

Policy and Procedures for Promoting Effective Learner Performance (Further Education Programmes)

Excellence

Our Mission

Raising Aspirations, Unlocking Potential, Advancing Futures

Our Values

Excellence, Passion, Team Work, Integrity, Innovation,
Sustainability, Valuing Others and Supportiveness

Sparsholt College Group

The Sparsholt College Group (the College Group) includes Sparsholt College, Andover College, University Centre Sparsholt, Sparsholt College Services, Westley Enterprises and Andover Town Football Club. College Group policies apply to each part of the group unless specified otherwise.

The *Policy and Procedures for Promoting Effective Learner Performance (Further Education Programmes)* was approved by the Board of Governors in July 2021. This supersedes the previous publication and is effective from 1 September 2021.

Originator: Vice Principal Curriculum

Located: College Group Websites
College Group Intranet

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Policy and Procedures for Promoting Effective Learner Performance

In line with the College's 'Professional Learner' initiative, the purpose of the Policy and Procedures for Promoting Learner Performance is:

- To provide a supportive framework, which allows the College (including Sparsholt College and Andover College) to help learners manage their performance in ensuring their success.
- Through induction and the programme of study, to provide learners with a clear understanding of the commitment they need to make to succeed in their studies and College life.
- To ensure that any intervention is coupled with support for the learner that considers their individual circumstances.
- To appropriately involve parents* of 14–18 learners (14-25 for vulnerable learners) or in the case of Apprentices the employers, in any actions regarding performance.
- To invite parents of learners aged 19-21 on Further Education programmes or in the case of Apprentices the employers, to be involved in addressing performance concerns, with consent.

College staff are passionate about learners doing their best at all times and need the learner (and where appropriate, parents/guardians/carers) to be clear when performance has slipped below that expected and what is required to correct/improve this. This is the purpose of the formalised procedure with its various "alert stages" and particularly where this involves other more senior members of staff in a "Hearing".

Note: Where Under 18 learners are referred to within this document, this is meant to include all learners who are under the age of 18 at the commencement of the academic year.

*In the College's context the term 'parents' should be taken to include all parents, guardian or carers.

Procedures for the Management of Learner Performance (Academic Matters)

This procedure may be implemented when staff have concerns relating to a learner's academic performance that will likely have an impact on their overall achievement. There are four levels:

Performance Alert

This level is used to informally address a learner's academic performance which is giving cause for concern. The majority of first-instance academic related concerns will action an 'alert', including but not limited to:

- Concerns regarding attendance and/or punctuality
- Lack of application to studies
- Lack of readiness to learn
- Failure to adhere to homework/ assignment/coursework schedules
- Standard of work below that known to be that which the learner is capable of achieving

Process

Any teacher, instructor, instructor technician, technician, or other member of staff (e.g. Learning Support Assistant, Progress Coach or Apprenticeship Liaison Officer) with a role in supervising students may raise and enter a performance alert.

The member of staff will clearly explain, usually verbally, to the student the reasons for the alert being raised.

The member of staff is responsible for ensuring (through the curriculum administrator if appropriate) that the 'alert' is entered on the learner's ProMonitor page.

Alerts (warnings)/Sanctions

Learners, during their development towards fulfilling their potential, may trigger a number of performance alerts for varying issues which will be discussed and improvement targets set and monitored during meetings with the Progress Coach or Apprenticeship assessor. If there is no visible improvement over a reasonable timeframe since the raising of a previous 'alert' for a similar issue, a formal meeting with their Progress Coach or Apprenticeship assessor to address academic performance will be required (Performance Stage 1).

Support/Follow up

The Progress Coach or Apprenticeship assessor is responsible for monitoring the learner's progress over the course of the academic year via the learner's ProMonitor page, during which any targets set through the issuing of a Performance Alert can be marked as 'completed' if the actions have been successfully complied with.

Performance Stage 1 (PS1)

Performance Stage 1 is triggered by specific matters that have demonstrated a significantly negative impact on performance or where there has been no visible improvement over a reasonable timeframe since the issuing of a previous 'alert'.

Examples which may trigger a Performance Stage 1, include but are not limited to:

- Performance below Pass standard
- Low level plagiarism
- Any incidence of seeking to gain unfair academic advantage

Process

Any teacher, instructor, instructor technician, technician, or other member of staff (e.g. Learning Support Assistant or Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor) with a role in supervising students may raise and enter a Performance Stage 1.

