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For the future you want

Gender-based Violence Policy

Students



Student Experience

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GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

At Edinburgh College we believe that all members of the College community have the right to study and work without experiencing any form of gender-based violence, abuse or harassment. Edinburgh College will not tolerate gender-based violence in any form. This policy is implemented through a range of activities and statements which are outlined in this document. This policy also links with other relevant Edinburgh College policies for example Safeguarding and Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying and Harassment policies.

As a college we recognise that gender-based violence is an issue within our communities therefore we are committed to ensuring that our campuses and outreach centres are safe for everyone. We are committed to providing a supportive and caring environment for students.

Our students, staff and visitors have the right to be in an environment free from gender-based violence. Therefore, all staff, students and visitors are expected to behave appropriately and follow College policies.

2. SCOPE

This policy was created to:

- increase and ensure the wellbeing and safety of Edinburgh College students at all campuses including outreach centers;
- support students who experience or have been impacted by gender-based violence by helping them to access specialist support services.

3. DEFINITION

The definition below is from Equally Safe which is the Scottish Government's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls.

Violence against women and girls encompasses (but is not limited to):

- physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family (including children and young people), within the general community or in institutions, including domestic abuse, rape, and incest;
- sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation in any public or private space, including work;
- commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, lap dancing, stripping, pornography and trafficking;
- child sexual abuse, including familial sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation and online abuse;

- so-called 'honour-based' violence, including dowry related violence, female genital mutilation, forced and child marriages, and 'honour' crimes.

The definition includes women and girls across all protected characteristics defined by equality legislation - age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation. ¹

It is important however, to recognise that abuse also occurs in same sex relationships and can be experienced by transgender people. While men are at less risk of GBV, some men are abused in similar ways by other men and women. Similarly, many boys are sexually abused in childhood.²

Not everyone experiences the same level of risk. Factors such as age, financial dependency, poverty, disability, homelessness and insecure immigration status can heighten vulnerability to abuse or further entrap people experiencing abuse. Also, many people experience more than one form of abuse e.g. sexual violence and domestic abuse within relationships.³

4. KEY PRINCIPLES

Edinburgh College will promote the safety of all students so that they are able to live safely and free from physical, emotional, financial and sexual harm. This will be achieved by:

- ensuring that all College staff have a clear understanding of their legal and moral obligations in relation to gender-based violence.
- responding to all reported incidents and ensuring that the appropriate actions are taken and advice and support given to the student and any staff members involved.
- working effectively with the key partners and other agencies such as the police, Rape Crisis, Women's Aid and Edinburgh College Students' Association.
- promotion, awareness raising and support of gender-based violence national and local campaigns, events and policies such as Equally Safe and White Ribbon for staff and students.
- being an active member of Fearless Edinburgh.

5. LINES OF RESPONSIBILITY

- The Head of Student Experience has overall responsibility for this policy.

¹ Equally safe - <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2018/04/equally-safe-scotlands-strategy-prevent-eradicate-violence-against-women-girls/documents/00534791-pdf/00534791-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00534791.pdf>

² NHS Gender Based violence overview - <http://www.healthscotland.scot/health-topics/gender-based-violence/gender-based-violence-overview/overview-of-gender-based-violence>

³ NHS Gender Based violence overview - <http://www.healthscotland.scot/health-topics/gender-based-violence/gender-based-violence-overview/overview-of-gender-based-violence>

- All managers have the responsibility to ensure that this policy is understood and followed by all staff within their teams.
- It is the responsibility of all College staff to contribute to the prevention of gender-based violence through an active awareness of the issues involved and by ensuring that their own, and their colleagues, standards of conduct and the content of learning and teaching materials do not cause offence.
- All staff have access to gender-based violence training and awareness materials.
- Quality approval check of this policy is the responsibility of the Corporate Development team who will arrange for the policy to be posted on the intranet.
- Disclosures and reports of gender-based violence will be dealt with by the Safeguarding team under the College's Safeguarding Policy which outlines processes in place.

6. EXAMPLES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Examples include but are not limited to -

- Domestic violence
- Rape and sexual assault
- Stalking and harassment
- Sexual exploitation
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriage
- 'Honour'-based violence

7. PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING

- Staff must make careful and clear detailed notes.

8. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING

- If a student reports an incident of gender-based violence to a member of staff, it should be reported to the Safeguarding team via the Safeguarding icon on Topdesk - <http://topdesk.int.edinburghcollege.ac.uk/tas/public>.
- If there is an immediate threat to life, the Safeguarding Team should be alerted immediately.

9. SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

- Students will be supported by the Safeguarding team and other relevant Edinburgh College staff such as Learning Development Tutors, Learning Support and external support services.

10. SPECIFIC POLICIES/RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

11. DIRECTLY RELATED LEGISLATION

- Violence against women and girls (VAWG) Policy
- Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy to eradicate violence against women – April 2018
- Domestic Abuse Act in force – April 2019
- Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018
- Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (Scotland) Act 2005
- Forced Marriage etc. (Protection and Jurisdiction) (Scotland) Act 2011
- Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015