



“Enabling Students to Accomplish their Academic Goal”

Staff Formal Dress Code Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy Number: HRP6

Version: 2.0

Date: March 2026

Owner: Head of Quality & Operations

Approved by: Board of Directors

Next Review: March 2027

Address: 1st Floor, 9 Lymington Avenue, Wood Green N22 6EA

Email: info@bellmontcollege.co.uk

Tel: + 44 (0) 203 840 9294 + 44 (0) 203 929 7665

Website: www.bellmontcollege.co.uk

March 2026

Contents:

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Introduction | 2 |
| 2. Purpose of the Policy | 3 |
| 3. Scope of the Policy | 3 |
| 4. Regulatory, Legal and Quality Assurance Framework | 4 |
| 5. Core Principles | 5 |
| 6. How this Policy Supports Students, Staff and Institutional Quality | 5 |
| 7. Professional Appearance Standards | 6 |
| 8. Acceptable Formal Attire and Personal Presentation | 6 |
| 9. Attire and Presentation Not Normally Acceptable | 7 |
| 10. Health, Safety, Safeguarding and Operational Requirements | 8 |
| 11. Equality, Reasonable Adjustments, Religion or Belief and Cultural Dress | 8 |
| 12. Student-Facing, Public-Facing, Online and Event Contexts | 9 |
| 13. Exceptions, Casual Days, Fieldwork, Weather and Remote Working | 9 |
| 14. Compliance, Supportive Resolution and Non-Compliance | 9 |
| 15. Governance and Committee Implementation Framework | 10 |
| 16. Roles and Responsibilities | 11 |
| 17. Training, Monitoring, Audit and Evidence | 12 |
| 18. Conclusion | 12 |

1. Introduction

Bellmont College is committed to maintaining a professional, inclusive, safe and respectful working and learning environment. The way staff present themselves when teaching, supporting students, receiving visitors, attending meetings or representing the College contributes to public confidence, student trust, institutional identity and the quality of the student experience.

This policy establishes the expectations for staff dress, personal presentation and professional appearance. It retains Belmont College's requirement for formal and professional attire during working hours and College activities, while making clear that dress expectations must be applied fairly, proportionately and without discrimination.

Bellmont College currently delivers higher education provision in collaboration with Liverpool Hope University (LHU). Under this partnership, Belmont College recruits and employs staff who teach, support and engage with students locally, while academic oversight and certain partnership requirements operate through LHU arrangements. Belmont College is also seeking Office for Students (OfS) approval for its own funding arrangements. Future regulatory or funding developments may affect staff-facing processes, governance responsibilities, partnership delivery models or operational procedures. The College will manage any such changes carefully, transparently and proportionately, while continuing to protect students' interests, preserve academic quality and support staff to meet professional expectations.

This policy should be read alongside the wider College framework for staff conduct, equality, safeguarding, health and safety, student support, quality assurance and governance, including (*HRP2 Belmont College Employee Handbook*), (*SWP2 Belmont College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy*), (*HSP2 Belmont College Health and Safety Policy*), (*HSP1 Belmont College Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy*) and (*QGP1 Belmont College Quality Handbook*).

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear, fair and practical framework for staff appearance and formal dress at Belmont College. The policy supports a professional institutional environment while recognising that staff may have different roles, religious or cultural requirements, health needs, disabilities, gender identities, personal circumstances and operational duties.

The policy aims to ensure that staff understand the standards expected when they are working on site, delivering teaching, supporting students, attending meetings, engaging online, representing Belmont College externally or participating in events. It also explains how dress code expectations will be implemented, monitored and reviewed through the College's governance and committee structure.

The policy is intended to support consistency and fairness. It is not intended to police personal identity, body shape, cultural background, religious expression or gender expression. Where professional appearance expectations intersect with equality, health, safety or safeguarding considerations, managers must apply the policy sensitively, proportionately and in accordance with *(SWP2 Belmont College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy)* and *(SWP1 Belmont College Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy)*.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all staff and individuals representing Belmont College, including full-time, part-time and hourly paid academic staff, professional services staff, administrative and clerical staff, student support staff, operational staff, contractors, consultants, agency workers, visiting lecturers, volunteers and directors when undertaking College duties or representing the College in a formal capacity.

