

STUDENT DRESS CODE POLICY

Date Approved:	16 November 2015
Approved by:	Principalship
Review Date:	November 2017
Responsible Manager:	Assistant Principal Student Experience
Principalship Lead:	Vice Principal Curriculum & Support
Accessible to FE Students:	Yes
Relevant to HE:	Yes
Relevant to WBL:	Yes
Relevant to MOL:	No
Relevant to Justice Sector:	No

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

Introduction

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

The College Policy on Dress is based on a set of principles rather than on a list of 'Do's and Don'ts' that are often too narrow and rigid. These principles (listed below) are mandatory in themselves but need to be applied with sensitivity, good judgement and discretion where appropriate.

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, piercing and tattoos; hairstyles and headdress; perfumes and body odours; footwear; and objects, slogans or symbols worn or carried in any way on the person.

Scope

The code applies to all learners on college premises and on external premises used for part of the course (such as work placements, residential venues, or on trips and visits).

PRINCIPLES

- **Wherever possible, people should be able to adopt whatever sort of dress they choose** and they should feel free to express themselves in dress. However, this freedom exists only if people's choices do not breach the principles below and/or cause significant offence to other college users.
- **People are expected to take responsibility for dressing in ways that are appropriate to the activity and being work ready for** the activity they are involved in. They 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 is also implied in the Learning Agreement, which expects students to behave in ways, that: 'respect the rights of others and complies with college policies and procedures'.
- **The Deal** states that all learners must be showing personal commitment to work readiness. This means wearing you ID and lanyards, in all classrooms, workshops (where possible) and public or shared areas of the college.
- **Exceptions** There may be times when learners 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 by the curriculum Head of Department.
- **Security, Health and Safety**
 - (a) Dress needs to be appropriate for the activity and environment to ensure safety. For 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.
 - (b) **For religious, cultural or personal reasons**, individual learners may make dress choices that may need to be reviewed in line with safety, for example 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 which they feel most appropriate. In such circumstances, the situation will be discussed on a learner-by-learner basis to agree appropriate expectations.
 - (c) The college has a Visual ID policy. The Dress Code Policy is to be read in conjunction with, and provides additional guidance regarding the implementation of the Visual ID policy.

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 will observe sensitivity in taking photographs of 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 taking account of dignity, courtesy and respect. For learners who cover their face, an appropriate member of staff in a private area should ask the individual to provide their college ID card showing their face and to remove their veil for the purposes of the identity check. * learners who cover their face must wear their lanyard at all times however the ID card may be worn reversed. Where circumstances are such that an appropriate staff member cannot be made available at that time, the individual will be given the option of having their identity checked by another member of staff.

Full participation in learning or college activities

If a learner'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 learner-by-learner basis. However the expectation of the college is that where learners make a dress choice based on personal preference, e.g. a hat or sunglasses, the learner can reasonably be expected to remove these items to support effective learning, assessment and 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 learner-by-learner basis. It is expected that learners 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, multi-cultural college 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). Learners 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.
- **Applying the principles**
It is recognised that the contexts in which learners learn and study can differ widely. Therefore, each case will need to be considered in the light of the particular circumstances and judged with sensitivity and care, although without compromising the general principles. Advice can be sought if needed from Head of Student Support or members of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy group where the issues or learners' responses are not straightforward.

Contraventions of the Dress Code and appropriate sanctions

- If a learner, either knowingly or unintentionally, breaches the College Dress Policy, the matter should be referred to the relevant manager to review the

situation and to, as appropriate:

- Discuss the matter with the learner concerned, explaining clearly in what way they have breached the Dress Code, what is then expected and for what reasons.
 - If the infringement is serious enough or repeated, the learner should be asked to remove or change the item/s of dress and/or may be sent home from college the same day. The learner would then be readmitted to college as soon as they complied with the Dress Policy. However, repeated and/or serious infringements of the Policy would invoke the relevant learner Disciplinary Procedures at an appropriate level
- In the case of a **prospective learner**, the interview or enrolment can still take place where the person is unknowingly breaching the Dress Policy *in minor ways*, although they should be informed about the Dress Policy during the interview so they are prepared for future attendance.
 - However, in less common cases *where the breach is significant*, the **prospective learner** should have the Dress Code explained to them, and be asked to return in acceptable dress *before an interview is completed*.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

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

LINKED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Safeguarding Scheme
Disciplinary policy
Single Equality Scheme
Visual ID Policy
The Deal

LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

Staff Intranet
Student Intranet

Please email equalitydiversity@tmc.ac.uk for comments and concerns.