The staff member will discuss the reasons behind issuing a PS1 with the learner and inform the Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor that a PS1 is required.

The member of staff is responsible for ensuring (through the curriculum administrator if appropriate) that the 'alert' is entered on the learner's ProMonitor page. The raising of the PS1 should be discussed in a meeting between the Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor and learner at an appropriate point after the PS1 is issued, and the member of staff who has raised and entered the PS1 should discuss this with the Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor.

A performance action plan will be agreed, with appropriate targets for completion in the next month.

Parents/guardians/carers of all under 18 learners will be notified in writing of the meeting and the targets set within five working days.

Sanctions

The learner may be put on 'academic report' and be responsible for ensuring that teachers and instructors complete regular monitoring of attendance and engagement. There may be a loss of access to optional visits, or assessment for Secondary Learning Goals, where appropriate.

Support/Follow up

Progress Coaches/Apprenticeship assessor are responsible for a formal desk-based review of targets raised on the learner's ProMonitor page through the issuing of a Performance Stage 1 during the course of the academic year at regular monthly intervals. If targets are met, they are marked as 'completed' however, if some/all targets remain incomplete then learners should be escalated to a Performance Stage 2. This is mandatory if insufficient improvement in performance has occurred after one month.

Performance Stage 2 (PS2)

Performance Stage 2 is used to formally address a learner's academic performance which continues to give cause for concern as there has been limited/unacceptable progress towards targets set in their performance action plan issued at PS1.

Examples which may trigger a Performance Stage 2 include but are not limited to:

- Non completion of performance action plan set at PS1
- Failure to comply with requirements for organising work placement
- Unauthorised absence from College for holiday purposes

Process

Any teacher, instructor, instructor technician, technician, or other member of staff (e.g. Learning Support Assistant or Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor) with a role in supervising students may request a Performance Stage 2.

The staff member will discuss the reasons behind issuing a PS2 with the Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor directly.

The Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor will enter a PS2 on the learner's ProMonitor page and arrange a meeting to be chaired by the Curriculum Leader (CL) / Senior Curriculum Leader (SCL) where appropriate.

Parents/guardians/carers of under 18 learners will be notified of the meeting, where appropriate, in advance by the Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor via telephone and/or email and, should they specifically request, be permitted to attend providing this does not create inappropriate delay to the meeting.

A performance action plan will be agreed, with appropriate targets for completion in the next month.

Parents/guardians/carers of under 18 learners will be notified of the meeting and the targets set within five working days.

Support / Follow up

A revisit and monitoring meeting will be booked for no later than three weeks after the initial PS2 meeting (Learner, CL/SCL/Residential Manager and Progress Coach/Warden/Apprenticeship assessor in attendance). If the learner is able to demonstrate sufficient progress and improvement towards these targets they will continue to be monitored by the Progress Coach/Warden/Apprenticeship assessor until the next progress review window (plus three weeks). If there is inadequate progress demonstrated towards targets, a Performance Stage 3 is raised.

As part of the support system, any learner on a PS2 action plan may be placed on the College 'Cause for Concern' register. This may facilitate additional reviews/support from Wellbeing to promote improvement in performance.

Performance Stage 3 (PS3)

Performance Stage 3 is carried out when either a serious performance issue is identified or where, despite support, performance is failing to improve, putting the student at serious risk of failing their course of study.

Examples which may trigger a Performance Stage 3 include but are not limited to:

- Actions set at PS2 have not been acted upon by the learner
- No evidence of improvement since the revisit and monitoring meeting
- Performance consistently below 'pass' standard
- Repeated plagiarism

Process

Any teacher, instructor, instructor technician, technician, or other member of staff (e.g. Learning Support Assistant or Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor) with a role in supervising students may request a Performance Stage 3.

The staff member will discuss the reasons behind issuing a PS3 with the Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor directly.

The Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor will raise a PS3 on the learner's ProMonitor page and arrange a meeting to be chaired by the Assistant Principal, or exceptionally, the Senior Curriculum Leader (SCL) once the Chair is satisfied that there is compelling evidence to proceed.

