

Learner Non-Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Process

Document Control:

Policy Owner	Julia Bindley, Director of Learner Success
Policy Author(s)	Julia Bindley, Director of Learner Success
Effective Date	April 2026
Version Number	V2.0
Date of Next Review	April 2027

Amendment History:

Version Number	Effective Date	Summary of Amendments	Author
V1.0	August 2025	Process separated out of the Learner Code of Conduct. First version of the standalone process for responding to breaches of the Learner Code of Conduct (Non-Academic).	Jemma Ansell, Safeguarding Implementation Lead
V2.0	April 2026	Introduces discretionary "Director's Decisions" as an alternative to formal committees, incorporates freedom of speech protections and the Care Act 2014 definition of "adults at risk," strengthens our wording on additional needs, clarifies external appeal routes, and moves the learner related disciplinary process and the investigating roles to be fulfilled by operational staff unless complexity warrants	Julia Bindley, Director of Learner Success

		Governance involvement.	

1. Purpose

The Learner Non-Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Process clearly details the procedure for reporting and investigating allegations of misconduct, and applying appropriate sanctions where the allegation is upheld. Its core purpose is to ensure that all reported concerns are addressed fairly, thoroughly and in a timely manner, leading to appropriate outcomes that uphold the integrity of Multiverse and support a safe and respectful environment for all.

2. Scope

2.1. As defined in Section 2 of the Learner Code of Conduct (Non-Academic), all learners agree to adhere to the Learner Code of Conduct and as such are subject to the Learner Non-Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Process if this Learner Code of Conduct is breached.

2.2. As defined in Section 2.5 of the Learner Code of Conduct, the Learner Non-Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Process can be employed to address misconduct that occurs both online and in person.

2.3. This process does not cover Academic Misconduct. Academic Misconduct will be handled under the [Assessment Policy](#) for programmes where Multiverse awards academic credit at level 4 and above.

3. Definitions

3.1. Learner Code of Conduct (Non-Academic): is defined as the policy that all Multiverse learners agree to adhere to in relation to conduct, detailing a non-exhaustive list of examples of non-academic misconduct and the policy's jurisdiction. It is published on the Multiverse website, updated from time to time and reviewed regularly.

3.2. Academic Misconduct: Defined as any action or attempted action by a learner that gives or has the potential to give them or any other learner an unfair advantage in an examination or assessment, or any activity likely to undermine the integrity and academic standards essential to examinations and research.

3.3. Adults at Risk: As defined in Section 42(1) of the Care Act 2014, identifying individuals who may require additional support or specific safeguarding pathways.

3.4. Inappropriate: Actions, words, or behaviors that are unsuited to the Multiverse apprenticeship setting, violating professional, social, or ethical standards. This includes actions that are offensive, humiliating, disruptive, or harmful, such as bullying, harassment, sexual advances, or abusive language.

3.5. Misconduct: Is defined as an act or failure to act by a learner which is inappropriate and which negatively affects, could negatively affect, or has negatively affected Multiverse (including its property and/or reputation) and/or any member of the Multiverse community.

3.6. Multiverse Community: Is defined as being all Multiverse learners, all staff (with any form of contract to undertake work at or for Multiverse), and visitors to Multiverse premises or online events.

3.7. Reporting Party: Is defined as the person(s) who has made an allegation of, or raised a concern about possible misconduct. The Reporting Party can be an individual inside or outside of the Multiverse Community.

3.8. Responding Party: Is defined as the learner(s) about whom an allegation of misconduct has been made.

3.9. Staff Misconduct: This policy applies to learners. Staff misconduct is governed separately by Multiverse HR policies and the Staff Code of Conduct.

3.10. Witness: Is defined as a person who witnessed the alleged misconduct, or who has other information that is relevant to establishing whether the alleged misconduct has occurred. This includes information shared with them by either the reporting or responding party.

3.11. Serious Misconduct: Is misconduct (as defined above) where the negative impact is, could have been, or could be serious or significant. This may include sustained or repeated misconduct.

4. General Principles

Multiverse is committed to conducting all non-academic misconduct proceedings in line with the following core principles. These principles underpin every stage of this process, guiding our actions and ensuring integrity and fairness for all involved:

4.1. Fairness and Impartiality:

4.1.1. Impartiality: All individuals involved in the resolution of non-academic misconduct cases, including Investigating Officers, Disciplinary Committee members, and Appeal Committee members, will act impartially, without bias, and will have no prior direct involvement in the incident under review.

4.1.2. Objectivity: Decisions will be made objectively, based solely on a thorough and balanced consideration of all available relevant evidence and in line with relevant policies.

