

## ACADEMY POLICY MANUAL

<b>Number and Title</b>	A001: Respectful Academy Community
<b>Responsible Department</b>	President
<b>Category</b>	Academy Community
<b>Effective Date</b>	October 1, 2025
<b>Next Review</b>	October 1, 2026 <b>Requires annual review</b>

### 1. Purpose

- Affirm every Community Member’s right to learn and work free from harassment, discrimination, bullying, and violence, consistent with the [BC Human Rights Code](#) and [WorkSafeBC](#) requirements.
- Clarify rights, responsibilities, and reporting pathways.
- Set fair, timely complaint and investigation procedures, with protection from retaliation.
- Promote a respectful, inclusive culture consistent with the Academy’s mission and values.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Academy Community members and all Academy contexts (in-person, remote/online, hybrid).
- Off-site activities under Academy auspices (e.g., clinical/field placements, conferences, competitions, hiring/interviews).
- Third-party spaces used by the Academy. Where a host site has its own complaint process, the Academy will coordinate to ensure safety and due process.

If a student is alleged to have contravened this policy, investigation proceeds under this policy; sanctions may be applied under the Student Code of Conduct.

If an employee is alleged to have contravened this policy, investigation proceeds under this policy; sanctions follow human resources policies and procedures.

Violence and safety risks are handled in alignment with the Workers’ Compensation Act and OHS Regulation for violence prevention.

Sexualized violence is addressed under the Academy’s Sexualized Violence & Misconduct Policy as well as this policy.

### 3. Definitions

**Academy:** Includes all organizations operating under Columbia Learning Group, including Columbia Medical Training (CMT) and Columbia Paramedic Academy (CPA).

**Academy Community:** Includes employees, students, members of Boards or committees established by the Academy, volunteers, contractors, individuals providing services or conducting research, individuals or groups who rent or use Academy facilities, visitors, applicants, and guests.

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**Discrimination:** Any action or behaviour that results in unfavourable or adverse treatment based on one or more of the Prohibited Grounds.

**Facilitator:** The designated Manager, Director, or Third Party Organization that facilitates the Complaint Process.

**Harassment:** Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. It includes bullying or personal harassment that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome and which could reasonably be regarded as intending to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate an individual and results in a harmful work/learning environment. Generally, a series of actions or behaviours is required to constitute harassment; however, a single act of sufficient severity may constitute harassment. Harassment may occur verbally, in writing or through any electronic media. Harassment with sexual overtones of any sort is included.

*Examples of Harassment:* Include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying or personal harassment,
- Vexatious conduct intended to intimidate, degrade, or humiliate an individual,
- Vexatious conduct that negatively affects an individual's dignity,
- Berating or belittling an individual,
- Unwarranted criticism,
- Undermining an individual's work or deliberately impeding their ability to perform their work,
- Spreading malicious rumours, gossip or innuendo that is not true,
- Yelling or using profanity,
- Taunting and teasing where the intention is to humiliate and embarrass,
- Conduct which creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile environment,
- Insulting language,
- Unwelcome name-calling and hurtful pranks,
- Phone calls, letters or emails which are abusive or offensive,
- Abuse of authority,
- Physical gestures intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate an individual,
- Display of offensive material, either in hardcopy or electronic form, which is intended to intimidate or humiliate an individual, or
- Use of any information and communication technologies to create, post, display, transmit, or distribute messages or other materials that are intended to intimidate or humiliate an individual.
- Violence: The exercise, or attempt to exercise, of physical force by a person against a person that causes or could cause physical injury to the person; or a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a person to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the person, that could cause physical injury to the person.

**Leader:** Any individual with formal or delegated authority to direct work or learning activities and who is accountable for safety, conduct, and performance outcomes. This includes employees in supervisory roles, managers/supervisors, and lead educators/educators responsible for students (e.g., program lead educators, clinical coordinators, preceptors, or similar titles).

**Poisoned Environment:** Any action or behaviour relating to one or more of the prohibited grounds, which although not necessarily directed at anyone in particular, has the effect of creating or maintaining an

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offensive, humiliating, or intimidating climate to work or study. Examples include insulting jokes, posting or displaying offensive cartoons or signs, or distributing such materials via electronic technologies.

**Prohibited Grounds:** In accordance with the Code and the definitions provided therein, and for the purposes of this policy, prohibited grounds are: race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed (religion), sex, sexual orientation, same sex partnership status, gender identity, gender expression, disability, age, marital status, family status (parent-child relationship) the receipt of public assistance, and record of offences (provincial offences, pardoned federal crimes).

**Reprisal or Retaliation:** Adverse action taken against an individual for invoking this policy or for participating or cooperating in an investigation under this policy or for associating with someone who has invoked this policy or participated in the policy's procedures.

**Sexual Harassment:** A course of comments or conduct of a sexual nature or that is related to sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome or unwanted, offensive, intimidating, hostile or inappropriate. Single acts of sufficient severity may constitute sexual harassment. Community members have the right to be free from:

- Sexual solicitation or advance made by a person in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement; or
- Reprisal or threat of reprisal for the rejection of a sexual solicitation or advance where the reprisal is made by a person in a position to grant, confer, or deny a benefit or advancement.