Where appropriate, parents/guardians/carers of under 18 learners will be notified of the meeting five working days in advance or earlier if all parties are in agreement and, should they specifically request, be permitted to attend providing this does not create an inappropriate delay to the meeting. The invitation will include details of the reason for the meeting and parents/guardians/carers will be made aware of relevant College procedures. Where parents/guardians/carers choose not to attend, the meeting will proceed in their absence. Where the learner subject to the PS3 chooses not to attend, the PS3 meeting can still continue in their absence with outcomes agreed by parties present. All learners may be accompanied by an advocate or support person but not by a professionally hired legal representative.

The learner's Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor, in conjunction with the relevant academic staff, is responsible for presenting details of the reason for the PS3.

The outcome of the meeting will be confirmed within five working days, together with the content of the action plan, the support that is being put in place and any other sanctions, such as access to optional trips or study tours.

Support / Follow up

A revisit and monitoring meeting will be booked for no more than three weeks after the PS3 meeting (Learner, CL/SCL and Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor in attendance). If the learner is able to demonstrate sufficient progress and improvement towards these targets they will continue to be monitored by the Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor until the next Progress Review window (plus three weeks).

Where a learner fails to demonstrate sufficient progress towards their expected level of performance, despite the necessary support being provided, the Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor will refer the learner to the Assistant Principal for a final decision about the learner's place on their study programme.

Where, despite the provision of appropriate support, a learner is continuing to perform below the level expected of them the Assistant Principal will be required to make a final decision about the appropriateness of the learner's current study programme.

This may include (but not be limited to):

- Transfer to another programme of study
- Exclusion from elements of the existing programme of study
- Exclusion from the College

Where such decisions are being considered they will be conducted in the presence of both the learner and the parents/guardians/carers (for under 18 learners) in order that all possible consideration can be given to ensuring that the learner is supported to transfer to another programme either within the College, or with another learning provider.

Returning Learners

Learners returning to College in the following academic year who have previously been subject to a PS3 may be placed on a Returner Monitoring Plan (to be completed by Progress Coach/Apprenticeship assessor). Learner progress will be closely monitored during the 'Flying Start' programme and their performance will be revisited at the first Progress Review (typically end of week 4). If the learner continues to demonstrate behaviours which were previously a cause for concern their place on the programme of study or at College will be at risk, with the final decision considered at a meeting chaired by the Assistant Principal.

Decisions

These are not legal procedures. There must be a fair and equitable process in considering cases of all allegations. Any mitigating circumstances need to be considered. The emphasis is on promoting learning, supporting effective learning behaviour and achievement.

Levels of Alert (warnings) and any Sanctions will, therefore, be decided in terms of:

- Wilfulness, recognition by the learner of their personal responsibility and the likelihood of the individual improving their own performance
- Coherence and consistency across the College
- The need to maintain the standards of performance of a class and therefore be seen to recognise performance which is below the standard expected and

where it is clear that the learner is responsible for failing to meet a standard judged to be one of which they are capable.

- Learning being the purpose of the College and for a student being part of the College

In making judgements and deciding sanctions, consideration will be given to the personal circumstances of the individual e.g. any medical conditions or learning difficulties that might contribute to their performance.

Appeals

The individual may appeal against sanctions imposed as a result of the process by writing to the appropriate manager within 10 working days of the decision.

The appeals process will be:

- Performance Alerts, Stage 1 and Stage 2 Performance Reviews to the Assistant Principal
- Stage 3 Performance Reviews and Exclusion to the Vice Principal Curriculum

The appeals process for exclusion on the grounds of academic performance will be:

The learner should appeal to the Vice Principal Curriculum in writing and within 10 College working days of receiving confirmation of the loss of course place. The letter should clearly set out the grounds for appeal.

The outcomes of an appeal may be that:

- The findings are upheld and withdrawal is appropriate
- The findings are upheld but withdrawal was not warranted
- The findings are flawed due to failings in the original hearing or because new evidence has come to light.

The outcome of any appeal will be final.

Complaints

Complaints about the way the procedure is implemented should be made in writing to the Vice Principal Curriculum who will identify a manager at the appropriate level to investigate the complaint. The Vice Principal Curriculum will identify the appropriate external body to which the complaint can be referred if the student is unhappy with the outcome of the College process.

Training and Monitoring

All college staff who chair hearings will be given sufficient training in order to fulfil this role effectively.

Level 3 Performance Reviews will be reported on a monthly basis (as a numeric total) to the Board of Governors and will be supplemented with an annual equality monitoring report.