The policy applies during working hours, teaching sessions, induction activities, student support activity, recruitment and admissions activity, College meetings, formal events, external representation, online teaching, virtual meetings, partnership meetings and any activity where the individual is visibly acting on behalf of Belmont College.

The policy applies to face-to-face and digital environments. Staff delivering online teaching, attending video meetings or participating in virtual student-facing activity should maintain the same professional standards expected in equivalent face-to-face contexts, unless a manager has approved a specific exception.

4. Regulatory, Legal and Quality Assurance Framework

This section summarises the main legal, regulatory and quality requirements that inform this policy.

| Requirement / source | Relevance to this policy |
|--|--|
| Office for Students Conditions of Registration | Supports governance, resources, student engagement, consumer protection, student protection, management and governance, and harassment and sexual misconduct expectations. |
| Competition and Markets Authority consumer law expectations | Supports clear, accurate and fair information about staff professionalism and student-facing procedures. |

| | |
|--|--|
| UK Quality Code for Higher Education | Supports quality assurance, student partnership, collaborative provision, staff support and continuous enhancement. |
| Equality Act 2010 | Requires non-discriminatory application of dress expectations, including reasonable adjustments and protection from harassment or victimisation. |
| Human Rights Act 1998 | Supports proportionate balancing of dignity, privacy, belief, expression, safety and professional conduct. |
| Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Personal Protective Equipment requirements | Confirms that safety, role-specific clothing and protective equipment take priority where required. |
| UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 | Requires confidential and secure handling of adjustment requests, employment records, health information and related evidence. |
| Employment Rights Act 1996 and good employment practice | Supports fairness, consistency, consultation and lawful management of employment expectations. |
| Protection from Harassment Act 1997 and safeguarding expectations | Supports a respectful working environment and appropriate handling of appearance-related harassment or safeguarding concerns. |
| Liverpool Hope University partnership requirements | Provides relevant partner context where Belmont College staff support or deliver Liverpool Hope University provision. |

5. Core Principles

Bellmont College applies this policy through the following principles: professionalism, fairness, safety, inclusivity, consistency, dignity, proportionality and accountability.

Professionalism means that staff should present themselves in a manner that supports confidence in the College, is appropriate to their role and reflects the formal educational environment in which students learn. Fairness means that similar standards apply to all staff, while allowing reasonable flexibility for role requirements, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, cultural dress, gender identity, health and safety needs and approved operational circumstances.

Safety means that clothing, footwear, accessories and personal presentation must not create avoidable risks to the individual, students, staff, visitors or the wider College community. Inclusivity means that the policy must be applied in a way that respects identity, belief, culture and individual circumstances. Consistency means that managers must apply expectations in a similar way across teams and must avoid personal preference, stereotypes or subjective judgements. Dignity means that conversations about dress or appearance should be private, respectful and supportive.

Proportionality means that any management response to non-compliance should be appropriate to the seriousness of the issue. Accountability means that repeated, serious or unresolved concerns should be recorded, monitored and escalated through the appropriate HR, management and committee routes.

6. How this Policy Supports Students, Staff and Institutional Quality

A clear and fair dress code supports the student experience by promoting a professional learning environment, confidence in staff, clarity of expectations and consistency in the College’s public presentation. It also supports staff by making expectations explicit and by preventing unnecessary ambiguity, personal judgement or unequal enforcement.

