



D U N B O Y N E
C O L L E G E
O F F U R T H E R E D U C A T I O N

Code of Conduct

Please note in this document “student” refers to any student of Dunboyne College who is over 18 years old or where a student is under 18 years old, it refers to student plus parents/guardians.

General Rules of the College

- Student Identity cards issued to students at registration will be carefully retained and produced on demand by any college staff member. If a student’s identity card is lost, he/she should immediately inform the library staff and a replacement may be issued on payment of a fee
- A student entered for a course is expected to attend all classes, labs, skills demonstrations and all other requirements given in the course
- A student must immediately notify the general office of any changes to registration details.
- A student who wishes to withdraw from the college should notify the college in writing/by email and return their student card to the library. Failure to do so may affect later claims regarding social welfare entitlements
- Dunboyne College is a smoke-free building. This includes the use of E-cigarettes. Smoking is not permitted in front of the college. There are designated areas to the rear of the building.
- Cars must be parked only in the designated student car park and bicycles must be left in bicycle racks which are provide
- A student may be denied access to any or all college premises or facilities without notice and for such a period of time as the college authorities see fit, in the event that the college authorities consider such exclusion to be necessary in the interests of the safety or well-being of that student and/or any other member of the college
- Any accident which occurs on the college grounds must be reported to a member of staff without undue delay
- Students are expected to make themselves aware of and abide by college policies.
- Failure to comply with these rules may result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions (including fines), in relation to the rule relating to vehicles – clamping, suspension or expulsion

Code of Conduct for students

The purpose of the Code of Conduct within Dunboyne College is to ensure that the pursuit of the objectives of the college is not disrupted. These objectives are primarily the advancement, promotion, gathering and dissemination of knowledge and understanding through teaching, research, learning and discussion. To enable these aims to be fulfilled in a satisfactory manner it is necessary that a suitable academic environment be maintained. The student Code of Conduct offers guidelines as to the norms of behaviour expected of students and promotes concern and respect for other people's rights and property. A student who registers for any course in the college will be expected to accept these objectives and to comply with the rules and regulations of the college.

Rules and breaches

Every student is expected and required to:

- Conduct themselves in a manner conducive to the academic environment of the college and take an active and positive role in the learning process
- Respect the rights of fellow students to learn without disruption
- Respect the authority of the college academic and other staff in the performance of their duties
- Respect the property of the college and of other students, college staff and other persons working in or visiting the college
- While on work experience or on college-related activities outside of the premises, to behave in a manner which will maintain the good name of the college
- At all times observe the criminal laws of the State and the rules and regulations of the college

In applying these basic rules the college authorities will normally regard as disciplinary offences any breaches and/or attempted breaches of the criminal laws of the State and/or the college Code of Conduct for students including but not limited to:

- Plagiarism, cheating or the use of unauthorised material during an examination or other breaches of Examination Regulations.
- Disruption of teaching, study, discussion or research. This includes the unauthorised use of mobile phones and other electronic or photographic devices during class time.
- Disruption of the administration of the college.
- Refusal to respect the authority of the college and to comply with reasonable requests by the college staff.
- Furnishing of false information to the college with intent to deceive or in circumstances calculated to deceive.
- The use of disrespectful or discriminatory language, comments or actions towards others. This includes all electronic communication and social media.
- Where a complaint of bullying has been investigated, and upheld. (Please see the college anti-bullying policy)
- Malicious or reckless damage or theft of college property or any other property on the college grounds.
- Unwarranted interference with the college safety equipment, fire -fighting equipment, security systems and alarms.
- On or off campus conduct likely to bring the college into disrepute. This includes all electronic communication and social media.
- Bringing, using or selling alcohol, drugs, tobacco or solvents while in college or on college trips.

- Conducting of any activity within the college for their own financial gain unless prior authorisation has been granted in writing by the Principal.
- Engaging in activities which contravene the laws of the State.

Procedure for dealing with breaches of the code of conduct

Informal stage

It would be normal practice for small day-to-day issues to be dealt with between the teacher and the student by unambiguous communication and clearly stated expectations.

If a more focused discussion is required, it would be normal practice for the teacher to take the student aside and have a private word in an effort to clarify the situation. The student's point of view will be listened to and taken into account as a matter of natural justice.

If the situation is not resolved satisfactorily, the Deputy Principal is empowered to handle summarily what he/she regards as minor breaches of the code of conduct and will request an informal meeting with the student in an effort to find a resolution. This may be sufficient to resolve the situation.

The Deputy Principal will consider the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the context of the behaviour, the impact of the behaviour, and the student's point of view when considering if any of the following sanctions are appropriate:

- The student may be given a verbal/written reprimand and warned that if further breaches of discipline occur in future, his/her present breach will be taken into consideration when imposing a sanction. The student will be given an opportunity to give a verbal/written response to this sanction.
- The student may also be required to give a written undertaking of good behaviour for the remainder of the academic year.

