

Student Code of Conduct



2026-2027

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I. OVERVIEW

1.1. Richmond American University London expects its students to uphold high standards of behaviour and conduct at all times, to support the institutional vision and mission, and uphold its values.

1.2. The Student Code of Conduct and its related documents outlines:

1.2.1. expectations for student behaviour

1.2.2. the procedures the University uses to resolve matters when students are alleged to have breached the SCOC

1.2.3. specific responsibilities and actions for staff who investigate alleged offences and who apply disciplinary penalties

1.2.4. the appeal process for decisions taken under the Student Code of Conduct

1.3. Agreeing to abide by the Student Code of Conduct is a condition of enrolment at the University: The primary purposes of the University are teaching, learning and research. This requires members of the University community to live and work beside each other in conditions which permit freedom of thought and expression and mutual respect.

1.4. Considering and using disciplinary action at an early stage can prevent more serious offences or issues arising. The University views the Student Code of Conduct and discipline procedures as a part of a welfare approach: misconduct may be the first indicator of underlying problems. The process can provide students with an opportunity for re-flection and learning.

2. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. The University shall:

2.1.1. Make the Student Code of Conduct and associated guidance material available to all students, staff, and faculty.

2.1.2. Deal with student disciplinary issues in a proportionate, transparent, and timely way.

2.1.3. Ensure all matters addressed under the Student Code of Conduct are treated in strict confidence and in accordance with relevant data protection and privacy legislation

2.1.4. Ensure that those involved are made aware of available guidance and support,

2.1.5. ensure that a holistic, developmental approach is considered.

2.1.6. Ensure that students have access to reasonable adjustments where appropriate

2.2. The University operates the Student Code of Conduct under the principle of Ignorantia juris non excusat in that the student who is unaware of the Student Code of Conduct may not escape liability for violating the Code merely because the student was unaware of its contents.

3. GOVERNANCE

3.1. Oversight of the University's Student Code of Conduct is the responsibility of the Vice-President for Student Affairs and is approved by the University Board.

3.2. There will be an annual review of all actions taken under the Code by the University Board every January, and the review will be passed to the relevant Committees of the Board of Trustees for comment.

3.3. The Student Code of Conduct itself shall also be reviewed annually.

3.4. The University Board may devolve responsibility to relevant Committees and Boards, with appropriate student membership, for:

3.4.1. Keeping the Student Code of Conduct under review and proposing amendments to relevant committees.

3.4.2. Discussing, reviewing, and approving appropriate student disciplinary procedures and guidance.

3.4.3. Considering an Annual Report about the number, types, and outcomes of cases of misconduct found to have been committed and make this information available in the appropriate format to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator and other external bodies as required.

4. SCOPE

4.1. The Student Code of Conduct applies to:

4.1.1. all students of the University. This includes: full-time and part-time students, study abroad students, and any other individual receiving formal teaching or instruction from the University, whether for-credit or not-for-credit ("the student").

4.1.2. activities in which they engage in their capacity as students of the University; or

4.1.3. services or facilities they enjoy by virtue of being a student of the University; or

4.1.4. their presence in the vicinity of, or their access to, any premises owned, leased or managed by the University, including but not limited to campuses and buildings in Chiswick and the study centre in Leeds.

4.1.5. activities related to a class, trip, or university sponsored or supported event off-campus; or

4.1.6. activities related to student workers' conduct whilst representing the University; or

4.1.7. any activity not covered by the above, which is considered to affect adversely the safety, interests, or reputation of the University, its community, or authorised representatives.

4.2. Free speech is protected in line with UK law and OfS guidelines. Please see the University's free speech policy [LINK](#) as well as the dignity at work and study policy

4.3. Study abroad students and other students may be subject to additional policies and regulations from another institution or institutions but are similarly required to comply with University policies and regulations during their time at this University.

4.4. Student organisations and groups formally recognized by the University are subject to the same regulations as individual students. Organisations may be disciplined if a significant number of students involved in an alleged offence belong to the group or if the planning and leadership responsible for an alleged offence came from the student members of an organisation or group. **See Appendix II.**

4.5. Students' behaviour may be affected by some health conditions or specific needs. However, the University has a duty to ensure that members of the University community are not subjected to unacceptable behaviour and any allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be investigated. Where health conditions, specific needs, or other mitigating circumstances may be a contributing factor, further evidence will be sought and taken into account and the University will endeavor to offer appropriate support to assist the student but may also take action under the Student Code of Conduct

4.6. The University maintains high standards with regard to academic conduct and regards the teaching of academic values as an important part of its mission.

Please note that allegations of Academic Misconduct are managed by a standalone academic policy, and not are in the remit of the Student Code of Conduct. For more information, please refer to Academic Misconduct Reporting and Appeals Policy – Coursework, Academic

5. TYPES OF MISCONDUCT

5.1. Misconduct refers to actions, behaviors, or omissions that negatively affect the safety, wellbeing, rights, property or normal operation of the University community. The examples below are illustrative and not exhaustive.

5.2. The University may choose to investigate and respond to misconduct allegations whether they take place on University premises or elsewhere, including online and in social media.