*Examples of Sexual Harassment:*

- Unwelcome remarks, jokes, slurs, innuendos or taunting about a person's body, gender or gender expression.
- Unwelcome sexual advances (verbal, written, physical).
- Practical jokes of a sexual nature which cause awkwardness or embarrassment.
- Leering, whistling, or other suggestive or insulting sounds.
- Attainment or distribution of improper information of a sexual nature including, but not limited to, electronic material.
- Unwanted or inappropriate physical contact such as touching, kissing, patting, hugging or pinching.
- Sexual or physical assault (also an offence under the Criminal Code). Refer to policy A003:Sexualized Violence & Misconduct Policy.
- Inappropriate and unwanted comments about a person's body, dress or appearance.
- Unwelcome enquiries or comments about a person's sex life or sexual orientation.
- Written or verbal abuse or threats of a gendered or sexual nature.
- Nasty or derogatory remarks or conduct directed toward members of one gender.
- Requests or demands for sexual favours which include, or strongly imply, promises of rewards for complying (e.g., job advancement opportunities, improved academic grades) or threats of punishment for refusal (e.g., denial of job advancement or opportunities, diminished academic grades).

**What is NOT Discrimination or Harassment:** Exercising appropriate supervisory, instructional and evaluation responsibilities, including conducting performance appraisals, enforcing standards, and taking corrective or discipline action, does not constitute discrimination or harassment and is not contrary to this policy.

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Vexatious or Bad Faith Complaint: A complaint in which a complainant makes allegations knowing them to be false or submits a complaint for a purely malicious or vindictive purpose.

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#### **4. Policy Statement**

The Academy is committed to fostering an Academy community that is both respectful of each Community Member and that is free from discrimination and harassment. Every community member has the right to freedom from discrimination and harassment in accordance with the BC Human Rights Code. The Academy does not tolerate discrimination, harassment or other disrespectful conduct. In the event of an alleged breach of this policy, the Academy responds promptly and strives to achieve a fair and timely resolution.

The Policy Sponsor develops, implements and maintains a system designed to achieve these ends. This system aligns with and is reflective of the Academy's mission, vision, strategic goals and values, and of relevant legislation.

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#### **5. Principles**

The Academy is committed to fostering a Academy community that is both respectful of each Academy community member and that is free from discrimination and harassment. Every community member has the right to freedom from discrimination and harassment in accordance with the BC Human Rights Code. The Academy does not tolerate discrimination, harassment or other disrespectful conduct. In the event that a breach of this policy is alleged, the Academy responds promptly and strives to achieve a fair and timely resolution.

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#### **6. Responsibilities**

##### 6.1. Academy Community Members

Academy Community members are responsible for ensuring that their working or learning environment is free from harassment by refraining from any comment or conduct that is in contravention of this policy. In addition, Community members are responsible for reporting incidents of apparent violations of this policy to their leader and, when necessary, cooperating in the investigation or resolution of complaints pursuant to this policy.

##### 6.2. Academy Employees and Others

Academy employees have a duty to act immediately on observations or allegations of breaches of this policy. Employees and others responsible for directing the activities of students have a responsibility to be familiar with this policy and its procedures and to inform staff and students about its existence.

##### 6.3. Leader

The Leader reports to a Manager or Director and may access the President as appropriate, and is responsible for administering this policy. In the event that the Leader, Manager, Director or a member of the Human Resources Department has a direct involvement with a complaint made under this policy (as a complainant, respondent or witness), the President or designate appoints a suitable alternate for the purposes of dealing with the complaint.

##### 6.4. Human Resources:

- Reviews this policy at least annually.
  - Facilitates mandatory training regarding this policy for students and employees upon hiring and every three years thereafter, and educational awareness for other Community members annually.
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- Facilitates the posting of this policy electronically and in visible and accessible locations at Academy campuses.
- Covers costs associated with administering this policy and complaint procedure, and the cost of mediators and investigators.
- Provides an annual monitoring report to the Senior Leadership team summarizing the frequency and types of complaints under this policy, with comparative trend information where possible.

### 7. Recourse to BC Human Rights Tribunal or Grievance Procedure

Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent a complainant from referring their complaint to the BC Human Rights Tribunal.

### 8. References

British Columbia Human Rights Code  
 WorkSafeBC

#### Academy Policies:

A004: Safe Academy Campuses  
 A003: Sexualized Violence & Misconduct  
 A002: Complaint Process Guideline  
 L001: Student Code of Conduct

### 9. Attachments

Document History

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### Document History

<b>PTIRU Institution Number</b>	03876
<b>Version</b>	2.0
<b>Responsible Author</b>	Director, Learning
<b>Approved By</b>	President

Version	Date	Author	Status	Description of Changes
1.0	01/10/25	Dugg Steary	Draft	n/a
1.1	01/10/25	Dugg Steary	Final Draft	Accepting Edits and Tracking
2.0		Dugg Steary	Final Version	Published to website