| Area of activity | What staff and students can expect | Implementation route and evidence |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Teaching and learning | Staff delivering teaching or academic support should present themselves professionally and in a way that supports a focused learning environment. | Head of Academic Programmes, Academic Board and Learning and Teaching Committee review teaching practice, student feedback and staff development evidence. |
| Student support and wellbeing | Student-facing staff should maintain a respectful and professional appearance while ensuring that clothing does not create barriers to approachability, inclusion or safeguarding. | Student Experience Committee, Safeguarding Committee and Student Staff Committee review feedback, concerns and support arrangements. |

| Area of activity | What staff and students can expect | Implementation route and evidence |
|---|---|--|
| Recruitment, admissions and public events | Staff representing Belmont College should present a formal, reliable and welcoming image that is consistent with public information and applicant expectations. | Recruitment, Admissions and Registry Committee monitors applicant-facing processes, event feedback, public information and training records. |
| Equality and accessibility | Dress expectations should be applied consistently and adjusted where required for disability, health, pregnancy, religion or belief, gender identity or cultural dress. | EDI Committee and HR review equality impact, adjustment requests, staff feedback and complaints trends. |
| Health and safety | Where a task requires specific footwear, protective clothing or other equipment, safety requirements take priority over general dress code expectations. | Senior Management Team, Health and Safety reporting and Risk, Audit and Compliance Oversight review risk assessments and incidents. |
| Governance and improvement | The policy should be reviewed regularly so that it remains lawful, proportionate, inclusive and aligned with College and partnership needs. | Board of Directors receives assurance through SMT, Academic Board, Quality Committee and annual policy review reporting. |

7. Professional Appearance Standards

Bellmont College expects staff to wear formal or smart professional attire during working hours and when representing the College, unless an exception has been approved. Clothing should be clean, neat, in good condition and suitable for the role being undertaken. Staff should consider the learning, working or public-facing environment in which they are operating and should choose attire that supports professionalism, safety, dignity and comfort.

Professional appearance includes clothing, footwear, visible accessories and personal presentation. Staff should ensure that their appearance does not undermine student confidence, disrupt the learning environment, breach health and safety requirements, compromise safeguarding, or create a risk of offence, harassment or discrimination.

Bellmont College recognises that professional dress can be achieved in different ways. The policy therefore gives examples of acceptable and unacceptable attire but does not require staff to dress according to binary gender stereotypes. Staff may choose

formal attire that aligns with their gender identity, cultural background, religion or belief, role requirements and personal circumstances, provided it meets the professional, safety and equality standards set out in this policy.

8. Acceptable Formal Attire and Personal Presentation

Acceptable formal attire may include any of the following, provided it is clean, neat, appropriate to the role and suitable for the working environment:

- Business suits, coordinated jackets, blazers, formal trousers, formal dresses, skirts, smart formal separates, shirts, blouses, smart knitwear and equivalent formal professional clothing.
- Formal shoes, smart flats, loafers, low-heeled shoes, boots or other professional footwear suitable for the role and safe for the working environment.
- Traditional, cultural or religious formal attire, including but not limited to head coverings, modest dress, cultural garments and faith-based clothing, where consistent with safety and professional presentation.
- Professional accessories that do not create safety risks, obscure identification where identification is required, or disrupt teaching, meetings or student support activity.
- Role-specific clothing, uniforms, identification badges, protective clothing or personal protective equipment where required by health and safety, safeguarding, contractor, placement, event or operational arrangements.

Staff should maintain personal hygiene and grooming appropriate to a professional workplace. Any comments or concerns relating to personal presentation must be handled sensitively and privately, and must not be based on discriminatory assumptions, cultural stereotypes or personal preference.

9. Attire and Presentation Not Normally Acceptable

The following attire is not normally acceptable during working hours, student-facing activity or College-related events unless a specific exception has been approved for operational, health, safety, cultural, religious, medical or wellbeing reasons:

- Denim jeans, shorts, cargo trousers or clothing that is primarily casual rather than professional.
- T-shirts, tank tops, casual tops, hoodies, sweatshirts, tracksuits, athletic wear or sportswear, unless required for an approved activity.
- Flip-flops, beach footwear, unsafe footwear or athletic trainers where they are not appropriate to the role or have not been approved for health or safety reasons.
- Overly revealing, transparent, distressed, ripped, excessively tight or excessively loose clothing that is not appropriate to a professional educational setting or creates a safety risk.