5.3. Misconduct Categories

5.3.1. The University accepts that misconduct offences will vary in significance and serious-ness. In order to ensure appropriate review of an alleged offence and to ensure that appropriate and proportionate sanctions are applied the University will consider non-academic misconduct violations according to the following types:

Type 1 – acts against a person

Type 2 – offenses related to property or safety

Type 3 – acts against the University

5.3.2. The determination of the type of offence committed lies with the University. Guidelines are provided in **Appendix VI.**

5.4. Type I: Acts against a person include but are not limited to physical misconduct, sexual misconduct, abusive behaviour, and harassment. The specific allegations in this category are:

5.4.1. Disrupting, or interfering with any academic, administrative, sporting, social or other University activities, including any action that may have or be seen to have a harmful effect on another member of the University

5.4.2. Obstructing, or interfering with, the functions, duties, or activities of any Person

5.4.3. Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening, or offensive behaviour or language (whether expressed orally, in writing or electronically) including harassment of any Person whilst engaged in any University work, study or activity, including behaviour influenced by drugs or alcohol.

5.4.4. Victimising or discriminating against any Person on grounds of age, disability, race, ethnic or national origin, religion or beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, marriage or civil partnership, colour, or socio-economic background, or any other action that is seen to be in breach of the Dignity at Work and Study Policy.

5.4.5. Recording, transmitting, broadcasting, and/or publishing the words or actions of any Person without consent or in a way which may cause distress or harm

5.4.6. Possession, transportation, storage, use, or manufacture of firearms, firecrackers, guns, knives, explosives, weapons, or any item which is intended to be used as a weapon or has been modified or adapted so that it can be used as a weapon.

5.5. Type 2: Acts against property or safety include damage to property; unauthorised use or taking of property; and causing a health or safety concern. The specific allegations in this category are:

5.5.1. damage, theft, misuse or unauthorised use of university property or facilities or the property of any Person.

5.5.2. misuse of fire equipment, blocking fire exits or not evacuating when instructed

5.5.3. Unreasonably obstructing, or interfering with, the functions, duties, or activities of any Person in a way likely to cause injury to any Person or impair or jeopardise safety.

5.5.4. Failure to comply with housing and accommodation policies and rules as set out in **APPENDIX and POLICIES**.

5.5.5. Smoking and vaping in prohibited areas

5.5.6. The use, consumption, possession, sale, distribution or abuse of illegal drugs or controlled substances or drug paraphernalia, including the sale of prescription drugs

5.5.7. The unlawful or unsafe use of alcoholic beverages by any individual under the legal age limit, or by any individual in common areas on University property (except in specific cases which are clearly defined and authorised)

5.6 Type 3: Acts against the University include operational obstruction and reputational damage/risk. The specific allegations in this category are:

5.6.1. Failure to comply with any University policy, rule, or regulations, including failure to comply with this Code or sanctions imposed under this Code.

5.6.2. Failing to comply with the reasonable instruction of a member of staff or faculty acting in the performance of their duties or refusal to respond promptly and appropriately to a request to report to an administrative office. This includes:

5.6.2.1. failure to pay, in a timely fashion, any fee, fine, charge, or assessment imposed by the University

5.6.2.2. failure to present University identification upon request by an authorised University official

5.6.2.3. failure to follow the University's UKVI Compliance policies and processes

5.6.3. Conduct which unjustifiably infringes freedom of thought or expression whilst on University premises or engaged in University work, study, or activity.

5.6.4. Fraud, deceit, falsification of documents, deception or dishonesty in relation to the University or its staff or in connection with holding any office in the University or in relation to being a student of the University.

5.6.5. Deliberately doing, or failing to do, anything which thereby causes the University to be in breach of a statutory obligation, including but not limited to University obligations under the Prevent Duty, the Equalities Act (2010) and the University's UKVI sponsorship license.

5.6.6. Behaving in a way which brings the University into disrepute or poses a reputation risk to the University (without prejudice to the right to fair and justified comment and criticism)

5.6.7. Making false, frivolous, malicious, or vexatious complaints to the University.

5.6.8. Any misconduct prior to a student's enrolment at the University, which was not previously known to the University, which raises questions about the fitness of the student to remain a member of the University community; poses a threat to any Person or the discipline and good order of the University; or raises questions about the student's fitness to be admitted to and to practise any particular profession to which the student's course or programme leads directly.

5.6.9 Failing to report a violation or possible violation of the Code to a member of staff or not taking reasonable steps to prevent a violation of the Code where in not doing so increased risk of harm. Please refer to the University's Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Policy for more information on reporting concerning behaviour and protection for whistleblowers.

5.6.10 Any other act or omission which a student may be reasonably expected to know is likely to be inappropriate or unacceptable to the university community, and any behaviour which may be reasonably considered to be in violation of the university values.

I. MISCONDUCT AND THE LAW

6.1. The University may report to the police any allegation that a criminal offence has been committed.

6.2. The University encourages any student who has been the victim of an alleged criminal offence to report this to the police, and, if relevant, to the University.

6.3. Where alleged misconduct constitutes a criminal offence, the University may investigate or take disciplinary action whether or not the matter has been referred to the police and whether or not criminal proceedings have begun or been completed.

6.4. The University may, at its discretion, suspend any internal investigation or disciplinary action on alleged criminal misconduct to await the outcome of any criminal proceedings. The decision whether or not to suspend the University's disciplinary process is taken collectively by the Vice President (Pro-Vice Chancellor) for Student Affairs in consultation with one other member of the University Board.

6.5 The University may investigate and take disciplinary action on alleged misconduct whatever the outcome of any external proceedings about the same matter and irrespective.

6.6 Where the student is convicted of or cautioned or warned for an offence, this may be relied upon as evidence in any University proceedings provided that the circumstances leading to that conviction are directly relevant to those proceedings

6.7. Any sentence or order pronounced by a Court of law may be taken into account in the imposition of any disciplinary penalty.

6.8. The University, where possible, will endeavour to record initial details of incidents to aid with law enforcement investigations as appropriate, and will hold these in line with the University's obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations.