

# Student Dress Code Policy

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## SCOPE AND PURPOSE

In practice, people's choice of dress has created very few difficulties within the College and UCEN Manchester over the years. However, some choices or prohibitions are occasionally problematic or even contentious. This Student Dress Code Policy is therefore intended to provide clarity and consistency across the College and UCEN Manchester about the appropriateness of students' dress.

The Dress Code is based on a set of principles rather than on a list of 'Do's and 'Don'ts' that are often too narrow or rigid. These principles (listed below), whilst mandatory in themselves, should be applied with sensitivity, good judgement and discretion as appropriate.

The code applies to all students on College and UCEN Manchester premises and on external premises used for part of the student's course (such as work placements, residential venues, or on trips and visits).

## DEFINITIONS OF DRESS

The word 'dress' is used here in a broad sense to cover any aspect of the following: clothing, accessories, jewellery, body decorations including piercings and tattoos; hairstyles and headdresses, perfumes and body odours, footwear, and any objects, slogans or symbols worn or carried in any way on the person.

## PRINCIPLES

- Wherever possible, students should be able to adopt whatever sort of dress they choose, and they should feel free to express themselves in how they dress. However, this freedom exists only if students' choices do not breach the other principles below and/or cause significant offence to other College and UCEN Manchester users.
- Students are expected to take responsibility for dressing in ways that are appropriate to the activity they are undertaking and for being work ready for any activity they are involved in. Students should recognise that some forms of dress can pose an unreasonable challenge or be unreasonably provocative, in a variety of ways, to others who share College premises or experiences with them. This awareness is also implicit in the Learning Agreement, which expects students to behave in ways that 'respect the rights of others and complies with College and UCEN Manchester policies and procedures.
- The Deal states that all students must show their personal commitment to work readiness. This includes wearing lanyards and ID badges in all classrooms, workshops (unless required to remove them for safety purposes) and in all public or shared areas of the College and UCEN Manchester.
- Exceptions. There may be times when students wish to support different charities, and they would like to ask for exceptions to the normal dress code rules, for example *Jeans for Genes Day*. On these occasions, authorisation may be required from the curriculum Head of Department.

## Security, Health and Safety

- a) Dress needs to be appropriate for the activity and environment to ensure safety. For

b) example, hair may need to be covered or tied back in a canteen or science laboratory; those taking part in sporting activities will be asked to remove jewellery or accessories if these pose a risk; and where prescribed protective clothing/equipment (such as hard hats or steel-capped footwear) is essential and must be worn in certain workshops or learning environments.

c) **Covid-19 face coverings**

College policy in relation to Covid 19 safety measures will change from time-to-time subject to national and local regulations and/or guidance. Currently, wearing a face covering is required by law when travelling as a passenger on public transport in England. Some people are exempt from wearing a face covering for health, age or equality reasons. When on campus students should wear a face covering in all communal areas, but this is not required within the classroom/workshop as 2-metre distance measures are in place. If you are exempt from wearing a face covering then let a member of staff know and you will be provided with an exemption sticker for the back of their ID card or a different coloured lanyard to prevent continuous challenge. You may be asked to temporarily remove your mask if ID recognition is required.

d) **For religious, cultural or personal reasons**, individual students may make dress choices that may need to be reviewed in line with safety, for example when using equipment or machinery and other course/learning requirements. Transgender and gender non-conforming students who wear uniforms may wish to adapt their uniform to what they feel most appropriate. In such circumstances, the situation will be discussed on a student-by-student basis.

All students are expected to wear their lanyard and ID cards on campus. Identification photographs must show the full face. Any member of staff can verify the identity of students at any time. Students are expected to adhere to this request. The Manchester College and UCEN Manchester will observe sensitivity in taking photographs and visual identification where any facial coverings are worn.

Any request to remove religious dress that covers the face in order to check identification should be dealt with in a sensitive manner which treats every student with dignity, courtesy and respect. For students who cover their face, an appropriate member of staff in a private area should ask the individual to present their ID card showing their face and remove their veil to enable an identify check. Students who do cover their face must wear their lanyard and ID card at all times, however, the ID card may be worn reversed.

In circumstances where an appropriate staff member is not immediately available, the student will be given the option of having their identity checked by another member of staff.

- **Full participation in learning or other College and UCEN Manchester activities**

If a student's face is partially or fully obscured for any reason (for example by hats, hoods, veils, sunglasses, balaclavas, scarves, etc.) these dress choices may be discussed on a student-by-student basis. However, the expectation of the College is that where students make a dress choice based on personal preference, e.g. a hat or sunglasses, the learner can reasonably be expected to remove these items during

lessons to enable effective learning and assessment and demonstrate work readiness. If, for medical reasons, a learner is required to wear sunglasses or other dress options,

these will be discussed and agreed on a student-by-student basis. It is expected that students have a religious, cultural or substantial personal reason for dress choices that may obscure the face.

- **The promotion of harmony amongst different groups represented** in the College and the avoidance of giving offence, as far as can reasonably be expected in a heterogeneous and multi-cultural setting and society, are key principles. Examples of infringements might include items of dress such as T-shirts bearing offensive slogans or images; particularly revealing items of clothing (e.g. ultra-short shorts or very low-cut vests); visible tattoos that contain pornographic images; or racist badges (such as a swastika). Students are expected to comply with the requirement that they do not make dress choices that may cause offence and may be required to remove or cover them.
- **Applying the principles**  
It is recognised that the contexts in which students learn and study can differ widely. Therefore, each case will need to be considered in the light of the circumstances and judged with sensitivity and care, but without compromising the general principles. Advice can be sought if needed and where the issues or student responses are not straightforward from a Head of Student Support and Experience or members of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group.

## CONTRAVENTIONS OF THE DRESS CODE AND APPROPRIATE SANCTIONS

- If a student either knowingly or unintentionally, breaches the Student Dress Code Policy, the matter should be referred to the relevant manager to review the situation and, where appropriate, take the following actions:
  - Discuss the matter with the student concerned, explaining clearly how they have breached the Dress Code Policy, what is now expected of them and why.
  - If the infringement is serious enough or repeated, the student should be asked to remove or change the item/s of dress and/or may be sent home from College or UCEN Manchester the same day. The student would then be readmitted as soon as they complied with the Dress Code Policy.
  - Repeated and/or serious infringements of the Policy would result in disciplinary action being taken at the appropriate level using the College's or UCEN Manchester's student disciplinary procedure.
- In the case of a prospective student, the interview or enrolment can still take place where the person is unknowingly breaching the Dress Code Policy *in minor ways*, although they should be informed about the Dress Code Policy during the interview so they are prepared for future attendance.
- However, in less common cases *where the breach is significant*, the prospective student should have the Dress Code explained to them and be asked to return in acceptable dress before *an interview is completed*.

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Students can expect an inclusive and supportive learning environment whatever their background.

## **LINKED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Safeguarding Scheme

Single Equality Scheme

Behaviour Support & Disciplinary Policy

Visual ID Policy

## **LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY**

Staff Intranet

Student Intranet

Please email [equalitydiversity@tmc.ac.uk](mailto:equalitydiversity@tmc.ac.uk) with any comments and concerns.