

COMPANY POLICY
NAME OF POLICY: Preventing Violence at Work

PURPOSE OF POLICY

Michael John Academy is committed to ensuring so far as reasonably practicable the health safety and welfare of all employees and learners in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Staff members at Michael John Academy are in regular contact with students and other members of the public and therefore are at risk of conflicts arising at any given time. It is essential all staff members are aware of how to deal with such situations and minimise the risk to themselves and others.

WHAT IS VIOLENCE?

The Health and Safety Executive's definition of work related violence is:

"Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work"

Michael John Academy considers the following behaviour towards staff as unacceptable:

- Verbal abuse or threats;
- Verbal or physical harassment, including racial or sexual harassment and bullying or threats of such;
- Verbal or physical abuse to staff arising from their employment, at any time including outside working hours;
- Threatening letters from students or members of the public;
- Attacks on or damage to, a member of staff's property arising from, or in connection with, carrying out their duties.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Director

- To ensure as much as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all employees and learners

Chief Executive

- To ensure arrangements exist for the identification, evaluation and management of risks associated with violence and aggression at work

Managers

- Ensure risk assessments are carried out and reviewed
- Implement procedures/safe systems of work aimed to eliminate or reduce the likelihood of violence and aggression
- Monitoring reporting system

Health and Safety Officer

- To investigate any incidents and report on these to senior management
- To notify RIDDOR of any violent incident resulting in major injury, death or incapacity to work for longer than 7 consecutive days and the SFA after 3 consecutive days.

Employees

- To take reasonable care of themselves and others

- Follow company policies and procedures
- Attend all required training sessions
- Report all incidents including verbal abuse, threats and physical assault to their line manager

Learners

- To take reasonable care of themselves and others
- Follow company policies and procedures
- Attend all required training sessions
- Report all incidents including verbal abuse, threats and physical assault to their Tutor if incident occurs in college
- Report all incidents including verbal abuse, threats and physical assault to their Supervisor if incident occurs in placement salon and also to Michael John Academy Employer Responsive Officer

ASSESSMENT OF RISK

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires employers to carry out an assessment on the risks to health and safety that their employees may be exposed to. In conducting a risk assessment Michael John Academy has adopted the following four point action plan recommended by the HSE

1. Find out if there is a problem
 - Ask staff
 - Keep detailed records
2. Decide on what action to take
 - Decide who might be harmed and how
 - Evaluate the risk
 - Training and information
 - The environment
 - The design of the job
3. Take the appropriate action
4. Check the action is effective.

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

All incidents of violence, aggression, verbal abuse, sexual or racial abuse and damage to property must be reported.

Managers of staff, who have been victims of violence or aggression, should complete an incident report form and return it to the Health and Safety Officer.

Supervisors of learners, who have been victims of violence or aggression, should complete an incident report form and return it to the Health and Safety Officer.

By completing these forms for all incidents it will help us to understand the problems staff and learners face at work, and to see ways to reduce the risk of future incidents.

PLACEMENT SALONS/ EMPLOYERS

If a learner makes a report of violence occurring in their placement salon to either the Employer Responsive Officer or Safeguarding Officer at Michael John Academy the Chief Executive or Training Operations Manager must be informed. If a report is made regarding a learner being at risk of violent behaviour in a salon, this too, must be reported to the Safeguarding Officer and the Chief Executive or Training Operations Manager.

An assessment will be made along with a decision whether to immediately remove the learner from their salon whilst an investigation into the allegation is made.

The Skills Funding Agency will be informed immediately by the Chief Executive or Training Operations Manager of the allegations. They will also be informed of the resulting investigation and outcome.

Following the investigation if the learner is found to be at risk in the salon, the learner will be fully removed and a suitable new placement will be found for the learner.

Michael John Academy will not work with any employer who is putting learners at risk of harm whilst working within their salon. The salon name will also be listed as a high risk salon during MHF meetings according to the MHF Employer Protocol.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING

As part of Michael John Academy induction programme staff will be made aware of the Violence at Work Policy.

