



Student Code of Conduct

OVERVIEW

Purpose	The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to ensure that the principles of a safe, inclusive and ordered teaching & learning experience are clear to all and consistently upheld.
Custodian	St Stithians Online School Head & Rector of St Stithians College
Approval Authority	Rector of St Stithians College
Version History	Version 1, Effective 11 January 2021



1. Introduction

- 1.1. This framework has been developed by St Stithians Online School in collaboration with Valentre Institute.
- 1.2. St Stithians Online School has adopted this Student Code of Conduct and as part of this code, we have defined a set of processes to follow when allegations of a breach of the Student Code of Conduct are reported or identified.
- 1.3. This code of conduct replaces all other disciplinary rules and procedures previously published by St Stithians Online School.
- 1.4. This document is the legally enforceable document.
- 1.5. This code of conduct may not be amended except in writing, under the hand of the Rector.
- 1.6. During the process of enrolling a Student at St Stithians Online School the Parents confirm in writing that they accept the Qualification Terms & Conditions, which confirms their agreement to be bound by the policies and procedures of St Stithians Online School.
- 1.7. St Stithians Online School subscribes to inquisitorial and restorative justice. Thus we are committed to investigating all allegations / incidents with fairness, and the intention of adopting remedial action wherever appropriate. Having said this, actions have consequences and the seriousness of an allegation can never be undermined. Should a student be found to have committed an act which infringes on the code of conduct, St Stithians Online School will enforce the consequences - taking into account the circumstances.
- 1.8. Parents, Teachers and the staff of St Stithians Online School accept that the Institute has a duty to Students, Parents and society to produce young people who will play a positive and constructive role in society as adults who have a developed sense of responsibility. Consequently, any act of misconduct must be dealt with by means of fair process, which may result in an appropriate consequence being imposed by the St Stithians Online School Operations and Governance Committee.
- 1.9. Parents accept that Teachers, Staff members and Management may be called upon to act in the best interests of the Student, the School, and other Students or Parents



in situations of “manifest uncertainty” and that certain decisions may or will have to be taken in the exercise of a general discretion exercised in this context.

- 1.10.** When addressing occurrences of alleged / explicit breaches in student discipline, all Students, Staff members, Parents and St Stithians Online School Management will not threaten any particular punishment. All parties must refrain from threats, abuse of power or any indication of bias, dislike or interpersonal difficulties, that may compromise the authority of the Disciplinary Process or the atmosphere of equity, of due process, and fairness in which Disciplinary Process should take place.



2. Student code of conduct undertaking

St Stithians Online School believes that collaboration and engagement are vital towards cultivating a rich learning experience that is both stimulating and safe for all members of the learning community.

To support the best interests of the learning community all engagement, regardless of participants, medium, channel or format, must be conducted in a healthy and constructive manner that is underpinned by the rules of this Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct defines the expected standards of conduct in respect of academic matters for all students at St Stithians Online School. Each student at St Stithians Online School is responsible for upholding and adhering to the Code of Conduct in all of their engagements.

As a student at St Stithians Online School, with commitment from your parent(s)/guardian (s), you must:

- 2.1. Ensure that all information provided to St Stithians Online School is true and accurate.
- 2.2. Inform St Stithians Online School timeously of any changes to your personal information.
- 2.3. Comply with any reasonable instruction issued by an authorised staff member of St Stithians Online School.
- 2.4. Comply with all rules and policies of St Stithians Online School, both available on the Handbooks page of the website, and including those relating to copyright and intellectual property.
- 2.5. Refrain from making any unauthorised use of the name of St Stithians Online School, its logo, or any other materials which can be identified as belonging to St Stithians Online School.
- 2.6. Familiarise yourself with all procedures relevant to your status as a student at St Stithians Online School (for example, procedures relating to student complaints) and abide by these.



- 2.7.** Refrain from behaviour or activities that would hamper or obstruct the work of the St Stithians Online School or the learning and overall academic experience of students at St Stithians Online School.
- 2.8.** Refrain from any behaviour or activity with a student or member of staff which could constitute corruption, such as the acceptance of any reward or compensation for taking part in an unlawful action.
- 2.9.** Comply with the findings and sanction of any disciplinary action brought against you.
- 2.10.** Treat all members of the learning community with respect and dignity at all times.
- 2.11.** Not engage in any forms of bullying towards either staff or students, and immediately report any instances within your knowledge to the appropriate authority. This includes, but is not limited to, demeaning or creating a hostile environment for a member of staff or a student based on their race, religion, beliefs, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- 2.12.** Not engage in, or subject another student to, any form of initiation.
- 2.13.** Take personal responsibility for all academic work and adhere at all times to all rules and policies relating to academic integrity.
- 2.14.** Participate fully in all academic activities as required by your individual courses and Qualification.
- 2.15.** Take responsibility for your learning and pay attention to the requirements of your subjects and associated Qualification.
- 2.16.** Not share your student number or other student credentials with another person or persons.
- 2.17.** Make use of St Stithians Online School's online platforms for only for their intended purpose.
- 2.18.** Conduct yourself in a manner that is compliant with the laws of the Republic of South Africa.
- 2.19.** Accept that a particular sanction imposed after the disciplinary process is legitimate and fair and is a necessary consequence of the breach of this Code of Conduct.



