

Student Dress Code Policy

Document Control	
Document Type	Policy
Date Approved	November 2020
Approved by	Principalship
Review Date	November 2021
Department	Student Support
Policy Owner	Assistant Principal/Director
Principalship Lead	Vice Principal
Accessible to Students	Yes

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

Introduction

In practice, people's choice of dress has created very few difficulties within the College and UCEN Manchester 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 and UCEN Manchester about the appropriateness of students' dress.

The 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 students on college and UCEN Manchester 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 and UCEN Manchester 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 and UCEN Manchester policies and procedures'.
- **The Deal** states that all students must be showing personal commitment to work readiness. This means wearing your ID and lanyards, in all classrooms workshops (where possible) and public or shared areas of the college and UCEN Manchester.
- **Exceptions.** There may be times when students 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) **Covid 19 Face coverings.**

Wearing a face covering is required by law when travelling as a passenger on public transport in England. Some people are exempt from wearing a face covering for health, age or equality reasons. When on campus you should wear a face covering in all communal areas but it is not required within the classroom/workshop as 2 metre distance measures are in place. If you are exempt from wearing a face covering then let a member of staff know and you will be provided with an exemption sticker for the back of your ID card or a different coloured lanyard to prevent continuous challenge. You may be asked to temporarily remove your mask if ID recognition is required.

(c) **For religious, cultural or personal reasons**, individual students 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 what they feel most appropriate. In such circumstances, the situation will be discussed on a student-by student basis.

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 and UCEN Manchester will observe sensitivity in taking photographs and 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 students who cover their face, an appropriate member of staff in a private area should ask the individual to provide their ID card showing their face and to remove their veil for the purposes of the identify check. * Students who cover their face must wear their lanyard at all times however the ID card may be worn reserved.

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 and UCEN Manchester activities**

If a students' 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 student-by-student basis. However the expectation of the college is that where students 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 students 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 and multi-cultural setting 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). Students 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 students 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 and Experience 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 student 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 student 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 student should be asked to remove or change the item/s of dress and/or may be sent home from college and UCEN Manchester the same day. The student would then be readmitted to as soon as they complied with the Dress Policy. However, repeated and/or serious infringements of the Policy would invoke the relevant student Disciplinary Procedures at an appropriate level
- In the case of a **prospective student**, 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 student** should have the Dress Code explained to them, and be asked to return in acceptable dress *before an interview is completed*.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

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

LINKED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Safeguarding Scheme

Single Equality Scheme

Behaviour Support & Disciplinary Policy

Visual ID Policy

LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

Staff Intranet

Student Intranet

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