Formal Stage

The process may enter the formal stage if:

A student has failed to respond to earlier sanctions or a serious breach of the code of conduct is made against a student. Serious breaches of the code may include but are not restricted to:

- Where a student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- Where a student persistently disrupts the administration of the college
- Persistent refusal to respect the authority of the college and to comply with reasonable requests by the college staff
- Furnishing of false information to the college with intent to deceive or in circumstances calculated to deceive
- Persistent use of disrespectful or discriminatory language, comments or actions towards others. This includes all electronic communication and social media
- Where a serious allegation of bullying has been investigated and upheld
- Where a student's continued behaviour in the college constitutes a real and significant threat to safety

- Where a student is responsible for serious damage to property
- Where a student persistently pursues conduct likely to bring the college into disrepute. This includes all electronic communication and social media
- Bringing, using or selling alcohol, drugs, tobacco or solvents while in college or on college trips.
- Knowingly conducting an activity within the college for their own financial gain without prior authorisation by the Principal
- Engaging in activities which contravene the laws of the State

If the process enters the formal stage, the Deputy Principal may refer the matter to the Discipline Committee for consideration.

If the Principal deems fit, he/she will have the authority to exclude that student from college premises, while the alleged breach is being investigated by the Discipline Committee.

Membership of the Discipline Committee

The Discipline Committee shall comprise:

- The Principal and/or Deputy Principal who shall be the Chairman
- One member of the academic staff
- Chair of the Student Council

Except as provided below, the deliberations of the committee will be held in confidence.

A formal meeting will be arranged by the committee to include the following people:

- The teacher/staff member involved in reporting the alleged breach
- The student
- The student is entitled to have present to assist him/her at the meeting a representative who is a registered student or a member of the academic or administrative staff of the college. As this is a lay forum, legal representation is not the norm and is not expected

If the student fails to attend/respond to this meeting, the matter may be dealt with in his/her absence. The committee will ensure that the student is informed of the full case against him/her and offer the student an opportunity to explain any mitigating circumstances.

The committee will consider the allegation, the evidence received in relation to it, and any representations made by or on behalf of the student.

The committee will deliberate in private and will notify the student of the outcome within three days where practicable.

The committee will forward a written report of its handling of any serious breach of conduct to the Board of Management.

Sanctions may include any or some of the following

- Conditional discharge – that no further action be taken against the student provided that he/she fulfils the conditions laid down by the committee. The committee may also give an absolute discharge where no further action is taken.
- Fine – that the student would be fined a sum determined by the committee in compensation for damage to property.
- Temporary exclusion of the student.

- Recommendation to the Board of Management for permanent exclusion of the student.

Temporary exclusion

This is an extremely serious sanction. It is making a statement to the student that his/her behaviour and refusal to respond to the requests and encouragement of the college staff have placed the student outside the community of the college. It is a *de facto* statement by that student that he/she does not wish to be associated with the character of responsibilities and rights of all who study and teach in Dunboyne College.

The Principal will have the authority to temporarily exclude a student for up to 5 college days should he/she deem this an appropriate sanction.

When considering the possible suspension of a student the Principal will ensure that the following factors are all given due consideration:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether suspension is an appropriate response
- The possible impact of the suspension

The student will be issued with a written letter of suspension notifying him/her of the reasons for the suspension, the duration of the suspension and the procedures for appealing the suspension should the student wish to do so.

The procedures for dealing with an appeal to the Board is outlined in Appendix 1.

Permanent exclusion

Where the Discipline Committee is considering recommendation of possible expulsion of a student, a detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal.

The student (and his/her parents/guardians where the student is under 18 years) will be informed in writing about the specific details of the alleged breach of behaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion. The Principal will ensure that the student is given an opportunity to respond to the complaint before a decision is made and any sanction imposed.

Following the investigation, a further meeting will be arranged between the student and the Discipline Committee before a meeting of the Board of Management is convened. This is to ensure that the student is aware of the outcome of the investigation and has an opportunity to respond.

Should the student fail to attend the meeting, the Principal will write advising the seriousness of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and - failing that - the duty of the college authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour.

Where the committee forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehavior, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

An emergency meeting of the Board of Management will be convened for decision on whether to recommend expulsion to LMETB. A minimum of 3 days' notice will be given to the student in order to comply with the requirements of fair procedures/natural justice.

A copy of the following will be issued to each member of the Board of Management:

- Code of Conduct
- Report of the detailed investigation carried out under direction of the Principal.
- Recommendation by the Principal to the Board of Management that it consider the expulsion of the student.

A copy of the following will be issued to the student:

- Code of Conduct
- Written confirmation, signed on enrolment by the student in acceptance of the college code of conduct.
- Report of the detailed investigation carried out under direction of the Principal.
- An invitation to the student to make a presentation/submission to and to be present at and make an oral presentation/submission to the Board of Management hearing.

Board of Management hearing:

The student may be accompanied by one other person at the Board hearing. As this is a lay forum, legal representation is not the norm and is not expected. The Secretary of the Board is to be advised in writing as to who will be attending the Board meeting at least two/three days prior to the meeting taking place.