St Stithians Online School will, at all times, retain the right to bring disciplinary action and appropriate sanction (including expulsion) against any student found, through the appropriate channels, to be in violation of this Code of Conduct.

An important note on bullying:

St Stithians Online School has a zero tolerance policy towards bullying. Where allegations or identified incidents occur, the School will act swiftly and decisively in applying our Disciplinary Process. We believe that assigning demeaning and disempowering labels to individuals such as 'Bully' or 'Victim' do not help any of the Affected Parties concerned during the implementation of the Disciplinary Process, and that the focus must be concentrated on the behaviour of an individual / individuals and determining the outcomes. Labelling individuals with these terms is not appropriate and will also be considered seriously.

For the purposes of clarity of upholding the above, students who have allegedly or explicitly engaged in behaviour that is characterised as bullying, as well as the student on the receiving end of this behaviour will be referred to by their first names and collectively as the Affected Parties.



3. St Stithians Online School's obligations

- 3.1. Our primary consideration is to ensure that we uphold the safeguarding of each student and overall integrity of a safe environment for the learning community.
- 3.2. Our key objectives in cases of alleged student misconduct are to:
 - 3.2.1. Uphold our contractual obligation to protect all students in our care as an institution;
 - 3.2.2. Protect the privacy of every student;
 - 3.2.3. Be highly responsive to reported cases of alleged misconduct;
 - 3.2.4. Ensure that all cases of alleged misconduct are handled by the appropriate forum and people;
 - 3.2.5. Do all that we can to ensure cases of alleged student misconduct are handled fairly;
 - 3.2.6. Exercise the overriding discretion enshrined in all policies relating to misconduct using a careful and considered approach; and
 - 3.2.7. Adhere to the principles of inquisitorial and restorative justice;
- 3.3. To meet our objectives, we commit to following these policies and prescripts:
 - 3.3.1. comply with the prescripts of the following St Stithians Online School policies:
 - 3.3.1.1. Qualification Terms & Conditions
 - 3.3.1.2. Student Handbook; and
 - 3.3.1.3. Student Code of Conduct.
 - 3.3.2. comply with all relevant laws and regulations applicable in each country in which we operate;
 - 3.3.3. respect the role of the designated Safeguarding Coordinator and Head as well as the authority of the:
 - 3.3.3.1. St Stithians Online School Operations and Governance Committee;
 - 3.3.3.2. St Stithians Online School Oversight Committee; and



- 3.3.3.3.** External regulatory authorities.
- 3.3.4.** not share the nature / information of the alleged misconduct with any team member who is not privy to this. Only the following team members may be informed of the required information:
 - 3.3.4.1.** Safeguarding Coordinator;
 - 3.3.4.2.** Head;
 - 3.3.4.3.** Student Success Mentor;
 - 3.3.4.4.** Campus Manager;
 - 3.3.4.5.** Any staff member who has been directly mentioned by an affected party / or involved in part of the alleged misconduct;
 - 3.3.4.6.** Members of the St Stithians Online School Operations and Governance Committee;
 - 3.3.4.7.** Members of the St Stithians Online School Oversight Committee; and
 - 3.3.4.8.** External authorities as provisioned for under law.



4. Student misconduct

4.1. First offences not deemed as Serious Misconduct

- 4.1.1. Teachers will use their own procedures and discretion (as outlined in point 1.9), in harmony with this Code of Conduct, to ensure that effective learning takes place in the classroom.

4.2. Serious acts of misconduct

- 4.2.1. Section 5 of this Code of Conduct sets out the list of acts, which is a non-exhaustive list, and their level of severity. In the event of alleged or explicit serious misconduct, the following procedure will be followed:
 - 4.2.1.1. If a student is in immediate danger, action appropriate to the circumstances must be taken, which could include calling the parents, police, medical services or other appropriate agency;
 - 4.2.1.2. The Safeguarding Coordinator or their designate must make contact with the student (within 12 hours of the incident being reported / identified) who has been allegedly impacted by an incident of misconduct to inform them of our awareness and the process that will be followed;
 - 4.2.1.3. apply considered discretion (the Head with contextual input from the Safeguarding Coordinator) to determine whether the alleged misconduct warrants a virtual disciplinary hearing with any affected party and their parent(s);
 - 4.2.1.4. Head to call the the parent of the affected parties' parents within 24 hours to inform them of the next steps;
 - 4.2.1.5. Where it is determined that a virtual disciplinary hearing is not required, Head must liaise with the Rector to draft the notice of alleged breach of student Code of Conduct letter



