

Respectful & Fair Treatment of Students Policy

Pacific Design Academy is committed to ensuring that its learning environment promotes the respectful and fair treatment of all students.

While on Pacific Design Academy premises or during activities or events hosted by PDA the following activities are prohibited:

Bullying: Repeated, intentional behaviour aimed at causing physical, emotional, or psychological harm to another individual. This includes verbal, physical, and cyberbullying.

Harassment: Unwanted behaviour that demeans, humiliates, or intimidates an individual based on their gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected characteristic.

Discrimination: Unfair or unequal treatment of individuals based on their gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, age, or any other protected characteristic, resulting in denial of opportunities or unequal access to resources.

Sexual Misconduct: Any form of non-consensual sexual contact, including sexual harassment, assault, exploitation, stalking, and related activities. See section 6.5 for the Sexual Misconduct Policy.

Violence: Physical force or power used against another person with the intention to cause harm, including physical assaults or threats of violence.

Hazing: Any action taken, or situation created intentionally to cause embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule and risks emotional and/or physical harm to individuals within groups or teams, regardless of the person's willingness to participate.

Substance Abuse: The use, possession, distribution, or sale of alcohol, cannabis, and/or illegal drugs on PDA premises or during institution-sponsored activities or events. This includes being under the influence of these substances in a manner that impairs the ability to participate in academic, professional, or social activities.

If any prohibited activity occurs, the following outlines the process for addressing the situation:

Reporting the activities to the Academic Coordinator:

- Any student who witnesses or experiences a prohibited activity should report the incident immediately.
- Reports can be made in person, in writing through email.
- Reports should include a detailed description of the incident, including the date, time, location, parties involved, and any witnesses.

Initial Response:

- Upon receiving a report, the Academic Coordinator will acknowledge receipt within five working days.
- The Academic Coordinator will work with the Academic Dean to assess the situation to ensure the immediate safety and well-being of those involved.
- Interim measures may be taken to prevent further harm, such as adjusting schedules, providing counselling, or imposing temporary restrictions.

Investigation:

- The investigation will be conducted impartially and confidentially, to determine whether the prohibited activity occurred.
- All communication throughout the investigation process will be honest, straightforward, timely, and objective to ensure clarity and transparency.

Resolution:

- Based on the findings of the investigation, the school will take appropriate action, which may include:
 - Disciplinary measures against the perpetrator(s), such as warnings, suspension, expulsion, or termination/dismissal.
 - Remedial actions to support the victim(s), such as counselling, academic accommodations, or other support services.
- The outcome of the investigation and the actions taken will be communicated to the relevant parties in an honest, straightforward, and timely manner within 20 days.

Appeal Process:

- If the outcome of the investigation is disputed, the affected parties have the right to appeal the decision.
- Appeals must be submitted in writing within 10 days following the notification of the outcome.
- The appeal will be reviewed by the school director, and a final decision will be made and communicated to the parties involved.

Confidentiality:

- All reports, investigations, and outcomes will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to carry out their duties.

Prevention and Education:

- PDA is committed to preventing prohibited activities through ongoing education and awareness programs.
- Training sessions, workshops, and resources will be made available to students, staff, and faculty to promote a respectful and inclusive learning environment.

By fostering a respectful and fair learning environment, PDA aims to ensure that all students can thrive academically and personally. Any violations of this policy will be taken seriously and addressed promptly to maintain the integrity of our community.