4.1.3. Standard of Proof: Any finding of non-academic misconduct will be made on the balance of probabilities (i.e., whether it is more likely than not that the misconduct occurred).

4.1.4. Opportunity to Respond: Learners against whom allegations are made will be given a clear and reasonable opportunity to understand the specific allegations, to present their account, to submit any supporting evidence, and to raise any relevant mitigating circumstances.

4.1.5. Right to Challenge: Learners will have the opportunity to respond to the evidence presented against them. This includes the right for Responding Parties to have questions asked of those who give evidence against them as part of the Discipline Committee hearing.

4.2. Natural Justice and Due Process:

4.2.1. Clear Information: Learners will be provided with clear, accessible information about this process, the allegations against them, the potential outcomes, and their rights throughout the procedure.

4.2.2. Timely Notification: Learners will receive adequate written notice of meetings and decisions, allowing them reasonable time to prepare and seek advice.

4.2.3. Evidence Disclosure: Learners will be provided with copies of all key evidence, including investigative reports including witness statements if available (appropriately redacted for confidentiality where necessary), that will be considered by a Disciplinary Committee.

4.2.4. Right to be Heard: No finding of misconduct will be made without the learner having been given a full opportunity to present their case and respond to the allegations.

4.2.5. Reasoned Decisions: All formal decisions, including findings of misconduct and imposed sanctions, will be communicated in writing with clear reasons for the decision, based on the evidence considered.

4.2.6. Reasonable Adjustments: Multiverse is committed to supporting all learners and will provide reasonable adjustments for individuals with disabilities as defined by the Equality Act 2010, including but not limited to physical, sensory, neurodivergent, and mental health-related conditions throughout the disciplinary process. These adjustments may include, but are not limited to, alternative communication formats, extended timeframes, and physically accessible or sensory-friendly venues and facilitation.

4.3. Confidentiality and Data Protection:

4.3.1. Sensitive Handling: All information pertaining to a misconduct case will be handled with the utmost sensitivity and strict adherence to Multiverse's Data Protection Policy and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

4.3.2. Need-to-Know Basis: Information will only be shared internally with those Multiverse staff and external parties (e.g. Police, children's social care) who have a legitimate "need to know" to facilitate the investigation, decision-making, provision of support, or to meet legal and safeguarding obligations.

4.3.3. Exceptions to Confidentiality: Confidentiality cannot be absolute. Exceptions will only be made where there is:

- A clear and demonstrable risk of harm to individuals (including the learner themselves or others).
- A legal or statutory requirement to disclose information (e.g., a court order, a Police investigation, or a safeguarding referral). This includes reporting the alleged misconduct to an apprentice's employer if they are engaged in a regulated profession.
- An overriding public interest.

- The express consent of the individual concerned.

4.3.4. Where allegations of misconduct are made against learners who are on apprenticeship programmes, Multiverse reserves the right to notify their employer if the learner is involved in a disciplinary process. Multiverse will inform employers if the apprentice's learning is impacted by the allegations or disciplinary process. Those learners might also be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the employer/ third party in addition to Multiverse disciplinary procedures.

4.3.5. Where misconduct is proven and raises concerns about fitness to practice, Multiverse reserves the right to share details of proven findings and resulting sanctions with the relevant professional regulatory body. The learner will be notified in advance and given the opportunity to make written representations before disclosure, unless statute requires immediate reporting or disclosure is prohibited by applicable law.

4.3.6. Multiverse reserves the right to disclose any penalty imposed under the Learner Code of Conduct (Non-Academic) (including suspension or termination of studies) in order to comply with any regulatory reporting requirements.

4.3.7. Misconduct which takes place on licensed Multiverse premises may also be subject to additional action by the licensee, who has a legal duty not to permit drunken, violent, quarrelsome or disorderly conduct to take place on the premises. This may include a ban from the premises.

4.3.8. Freedom of Speech: Multiverse is committed to freedom of speech and expression within the law, and as defined and protected by the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023. When investigating allegations of bullying or harassment (e.g., related to gender identity or antisemitism), Multiverse will distinguish between the expression of lawful, even if controversial, views and behavior that breaches the Code of Conduct. In line with our statutory duties, disciplinary action will not be taken against a learner for the lawful exercise of their freedom of speech. However, Multiverse also has a duty to ensure the safety of staff, learners, and visitors from violence, intimidation, discrimination, harassment, and incitement to hatred or terrorism. The right to freedom of speech must be balanced with the Prevent duty and Multiverse's Prevent Policy. These statutory duties apply to learners enrolled on OfS-registered programmes. For all other learners, Multiverse extends substantively equivalent protections as institutional policy.