- to be sent to the accused party or parties within three working days of the incident being reported / identified;
- 4.2.1.6.** Collate all of the information and evidence within two working days of receipt and store this securely;
 - 4.2.1.7.** convene a meeting of the St Stithians Online School Operations and Governance Committee to take place within two working days of all evidence being received;
 - 4.2.1.8.** circulate the collated information and evidence to all members of the St Stithians Online School Operations and Governance Committee within one working day of receipt;
 - 4.2.1.9.** The St Stithians Online School Operations and Governance Committee must meet in a private space to review the instance of alleged misconduct;
 - 4.2.1.10.** The meeting of the St Stithians Online School Operations and Governance Committee must be minuted by a representative as designated by the Valenture Institute Registrar;
 - 4.2.1.11.** Where the St Stithians Online School Operations and Governance Committee identifies evidence of negligence on the part of any team member of St Stithians Online School this must be reported separately to the respective team member's Executive Officer. This alleged negligence must be investigated by the respective Executive Officer and the matter tabled for review by the Executive Committee to determine an outcome;
 - 4.2.1.12.** The recommendation reached by the St Stithians Online School Operations and Governance Committee must be finalised by the Head and sent to the St Stithians Online School Oversight Committee School by the Head;
 - 4.2.1.13.** The St Stithians Online School Oversight Committee must meet within two working days of receiving the recommendation and decide to uphold or override the recommendation. The Valenture Institute Registrar must be



included in this meeting to take minutes and provide counsel on matters of governance. Where the St Stithians Online School Oversight Committee decides to override the recommendation they must provide a reason for this in writing. While the Board has the authority to override the recommendation the decision must be compliant with St Stithians Online School's policies as listed in this framework;

- 4.2.1.14.** The decision reached by the St Stithians Online School Oversight Committee is final and must be communicated to the affected parties and their parent(s) in the standard determination letter;
- 4.2.1.15.** Any sanctions imposed must be actioned immediately;
- 4.2.1.16.** The Valentre Institute Registrar must notify the Safeguarding Coordinator of the outcome reached;
- 4.2.1.17.** Safeguarding Coordinator must ensure that any support plan(s) required are initiated.
- 4.2.1.18.** Any appeals will be directed to the St Stithians Online School Oversight Committee.



5. Prescribed levels of misconduct severity and consequences

- 5.1. The levels set out on the next page are to be used as a guideline. Nevertheless the St Stithians Online School Operations and Governance Committee and Oversight Committee must use their discretion in order to assess the severity of each incident.
- 5.2. It is important to note that the prescribed levels and the forms of misconduct therein are not intended to act as an exhaustive list but rather as an indication of the type of severity of an infringement in general.
- 5.3. Instances of academic misconduct require consideration from the respective teacher.
- 5.4. One or more consequences / sanctions may be implemented as fitting to the circumstances of the incident.

LEVEL ONE	POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First offence of name calling or rude gestures;• Minor infringement of the live session or discussion forum etiquette;• Minor infringement of the Student Code of Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First letter of warning outlining the nature of the offence, signed by parents and kept on file.• Written apology for the infringement to the affected party.• Suspension from the Campus (maximum of 3 school days)• Compulsory development sessions with Student Success Mentor.• Minor penalty on grade for assignment (in the case of academic dishonesty) and letter of apology.



LEVEL TWO	POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Repeated Level One infringements; ● Making inappropriate comments, taunting or teasing, spreading rumours or embarrassing information about someone or impairing someone’s reputation or relationships, or causing children to exclude others or avoid befriending them. ● Forcing others to hand over property which belongs to them. ● Defacing the property of others / the school. ● Posting inappropriate content on the Valentre Campus. ● Moderate infringement of the Student Code of Conduct. ● Moderate infringement of the live session or discussion forum etiquette. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Second warning letter kept on file. ● Written apology for the infringement to the affected party. ● Final warning letter, kept on file. ● Virtual disciplinary hearing chaired by the Head. ● Suspension from the Campus (maximum of 3 school days). ● Moderate penalty on grade for assignment (in the case of academic dishonesty) and letter of apology. ● Cancellation/reduction of scholarship, if applicable.
LEVEL THREE	POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Repeated Level Two Infringements ● Making fun of, threatening, ridiculing or humiliating a person or group of people, whether on the basis of of their appearance, physical characteristics, sexuality, cultural background, religion or otherwise; ● Any form of physical assault; ● Any form of impersonation, identity theft and /or identity fraud; ● Any act qualifying as a sexual offence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Virtual Disciplinary hearing chaired by the Oversight Committee. ● Final warning letter, kept on file. ● Written apology for the infringement to the affected party. ● Suspension from the Campus (maximum of 5 school days). ● Compulsory community service. ● Expulsion. ● Receive zero for an assignment (in the



<p>under the Sexual Offences Act;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any act that violates the law.• Severe infringement of the Student Code of Conduct	<p>case of academic dishonesty) and letter of apology.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cancellation/reduction of scholarship, if applicable.
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Under NO circumstances will the administering of corporal punishment at the school ever be an acceptable disciplinary measure.

6. Safeguarding coordinator

The St Stithians Online School's safeguarding coordinator:

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