Immediate Support Following a Violent Incident

- Immediately after an incident, the line manager should ensure the employee/learner receive any necessary medical treatment and advice
- Debriefing: Victims of violence will need to talk through their experience as soon as possible after the event. Verbal abuse can be as upsetting as a physical attack
- The Guidance and Support service should be accessed if required
- In some circumstances individuals may require counselling after an attack. Shock or trauma will affect each person differently, be aware of time off to recover
- In serious cases legal advice and guidance may be appropriate
- Support and guidance should be given by line managers

General guidance on personal safety

Violent and threatening behaviour at work may involve many factors, including the following:

- Random violence with no clear intent, such as from someone under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
- Intimidation used to achieve a desired end, such as control or sexual favours or simply faster service.
- The expression of uncontrolled irritation such as dissatisfaction with poor service or prolonged discomfort.
- Displaced anger from past situations applied unreasonably to the issue at hand.
- Violence related to criminal activity, thrill-seeking or revenge.
- Violence related to cultural or religious differences between subgroups in society.

How to deal with an aggressive or possibly violent situation

Practical tips to avoid aggression

If you think that a person is becoming violent or aggressive DO NOT:

- Stare them out or react with sudden movements
- Shout at them
- Whisper to other people
- Move closer to them or surround them
- Look aggressive
- Feel aggressive
- Keep the person wondering what you might be about to do to them

Signs of aggression to look out for

- Clenched fists, poking fingers
- Restlessness, body tension
- Increased breathing

- Staring
- Increased volume of speech
- Refusal to communicate
- Poor concentration
- Offensive language
- Disrespect
- Emotional outbursts
- Blocking escape routes

Act immediately to stop aggression turning to violence

- Take a pace backwards to let them know you are giving them space
- Talk calmly and evenly
- Be aware of your own body language
- Keep your hands in view
- Ensure that they know you don't mean them any harm
- Ask them why they are upset
- Take them out of a noisy environment
- Identify if there is a simple solution
- Only one person should talk and keep movements to a minimum
- Continue to reassure them

Violence or aggression between two or more people

If there are two or more persons involved in a situation:

- Separate them.
- Ask to speak with one person whilst the other one waits or another person speaks with them.
- Distance the people from each other. Ask one to explain the conflict, and then the other has their turn. Inform that they have 5 minutes each and they must not interrupt.

COMMUNICATION

Correct communication is essential to diffuse a situation. It is essential that you are aware of your responsibilities and limits regarding the Safeguarding of learners. This person may need referrals to other staff that can offer correct advice and guidance. If you feel the individual requires one to one counselling or pastoral support YOU MUST REFER them to Pastoral Support Officer OR the DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS as appropriate. In other instances:

- Reassure them that you are listening
- Pay attention to what is being said
- Use non-verbal communication
- Avoid audiences
- Speak confidently
- Ensure the person understands what you say
- Try not to let your anger or frustration show
- Never prolong a discussion but try not to be dismissive
- Avoid reaction to abusive remarks
- Do not become upset
- Do not take things personally

DEALING AND REACTING TO VIOLENCE

If the situation has got out of control and has resulted in violence in the workplace you need to ensure the safety of yourself. You must not put yourself in danger

Attempt to avoid physical contact

- Attempt to discreetly move any objects that can be used by the aggressor
- Place a substantial object in the way

- Inform them that it would best if your manager dealt with the situation
- If other people are available ask them to get your line manager/manager
- Use emergency call bell if there is one

There may be situations where you are contacting a learner's home or salon and you may be speaking with an abusive and angry employer or parent/guardian.

- Speak clearly and confidently
- Do not interrupt
- The tone of your voice is very important
- If you do not have correct information call them back
- Do not keep the person waiting
- Make notes as you are speaking, this will help you to remember key issues

Employer Responsive officers are often working alone or on a 1:1 situation with employers. There are a few precautions to take to ensure safety at work.

- Carry a mobile phone with you
- Always let someone know where you are working
- Do not approach a group if you think you could be compromising your safety

SUMMARY

In aiming to prevent potential violence or aggression at work Michael John Academy will conduct risk assessments and provide training. All environments within the training centre have been considered in the minimising of risk, with each lecture facility having glass inserts in doors to allow for visual inspection and lecturer positioning close to access and egress routes.

Employees need to feel that their concerns will be taken seriously which should ensure they are confident to make reports.

Michael John Academy use supporting policies and procedures with further guidance – please see:

- Alcohol & Drugs policy
- Stress policy

This policy will be reviewed annually as per the company policy schedule.

Signed and verified: July 2018

By Health & Safety Officer – Suzanne Johnson

* This policy can be made available in larger type.