4.4. Timeliness and Efficiency:

4.4.1. Prompt Action: Investigations and formal proceedings will be commenced and conducted as efficiently and promptly as reasonably possible to minimise distress and disruption for all parties involved. Timelines for each stage of the disciplinary process are stipulated in the procedures detailed below.

4.4.2. Communication of Delays: Should unforeseen delays occur, all relevant parties will be informed of the reasons for the delay and the revised timeline.

5. Support and Right to be Accompanied:

5.1. Information on Support: Learners involved in the process, whether as a Reporting Party, a witness, or Responding Party, will be proactively informed about available internal and external support services.

5.1.1 Tailored Support for All Parties: Both the Reporting Party and the Responding Party will be offered and provided with tailored support, where appropriate and available, in equal measure throughout the process, recognising the different impacts that engagement with a misconduct process can have.

5.1.2. Supportive Communication: Wherever possible, communication will not be sent on a Friday, so as to reduce the risk of public support services being unavailable for individuals over a weekend.

5.2. Right to be Accompanied:

5.2.1. For all formal meetings, including investigative interviews (where the learner is the subject of allegation), disciplinary meetings and appeal meetings, both parties have the right to be accompanied by an accompanying party.

5.2.2. An accompanying party can be a fellow Multiverse learner, a friend, a family member, a colleague, or a non-conflicted member of the Safeguarding Team.

5.2.3. The role of the accompanying party is to provide moral support, take notes, and confer quietly with the party. They may speak on the party's behalf to clarify points or summarise the party's position but cannot answer questions directed to the party or disrupt the proceedings.

5.2.4. The accompanying party should not normally be a witness in the case. If a chosen accompanying party is deemed to be a witness or have a conflict of interest, the party will be asked to choose an alternative accompanying party.

5.3. Legal Representation: Multiverse will generally permit legal representation only in exceptional cases where the potential outcome includes Permanent Withdrawal and the Learner is engaged in a regulated profession, or where concurrent criminal proceedings make legal advice necessary to ensure a fair hearing. In all other cases, the Right to be Accompanied by a non-legal party remains the standard.

5.3.1. Application Process for Legal Representation: Requests for legal representation must be made in writing to the Senior Director, Delivery at least 10 working days before the scheduled meeting, including:

- Detailed reasons why legal representation is necessary.
- Specific circumstances that justify the request.
- Confirmation of the legal representative's qualifications and experience.
- Agreement to comply with the Provider's procedural requirements.

5.3.2. Decision Timeline: Multiverse will respond to requests within 5 working days of receipt, providing written reasons for any refusal.

5.3.3. Appeal of Refusal: Learners may appeal a refusal of legal representation to the Legal Director within 3 working days of the decision.

5.3.4. Conditions for Legal Representation: Where legal representation is permitted:

- The legal representative may advise the learner throughout the proceedings.
- The legal representative may make submissions on behalf of the learner.
- The legal representative may examine witnesses and challenge evidence.
- The learner must still personally respond to questions from the panel when requested.
- The legal representative must comply with the Provider's procedural rules and directions.
- The Provider reserves the right to seek its own legal advice.
- Costs of legal representation are the learner's responsibility.

5.3.5 Fair Procedure Guarantee: Where legal representation is refused, Multiverse will ensure additional procedural safeguards including:

- Extended time for the learner to prepare their case.
- Assistance from a trained student advocate if requested.
- Clear explanation of procedures and rights.
- Additional breaks during proceedings if needed.
- Written summaries of complex procedural or evidential matters.

5.3.6. Review Mechanism: All decisions regarding legal representation will be subject to review as part of any appeal process, with particular attention to whether the refusal affected the fairness of the proceedings

6. Safeguarding Paramourcy:

6.1. Highest Priority: The safety and well-being of all learners, particularly those under 18 or those identified as Adults at Risk, is Multiverse's highest priority and will always be the paramount consideration in all decision-making throughout this process.

6.2. Immediate Referral: In line with Multiverse's [Safeguarding Policy](#), any concern that raises a safeguarding issue will be immediately referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

6.3. Safeguarding Policy Takes Precedence: Where there is any conflict between this Non-Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Process and Multiverse's Safeguarding Policy, the Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures will take precedence to ensure the protection and welfare of all those impacted or involved. For instance, the 'child-on-child abuse procedure' will take precedence when misconduct occurs between learners under the age of 18.

6.4. Information Sharing for Protection: Information will be shared with relevant external agencies (e.g., local authority children's social care, Police) without consent if it is deemed necessary to protect a learner from harm, in accordance with statutory guidance and Multiverse's Safeguarding Policy.

7. Potential Criminal Offences

7.1. If, a Reporting Party who is a learner, decides to notify the Police of an allegation of misconduct as a potential criminal offence, they will be supported with this. Both reporting and responding parties will be offered ongoing support whilst the matter is being investigated by the Police.

