



Personal Relationships Policy

Document Owner	Head of Finance and Administration/Bursar
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Table of Contents

1. Scope and Purpose of the Policy	3
2. Definitions.....	3
3. Relationships Between Staff and Students.....	3
3.1 Pupils/Students Under the Age of 18.....	3
3.2 Adults at Risk.....	4
3.3 Students Aged 18 or Older	4
3.4 Disclosure Requirements	4
4. Professional Boundaries.....	5
4.1 Expected Conduct	5
4.2 Unacceptable Behaviour	5
5. Compliance.....	6
6. Review and Updates.....	6



1. Scope and Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out MMI's position on personal relationships in the following contexts:

- Between members of staff and students who are Adults at Risk
- Between members of staff and students aged 18 years or older
- Between members of staff and pupils who are under the age of 18 or "Adults at Risk"

For the purposes of this policy:

- Member of staff refers to all MMI employees and individuals engaged in work on behalf of MMI (including examiners)
- Student refers to any person pursuing a course of study at MMI
- Ensure appropriate safeguards and processes are in place to prevent abuse of power and sexual misconduct
- Protect staff and students from allegations of actual or perceived conflicts of interest
- Limit circumstances where a position of power may be abused

2. Definitions

A personal relationship is defined as:

- a family relationship; or
- a business/commercial/financial relationship; or
- a close friendship; or
- an intimate relationship (sexual and/or romantic), however brief.

A professional relationship is defined as:

- assessing, supervising, tutoring, mentoring, teaching role; or
- a pastoral role; or
- a collaboration on a project for MMI; or
- an administrative or technical support role.

3. Relationships Between Staff and Students

3.1 Pupils/Students Under the Age of 18

MMI places the highest priority on safeguarding students under the age of 18:



- Intimate or romantic relationships between staff and students under 18 are strictly prohibited
- Such relationships constitute a serious safeguarding concern and will be treated as gross misconduct under the University's Disciplinary Procedure
- Any concerns about inappropriate behaviour towards a student under 18 must be reported immediately in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

3.2 Adults at Risk

Intimate relationships between members of staff and students who are Adults at Risk are strictly forbidden. These relationships are considered a safeguarding concern and will be treated as gross misconduct under the MMI's Disciplinary Procedure.

All concerns about inappropriate behaviour towards an Adult at Risk must be reported in line with the Safeguarding Policy.

3.3 Students Aged 18 or Older

The professional relationship between a student and a member of staff is central to the student's educational experience at MMI. It must be based on trust, confidence, and respect, ensuring equal treatment for all students.

- A personal relationship between a member of staff and a student with whom they also have a professional relationship creates an actual or perceived conflict of interest
- Such relationships risk favouritism, abuse of authority, and undermine trust
- Except for family relationships, personal relationships with students are strongly discouraged
- MMI prohibits intimate relationships between staff and students where the staff member has responsibility for assessing, supervising, tutoring, mentoring, teaching, or providing pastoral care.

3.4 Disclosure Requirements

- If a personal relationship exists prior to joining MMI or develops during a student's enrolment, the staff member must disclose it immediately
- Disclosure should be made to the Executive Director or the relevant Head of Department, who will liaise with HR Services to determine any actions required to manage potential conflicts of interest
- All disclosures will be treated as confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis



- Actions taken to mitigate conflicts will be documented and retained on the staff member's personal file
- A confidential register of all staff-student personal relationship disclosures will be maintained by HR Services
- If in doubt, staff should err on the side of disclosure.

4. Professional Boundaries

To maintain trust and avoid any misinterpretation of actions, members of staff must exercise care in their conduct at all times. The following principles are designed to uphold professional boundaries and reduce the risk of allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

4.1 Expected Conduct

- Maintain appropriate physical and emotional distance from students, ensuring duties are carried out in MMI's best interests without favouritism
- Use official MMI communication channels (e.g., MMI email, telephone systems, approved software and applications) when contacting students. Avoid personal communication channels, including private social media accounts
- Communicate with students in a professional and business-like manner at all times
- Hold meetings and discussions on MMI premises or, where not possible, in public venues such as libraries or cafés
- Organise events at MMI or other public venues only
- Refer students requiring support beyond your role to appropriate organisational support services
- Request personal information from students only when necessary for legitimate purposes (e.g., medical details for special consideration).

4.2 Unacceptable Behaviour

The following behaviours are strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action: Physical contact that could be perceived as sexualised (e.g., touching the shoulder, squeezing the leg)

- Comments or questions of a sexual nature, whether written or verbal
- Requests for sexual or other personal favours
- Paying undue attention to a particular student



- Giving gifts to a student, except for approved prizes or incentives available to all students
- Accepting gifts from a student, unless it is a minor token of appreciation deemed acceptable by MMI
- Inviting a student to your home or visiting a student's home or accommodation unaccompanied, including during conferences, overseas trips, or placements.

This list is not exhaustive. Any inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under MMI's Disciplinary Procedure.

5 Compliance

- Engaging in a prohibited relationship, as outlined in this policy, will be treated as potential gross misconduct. Such cases will be investigated under MMI's Disciplinary Procedure and may result in action up to and including dismissal without notice
- Failure to disclose a personal relationship as required by this policy will be considered a breach and investigated under the Disciplinary Procedure. This may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal, or dismissal without notice in cases of gross misconduct
- Investigations and disciplinary proceedings arising from breaches of this policy will continue to conclusion, even if the staff member resigns during the process
- Any allegations of harassment, victimisation, or less favourable treatment of staff or students will be investigated as potential misconduct or gross misconduct under the Disciplinary Procedure. This may result in action up to and including dismissal without notice
- Complaints about inappropriate student behaviour toward staff should be reported to the designated Student Conduct Lead and may be investigated under the Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy or the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy, as appropriate.

6 Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.