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairperson will inquire whether any member of the Board has a conflict of interest and/or bias, whether subjective or objective, in relation to the recommendation that the student be expelled. Where the board is satisfied that a conflict of interest or a bias exists, the member involved shall withdraw from the meeting.

The Chairperson will nominate a member of the board to act as recording secretary and to minute the meeting. The person recording the minutes must formally provide a minute of the meeting to the Secretary.

The student will present their case/submission and will be available to answer questions from the members of the Board of Management only at the end of the presentations.

A student under 18 may attend the meeting but does not present his/her case.

The Principal will present the case against the student including the report of the detailed investigation of the alleged misbehavior by the student and the recommendation that the Board should consider the expulsion of the student. The Principal will be available to answer questions from members of the Board of Management only at the end of the presentation.

Each of the parties will have the right of reply and each will have the right to question the other through the Chair.

Prior to withdrawal from the hearing, the student will be asked whether there is anything that is relevant to the issue, which he/she would like to add.

When the Principal and the student have made their submission/presentation they will withdraw from the meeting.

Should the Board require the professional advice of the Principal, the Principal may be invited to return to the meeting briefly and solely for that purpose. While the Principal is present, there is no discussion or consideration of the possible expulsion of the student. The Principal **must not be present for the decision of the Board.**

Determination of issue of possible expulsion of a student:

When considering the possible expulsion of a student, the Board will ensure that the following factors are all given due consideration:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether expulsion is an appropriate response
- The possible impact of the expulsion.

The Board will also consider any other relevant factors arising from the documentation circulated, and the presentations of both parties.

The Board will make a decision on the issue of possible expulsion of the student and record the reasons for its decision.

Where the Board decides that the student should be expelled, the student will be notified of the decision by letter, normally delivered by registered post which will include the following:

- Notice of the decision to expel and the effective date of the proposed expulsion.
- The reasons for the decision to expel.
- Information on the right to appeal the Board's decision to expel and information in relation to the appeal process, including the LMETB Appeals Application Form.

Appendix 1

Appeals in relation to Suspension

A special meeting of the Board of Management will be convened to consider an appeal against the suspension of a student. Notice of the meeting should be issued to the Secretary 7 days (where possible) prior to the meeting to each member of the Board of Management and to the student.

A copy of the following will be issued to each member of the Board of Management:

- Code of Conduct
- Letter of suspension (possibly redacted to preserve anonymity).

A copy of the following will be issued to the student:

- Code of Conduct
- Written confirmation, signed on enrolment by the student in acceptance of the college code of conduct.
- Further copy of letter of suspension (possibly redacted to preserve anonymity).
- An invitation to the student to make a written presentation/submission to and to be present at and make an oral presentation/submission to the hearing of the appeal by the Board.

Board of Management hearing:

The student may be accompanied by one other person at the Board hearing. As this is a lay forum, legal representation is not the norm and is not expected. The Secretary of the Board is to be advised in writing as to who will be attending the Board meeting at least two/three days prior to the meeting taking place.

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairperson will inquire whether any member of the Board has a conflict of interest and/or bias, whether subjective or objective, in relation to the recommendation that the student be expelled. Where the board is satisfied that a conflict of interest or a bias exists, the member involved shall withdraw from the meeting.

The Chairperson will nominate a member of the board to act as recording secretary and to minute the meeting. The person recording the minutes must formally provide a minute of the meeting to the Secretary.

The student will present their case/submission and will be available to answer questions from the members of the Board of Management only at the end of the presentations.

A student under 18 may attend the meeting but does not present his/her case.

The Principal will present the case against the student (normally from a written statement) and will be available to answer questions from members of the Board of Management only at the end of the presentation.

Each of the parties will have the right of reply and each will have the right to question the other through the Chair.

Prior to withdrawal from the hearing, the student will be asked whether there is anything that is relevant to the issue, which he/she would like to add.

When the Principal and the student have made their submission/presentation they will withdraw from the meeting.

Should the Board require the professional advice of the Principal, the Principal may be invited to return to the meeting briefly and solely for that purpose. While the Principal is present, there is no discussion or consideration of the possible suspension of the student. The Principal **must not** be present for the decision of the Board.

Determination of the Appeal:

When considering the appeal against the suspension of a student, the Board will ensure that the following factors are all given due consideration:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether suspension is an appropriate response
- The possible impact of the suspension

The Board will also consider any other factors which it considers are relevant to the appeal. Such factors should include where relevant, whether fair procedures were applied in terms of the right to be heard, and the right to impartiality, or whether the student is scheduled to sit an examination in the near future.

The Board will make a decision on the appeal and record the reasons for its decision.

Notification of decision to suspend.

Where the Board has made its decision to uphold the suspension, the student will be notified of the decision by letter, normally delivered by registered post which will include the following:

Notice of whether the appeal has been upheld or not been upheld by the Board.

Where the appeal has been upheld the letter may include arrangements for the student to return to college.

Where the appeal has not been upheld by the Board, the letter will include the reasons for the Board's decision, notice of the right to and timeframe for the appeal to the Appeals Committee of Louth and Meath Education and Training Board together with a copy of the LMETB Appeals Application Form.