7.2. Multiverse may, at any time, refer a matter to the Police, but is unlikely to do so if the Reporting Party (where there is one) is not in support of taking this action, unless it is deemed necessary for safeguarding purposes, to protect the Reporting Party and/or others from harm or to prevent further crimes taking place, for example.

7.3. Multiverse has a legal duty to consider a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service in circumstances where learners are following a programme that involves regulated activity. The referral is subject to conditions that will be considered by the DSL.

7.4. Multiverse has a legal duty to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer in circumstances where learners are in a Position of Trust where they have behaved in a way that has harmed an individual under the age of 18; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to an under 18; behaved towards an under 18(s) in a way that indicates that they would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children and/or behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. The referral is subject to conditions that will be considered by the DSL.

7.5. Where a potential criminal offence is committed against Multiverse (including but not limited to: theft, damage to property), a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis as to whether to report the matter to the Police and the reporting party and responding party will be notified accordingly.

7.6. If an allegation of misconduct is reported to the Police, whether by Multiverse or a Reporting Party, Multiverse will assess whether:

- any precautionary measures are needed in accordance with Section 11.
- the disciplinary process should be paused until such time as the criminal process is complete. When the process is paused, regular reviews of the situation will be undertaken, including consideration of restarting the process at any time even if the criminal process has not yet been completed.

7.7. If the criminal process results in a conviction or caution, Multiverse will usually take that to be conclusive proof that the offence in question has been committed and may seek to take action or apply sanctions under this code. Consideration will be given to any further investigation required into other potential breaches of the code arising out of or related to the criminal conviction or caution.

7.8. Multiverse reserves the right to proactively investigate alleged or suspected misconduct that comes to its attention through means other than a formal complaint if there is an overriding safeguarding or community safety requirement.

8. Making a Disclosure of Non-Academic Misconduct

8.1. A disclosure is made when someone contacts the Safeguarding Team via email, safeguarding@multiverse.io or via the Data Input Sheets with a misconduct concern. Where a member of Multiverse staff or a fellow learner has received a disclosure in person or via other means, they should submit a disclosure on behalf of the affected party to the Safeguarding Team.

8.2. If the misconduct relates to a member of the Safeguarding Team, the disclosure can be sent and made directly to the Senior Director, Delivery.

8.3. The submission of a disclosure does not automatically create a formal complaint, and is not an instruction for Multiverse to take action. No immediate action will be taken by Multiverse unless there is a concern about safety or if Multiverse has a duty to do so, for example, under safeguarding.

8.4. Instead, the person who has disclosed will have the opportunity to speak to a member of the Safeguarding Team to consider their options before making an informed decision on next steps.

8.5. If a person decides to disclose anonymously, Multiverse is unlikely to be able to take any direct action on the basis of their disclosure. Anonymised data will however help Multiverse to understand patterns in learner behaviour and inform future policy.

9. Options Following Disclosure

9.1. After disclosure there are several options available to the Reporting Party.

These options include:

- a) Take no further action at this time.
- b) Undertake an informal resolution. This option is dependent on the parties involved being willing to participate, and may not be deemed a suitable resolution for all forms of misconduct.
- c) Make a report to the Police if the misconduct could constitute a crime. In this case no discipline action will normally be taken by Multiverse, unless a formal complaint is simultaneously submitted to Multiverse.
- d) Make a formal complaint to Multiverse: This will result in a formal investigation. A formal complaint is different to a disclosure; it requires a submission in writing to the Senior Director, Delivery, informing them what has happened, who is alleged to have carried out the misconduct, and that the person who has made the complaint wishes Multiverse to take formal action. From this stage onwards, the person who has submitted the complaint is referred to as the Reporting Party, and the student who an allegation of misconduct has been made about is referred to as the Responding Party.

9.2. Learners are able to access support both internally and externally regardless of the option they choose, and access to this process in writing, alongside the Learner Code of Conduct is publicly available for reflection.

9.3 If the reported concern involves a learner under 18, or if it raises a safeguarding issue for any learner regardless of age, Multiverse has a statutory and moral duty to act. In such instances, the Reporting Party does not have the option to choose for no further action to be taken. Multiverse's safeguarding procedures will be immediately initiated. This may involve sharing information with, or reporting to, external agencies (e.g., local authority children's services, Police) without the consent of the learner or their parents/carers, if it is deemed necessary to protect the learner or others from harm.

10. Making a Formal Complaint of Non-Academic Misconduct

10.1 The Reporting Party may choose to make a formal complaint to the Senior Director, Delivery about another learner. This must be submitted in writing to the Senior Director, Delivery.

