give a quiet order and repeat it,
- use humour not sarcasm,
- send for help if necessary,
- move on;

Exclusions

Only the course directors have the power to exclude a student from college, either for a fixed term or permanently. A student may be immediately and permanently excluded for a more serious offence, at the directors' discretion. However, every effort will be made to avoid this situation, through Behavioural Contract Agreements and meetings to discuss the student's behaviour and its consequence.

Behaviour on Educational Visits/Offsite Conduct

Students are reminded:

- That they should arrive punctually.
- That they must at all times follow the directions given to them by members of staff.
- That they must listen to and follow directions given to them by staff employed at the venue and to treat the staff with courtesy and respect.
- That in public places they must behave in a considerate manner and not inconvenience members of the public in any way.
- That they must behave in a responsible and safe manner whilst travelling.
- That they must come equipped for and complete the appropriate work.

Students Must Never:

- Eat, drink or chew gum whilst attending an exhibition, lecture etc.
- Leave their allotted group without prior permission from staff.
- Leave the venue without prior permission from the visit organiser.

Attendance

It is expected that all students will be in attendance for all classes, workshops and events.

Term dates are shared with students ahead of the commencement of the academic year. Workshop dates, rehearsal schedules and weekly personal timetables are shared with students with suitable advance warning.

All faculty are required to inform one of the course directors immediately in the event of any student's absence from class or event. It is then the directors' duty to locate the student, discuss their reason for absence and encourage their re-attendance at the earliest convenience to all.

Authorised Absences

If a student is unwell or unable to attend for any reason, the student is expected to contact any member of faculty as soon as they are aware that they will be absent. This enables us to open discussion about the reason for their absence, as well as potentially adapting their timetable to minimise any impact on their studies. For example, we may be able to rearrange their weekly private tuition lesson for when they are back in class.

Absence due to illness and medical appointments will be authorised with minimal questioning, as these matters are of a personal nature. However, should a student be absent for an extended period due to medical reasons, they will be invited to a meeting to discuss the impact on their studies and any adaptations we can offer to support their attending.

At the Norfolk Institute of Performing Arts, as a higher education setting aimed at promoting a career in the professional performing arts industries, we are keen for students to take up any performance opportunities. Thus, approval for absence will be granted wherever possible, if the reason for absence includes a performance or any industry-related opportunity, whether paid or voluntary.

Absences are individually addressed, dependent on each specific circumstance. Consideration is given to frequency of absences and length of absence; please note that an accumulation of unauthorised absences may be taken into account when casting for shows and entering students for examinations.

Consistent Absences and Unauthorised Absences

Where a pattern of repeated absences is noted, or a student has 3 or more unauthorised absences, the student will be invited in to discuss this with the course directors. This meeting will address the reasons behind the absences and, if suitable, a plan will be put in place to ensure the student is able to more consistently attend their studies. Support will be offered to aid the student with any possible factors keeping them from attending - these factors may be practical, for example transport, or the student may require mental health support, support with the work being taught or support with social issues. Absenteeism can be a sign of a safeguarding concern, and the student will be given the opportunity to address any issues facing them in a supportive environment.

If, after this meeting, the student continues to absent themselves, a significantly more formal meeting will follow; if the student is under 18 years, their parents/guardians will also be invited to this second meeting. The student's motivation to attend and the course's suitability for the student will be included within this discussion.