10.1.1. The complaint does not need to include in-depth detail about the experience. It should include enough information so that the Senior Director, Delivery can take the complaint forward, including identifying the learner(s) against whom the complaint has been made (Responding Party) and some detail on what has happened.

10.2. If a Reporting Party withdraws their complaint in writing, Multiverse may consider that even though a complaint has been withdrawn there is sufficient evidence for Multiverse to continue with an investigation without a Reporting Party. For sexual misconduct complaints (with no additional safeguarding concerns) the Reporting Party has the right to withdraw their complaint and stop the formal discipline process at any time and Multiverse will not continue with any investigation without the consent of the Reporting Party.

10.3. At any point throughout this process, the Senior Director, Delivery may delegate their responsibilities to another member of the governance team, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead may delegate responsibilities to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

11. Initial Assessment and Precautionary Action

11.1. Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Senior Director, Delivery and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will conduct an initial assessment of the formal complaint. This stage is to quickly determine the appropriate path forward. The initial assessment will consider the following criteria:

11.1.1. Safeguarding: To identify immediately if the concern constitutes a safeguarding issue requiring urgent referral to the Safeguarding Team, who will then take the lead in accordance with Multiverse's Safeguarding Policy.

11.1.2. Review of Allegation: To determine if the reported behaviour falls within the scope of this non-academic misconduct process and Learner Code of Conduct.

11.1.3. Severity and Risk Assessment: To gauge the seriousness of the allegation and any immediate risks to the safety or well-being of all individuals, the wider Multiverse community, or the integrity of any potential investigation.

11.2. Based on the risk assessment, the Senior Director, Delivery and Designated Safeguarding Lead may implement immediate precautionary measures. These are not sanctions but temporary actions taken to protect individuals, prevent further misconduct, or ensure a fair investigation. Examples include:

- No Contact Agreement: A mutual agreement or formal instruction to cease all contact.
- Temporary Restriction of Access: Limiting a learner's access to certain Multiverse facilities, online platforms, or activities.
- Temporary Adjustment to Learning Arrangements: Implementing alternative learning or work placement arrangements.

- Temporary Suspension: In serious cases where there is an immediate and significant risk to safety or a potential for substantial disruption, a learner may be temporarily suspended from their programme while an investigation takes place. This decision will be communicated in writing, providing reasons and the duration of the suspension.

11.2.1. All precautionary measures will be:

- Proportionate to the perceived risk.
- Reviewed regularly to ensure they remain necessary.
- Clearly communicated to the learner in writing, explaining the reasons and the expected duration.

11.3. Following this initial assessment, the Senior Director, Delivery will decide whether to:

- Close the case (e.g., if there is insufficient information or no misconduct).
- Seek Informal Resolution (only if appropriate and must be agreed by all parties).
- Initiate a Formal Investigation.

12. Informal Resolution

For minor incidents of non-academic misconduct, where appropriate and all parties agree, Multiverse may pursue informal resolution. This approach aims to address the issue constructively without resorting to formal disciplinary proceedings.

12.1. Informal resolution is considered for less serious incidents where there is a good chance of resolution through dialogue, mutual understanding, or minor adjustments in behaviour. It is not typically suitable for serious misconduct.

12.2. All parties must voluntarily agree to engage in informal resolution. If informal resolution is unsuccessful or not agreed upon, the matter may proceed to a formal investigation.

12.3. Discussions held during informal resolution are typically confidential between the parties involved and minutes will not be taken, though Multiverse will keep a record that informal resolution was pursued and a brief summary of the outcome.

12.4 Informal resolution methods could involve:

- Mediation: Facilitated discussion between the parties involved to reach a mutually agreeable outcome.
- Coaching/Guidance: Providing direct feedback and guidance to the learner on expected standards of behaviour.
- Verbal Warning: A recorded verbal warning, outlining expected future conduct.

13. Formal Investigation

If the initial assessment determines that the matter is serious misconduct, or informal resolution is not appropriate/successful, a formal investigation will be initiated.

13.1. The Senior Director, Delivery will appoint an Investigating Officer (a reasonably senior and experienced member of Multiverse staff, who has not been previously involved in the incident or has a conflict of interest) to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation. This role should be fulfilled by operational staff unless the complexity or sensitivity of the case demands involvement from the Governance Team or the appointment of an independent external investigator.

13.2. The Investigating Officer will draft clear terms of reference, outlining the scope of the investigation. The Senior Director, Delivery will need to approve the terms of reference before any investigation begins.

13.3. The level of investigation shall be proportionate to the seriousness of the circumstances of the incident.

13.4. The Responding Party will be informed in writing, as soon as reasonably practicable, of:

- The nature of the allegations in sufficient detail to enable the Responding Party to effectively respond.
- Reassurance that an investigation is not an inference of misconduct or a proven outcome.
- That a formal investigation is underway.
- Their right to be accompanied to any investigative meetings by an accompanying party (as per the "Support and Right to be Accompanied" principle).
- Information about available support services.
- Who their designated Multiverse support officer is.

13.5. The Investigating Officer will:

13.5.1. Interview the Reporting Party, the Responding Party, and any relevant witnesses. Notes will be taken during all interviews. Where an AI-assisted notetaking tool is used, participants will be informed in advance, and its use will comply with Multiverse's Data Protection Policy and UK GDPR. Participants have the right to object to the use of AI notetaking, in which case manual notes will be taken. Notes will be shared with the interviewee for verification and amends. The Investigating Officer may decide to speak only to a subset of witnesses if they assess this to be proportionate to the case.

13.5.2. Collect and review all relevant documentary or digital evidence (e.g., emails, messages, CCTV footage, policies).

13.5.3. Ensure that all evidence is handled securely and in line with data protection regulations.

13.6. The Responding Party will be given a full and fair opportunity to:

- Respond to all allegations made against them.
- Present their account of events.
- Provide any supporting evidence or identify witnesses.
- Raise any mitigating circumstances they believe are relevant.

13.7. Upon completion, the Investigating Officer will produce a detailed report summarising the evidence gathered, findings of fact on the balance of probabilities, and a conclusion as to

whether there is a case for misconduct to answer. The report will not make recommendations for sanctions.

13.8. The Investigating Officer will aim to complete their investigation and investigation report within 30 working days. However, this timeline may vary depending on the complexity of the case.

14. Discipline Committee Process and Membership

14.1. If the Investigating Officer report concludes there is a case for misconduct to answer, the Senior Director, Delivery will decide on a case-by-case basis if it is reasonable and in everyone's interest to call for a formal Discipline Committee.

14.2. Where a full hearing is not deemed proportionate, a Director's Decision may be issued. This is not a formal finding of proven misconduct but may require the Responding Party to undergo awareness-raising, educational activity or similar as an alternative to a Discipline Committee. In practice, the following procedural safeguards apply where a Director's Decision is issued:

14.2.1 The Responding Party receives written notice and a reasonable opportunity to respond before the decision is issued;

14.2.2 The decision is communicated in writing with reasons; and

14.2.3 The decision is subject to the same appeals process as a Discipline Committee outcome.

14.2.4 The Responding Party may decline a Director's Decision and request that the matter be referred to a full Discipline Committee hearing. Such a request must be made in writing within 5 working days of receiving the proposed Director's Decision.

14.3. If a Discipline Committee is called, it will comprise of a total of three reasonably senior members of Multiverse staff, none of whom will have been involved in the initial report, assessment, or investigation of the case.

14.4. The Discipline Committee Chair will be the most senior of the three Multiverse staff members comprising the Discipline Committee.

14.5. All members of the Discipline Committee considering allegations of sexual misconduct or harassment will have undergone relevant training.

14.6. Should a Discipline Committee be convened to consider a case that involves two or more Responding Parties, it may be the same Discipline Committee hearing the cases. Differing determinations may be made depending upon the evidence and any aggravating or mitigating features of the case which may or may not apply equally to all learners against whom an allegation is made.

14.7. Where multiple allegations are received about the same Responding Party by multiple Reporting Parties, it may be the same Discipline Committee hearing the cases. Differing determinations may be made depending upon the evidence and any aggravating or mitigating features of each case.

15. Discipline Committee - Before the Meeting

15.1. If a Discipline Committee is called, both the Responding and Reporting Party will receive written notice of the Discipline Committee Meeting at least 10 working days in advance. This notification will include:

- The specific allegations of misconduct.
- A copy of the Investigating Officer's report and all supporting evidence to be considered by the Discipline Committee.
- The date, time, and location of the meeting.
- A reminder of their right to be accompanied by an accompanying party (as defined in the "Support and Right to be Accompanied" principle).

15.2. The Responding Party has the option to either accept or reject the allegation(s). This decision should be delivered in writing to the Senior Director, Delivery within 5 working days of receiving written notice of the Discipline Committee Meeting, along with details of their accompanying party.

15.3. If the Responding Party rejects the allegation(s), the Senior Director, Delivery will convene a Discipline Committee.

15.4. If the Responding Party rejects the allegation(s) in part, Multiverse reserves the flexibility to accept the admitted allegations and discontinue disciplinary action in relation to matters not admitted.

15.5. If the Responding Party accepts the allegation(s) then the allegation(s) will be considered proven and the process will proceed to a Mitigation Meeting. The Responding Party may accept the allegation(s) at any stage of the proceedings.

15.6. At least 5 working days before the Discipline Committee Meeting, the Responding Party should submit their evidence in rejection of the allegation or their evidence in mitigation if the allegation has been accepted. Verbal testimony will also be permitted at the meeting. Evidence will be shared with the Discipline Committee, and the Investigating Officer. Evidence in rejection of the allegation will also be shared with the Reporting Party and their accompanying person (where applicable).

16. Discipline Committee - During the Meeting

16.1. The Discipline Committee Meeting will typically proceed as follows:

- Introduction by the Chair, outlining the process.
- The Investigating Officer presents their findings and evidence.
- The Discipline Committee may ask questions of both parties.

- The Responding Party shall have the ability to have questions asked of witnesses. These will be directed through the Chair.
- Both parties will have the opportunity to make a closing statement.
- The Discipline Committee will then deliberate in private.

16.2. Following the meeting, the Discipline Committee will determine, in private, on the balance of probabilities (i.e., whether it is more likely than not), if the alleged misconduct occurred, based on all evidence presented.

16.3. Where a learner is permitted legal representation, subject to any reasonable adjustments put in place, they will be required to personally answer questions put to them by the Discipline Committee. The Discipline Committee may draw an adverse inference if a learner decides not to personally answer such questions. The Discipline Committee may take into account a learner's failure to respond to questions when considering the evidence as a whole. However, no adverse inference will be drawn where the learner's silence is on the advice of a legal representative, or where concurrent criminal proceedings are ongoing and answering could prejudice the learner's position in those proceedings.

16.4. The Chair will not ask or allow a legal representative to ask questions which are unfair, oppressive, or irrelevant.

17. Decision Outcomes

17.1. The outcome of the Discipline Committee or the outcome of the Director's Decision will typically be communicated to the Reporting Party and Responding Party within two working days of the decision being made. It will be confirmed in writing (alongside minutes of the meeting and the Discipline Committee's reasonings if one was held), within five working days. The individuals will be informed if, exceptionally, there is good cause for this time period to be extended. Outcomes will be communicated over appropriate channels and with a requisite degree of sensitivity.

17.2. If the allegation is not proven the meeting will be concluded and the Reporting and Responding Parties will be notified and outcome letters (via email) will be issued. Multiverse will prioritise its duty of care to both parties to enable them to continue their learning and minimise any ongoing distress.

18. Mitigation and Sanctions

18.1. If the Responding Party accepts the allegation the Discipline Committee would then also accept that the allegation is proven, and the Senior Director, Delivery will convene a Mitigation Meeting.

18.2. If the Discipline Committee finds that on the balance of probability the allegation is proven, then the original Discipline Committee will reconvene, and a Mitigation Meeting will take place. If no Discipline Committee was called for (as described in 14.2), this step and the following would simply be managed via the Senior Director, Delivery.

18.3. The Responding Party will be invited to attend the Mitigation Meeting and they are encouraged to attend. They will be offered the opportunity to present and/or submit evidence

in mitigation which will be taken into consideration prior to any sanction being decided. The Responding Party will be given 5 working days to send their mitigating evidence to the Senior Director, Delivery following their acceptance of the allegation, or from the confirmation of a proven allegation in writing. This is not an opportunity to present new evidence in relation to the allegation(s).

18.4. The mitigation can be presented in person at the meeting, or the Senior Director, Delivery may accept mitigation from the Responding Party solely in writing. The mitigating evidence will not be shared with the Reporting Party, and the Reporting Party will not be present during the Responding Party's presentation of their evidence. The mitigating evidence will be redacted from the Reporting Party's copy of the meeting minutes.

18.5. The Reporting Party will be invited to the Mitigation Meeting if held in person. They will be offered the opportunity to present and/or submit a written impact statement which will be taken into consideration prior to any sanction being decided. The same deadline applies as in 18.3. The impact statement will not be shared with the Responding Party, and the Responding Party will not be present during the Reporting Party's presentation of their impact statement. The impact statement will be redacted from the Responding Party's copy of the minutes.

18.6. The Discipline Committee (if held) will deliberate in private and decide sanctions based on the specific details of the case and taking into account any mitigating and aggravating factors. The Discipline Committee will also consider previous similar cases to ensure consistent application of sanctions, while recognising that each case must be decided on its individual merits.

18.7. The decision of the Discipline Committee does not need to be unanimous. The outcome can be determined by a majority of votes and announced as the decision of the Discipline Committee. In the case of an equally split vote, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote to resolve a tie.

18.8. A list of potential sanctions is noted in **Appendix 1**.

18.9. Both parties will be informed of the sanction(s) in writing. Their outcome letters (via email) will set out the rationale for the decision. The letters (via email) will also include details of the appeal process.

18.10. All sanctions will be applied from the date of the mitigation meeting.

18.11. Non-compliance with a sanction may result in further disciplinary action.

18.12. Where a learner is permanently or temporarily withdrawn from Multiverse, Multiverse may be required to notify relevant regulatory agencies once any appeals process has concluded.

18.13. If Multiverse has not already informed the Responding Party's employer, and one or more allegations are found proven (either after acceptance by the Responding Party or after a Discipline Committee Meeting), Multiverse will usually inform the Responding Party's employer once the Mitigation meeting and any appeals process has been concluded.

19. Appeals

19.1. Both the Reporting Party and the Responding Party have the right to appeal the Discipline Committee outcome. The Discipline Appeals Committee will only consider appeals made on the following grounds:

19.1.1. That there was a material irregularity or failure in procedure in the conduct of the original Discipline Committee Meeting;

19.1.2. That there appears to be evidence of prejudice or bias during the original Discipline Committee Meeting;

19.1.3. That relevant new evidence has come to light which either party had a good reason for being unable to present prior to or during the original Discipline Committee Meeting which may make a material difference to the sanction applied.

19.2. Both the Reporting Party and Responding Party will have 5 working days from the date of their formal written outcome letter to submit their appeal. The individuals should appeal in writing to the Senior Director, Delivery. The appellant must state the grounds on which the appeal is made and include any relevant evidence to support their case that the grounds for appeal are met.

19.3. If an appeal is submitted by either the Reporting or Responding Party, a Discipline Appeals Committee will be convened by the Senior Director, Delivery. The Chair of the Discipline Appeals Committee will be a non-conflicted Senior Director or VP. The Discipline Appeals Committee will consist of reasonably senior staff who have no prior involvement in the case.

19.4. If the Discipline Appeals Committee determines that one or more of the grounds for appeal have been met, then the appeal will normally take the form of a paper review unless the Chair of the Discipline Appeals Committee decides that a new meeting is required. In all cases the detailed reasons for the first decision will be made available, and the Chair of the Discipline Committee invited to assist the Discipline Appeals Committee. If required, the Discipline Appeals Committee may also consult the original Investigating Officer, and will notify the members of the original Discipline Committee if the decision is significantly changed.

19.5. The Discipline Appeals Committee has power to confirm, set aside or vary a finding or decision of the Discipline Committee. This may include increasing the original sanction imposed by the Discipline Committee or Senior Director, Delivery (if no Discipline Committee was called).

20. Outcome Letters (Via Email)

20.1. Following the outcome of an appeal, or the passing of five working days without the submission of an appeal by either party. A Completion of Procedures (COP) letter will be issued to the Responding Party and Reporting Party.

20.2. If a learner remains dissatisfied following the final internal appeal outcome, they may seek an external review:

- **Degree Apprenticeships:** These programmes fall within the remit of the **Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)**; details about how to complain to the OIA is detailed here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/how-to-complain-to-us/>.
- **Non-Degree Apprenticeships:** For programmes not covered by the OIA, learners may escalate their concerns to the **Department for Education (DfE)** via the Apprenticeship Service Support Desk.

In all instances, Multiverse will provide clear signposting to the appropriate regulatory body at the conclusion of the internal process to ensure learners can exercise their right to external oversight.

Appendix 1 - Possible Sanctions Following the Learner Non-Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Process

The following is a list of actions and sanctions that may be applied in cases of misconduct or serious misconduct, following the Learner Non-Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Process.

The specific sanction to be applied will be determined on an individual basis for each case, based on the circumstances and seriousness of the misconduct, along with any relevant mitigating/ aggravating factors.

Multiverse may deem it appropriate to employ informal resolutions, such as mediation, coaching, guidance, a verbal warning, education and training, instead of or alongside sanctions.

Below is a list of all possible sanctions following a disciplinary process:

- Written reflection (if appropriate)
- Formal Written Warning
- The requirement to make good the cost in whole or in part of any damage caused and/or repay/make good any financial loss to Multiverse
- No Contact Order
- A requirement to undertake suitable training or awareness programmes
- A requirement to undertake an informal resolution
- Formal Performance Improvement Plan
- Loss of progression (for learners on advanced programmes)
- Partial Suspension, such as a ban from the Multiverse premises or platform
- Suspended permanent or temporary withdrawal from Multiverse
- Limitation of references provided by Multiverse (e.g. provision of a factual reference only)
- Temporary withdrawal from Multiverse
- Permanent withdrawal from Multiverse
- Exclusion from future programme participation at Multiverse