- Clothing or accessories displaying offensive, discriminatory, political, extremist, sexually explicit, violent, abusive or otherwise inappropriate slogans, images or symbols.
- Excessive jewellery, fragrance, make-up or accessories where they create a health, safety, accessibility or professional concern. This provision must be applied sensitively and must not be used to restrict cultural or religious expression unless there is a legitimate and proportionate reason.
- Any attire that prevents a member of staff from performing duties safely, communicating effectively, being appropriately identified where required, or complying with safeguarding or health and safety instructions.

The examples above do not remove the need for managerial judgement. Managers should consider context, role, equality considerations, health and safety requirements and any relevant reasonable adjustment before deciding whether attire is inappropriate. Where a concern is minor, informal supportive guidance will normally be the first response.

10. Health, Safety, Safeguarding and Operational Requirements

Health and safety requirements take priority over general dress expectations. Where a risk assessment, event plan, contractor requirement, building requirement, fieldwork activity or operational task requires specific footwear, protective clothing or personal protective equipment, staff must comply with those requirements.

Staff should not wear clothing, jewellery, footwear or accessories that create avoidable hazards, restrict movement, increase risk of slips, trips or falls, interfere with equipment, compromise hygiene, or create risks in emergency evacuation or first aid situations. Where staff undertake physical, facilities, outreach, event or operational duties, managers may approve practical clothing that differs from normal formal attire where this is justified by the task.

Safeguarding and student protection considerations also apply. Staff should ensure that clothing supports clear professional boundaries, respectful interaction and the maintenance of a safe learning environment. Concerns linked to harassment, discriminatory comments, inappropriate conduct or student safety should be handled through the relevant safeguarding, conduct or complaints routes, including (*HSP1 Belmont College Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy*) and (*CAP3 Belmont College Complaint and Appeal Policy and Procedure*).

11. Equality, Reasonable Adjustments, Religion or Belief and Cultural Dress

Bellmont College is committed to applying this policy in accordance with equality law and inclusive practice. No member of staff should be treated less favourably because

of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic.

Staff may request adjustments to dress code expectations where needed because of disability, long-term health conditions, pregnancy, maternity, menopause-related symptoms, temporary injury, medication, religious practice, cultural dress, gender identity or other relevant circumstances. Requests will be considered sensitively, confidentially and proportionately in line with *(SWP2 Belmont College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy)*, *(SWP1 Belmont College Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy)* and *(BCP7 Belmont College General Data Protection & Regulation (GDPR) Policy)*.

Bellmont College does not require staff to wear high heels, make-up, gender-specific clothing, revealing clothing, particular hairstyles, hosiery or any other appearance requirement that would impose unequal or unreasonable standards. Where different examples of attire are provided, they are illustrative only. The underlying standard is professional, formal and appropriate presentation that is applied equivalently across staff groups.

Religious and cultural dress, including head coverings, modest clothing, faith symbols and traditional formal attire, is respected. Any restriction may only be considered where it is objectively justified, lawful, proportionate and necessary for safety, safeguarding, identification, communication or another legitimate operational reason. Such cases must be discussed with the Head of Quality and Operations, HR or the Senior Management Team before any formal action is taken.

12. Student-Facing, Public-Facing, Online and Event Contexts

Staff should apply particular care when representing Belmont College in student-facing or public-facing contexts. This includes teaching, tutorials, open days, induction, applicant interviews, recruitment activity, graduation or awards events, partnership meetings, employer engagement, external visits, regulatory visits and online sessions involving students or external stakeholders.

In these contexts, staff should dress in a way that is formal, respectful, inclusive, suitable for the activity and consistent with Belmont College's professional identity. Staff who appear on camera for online teaching, support meetings or partnership activity should ensure that their visible attire and background are appropriate for the purpose of the meeting and do not undermine student confidence or professional boundaries.

Where Liverpool Hope University partnership events, oversight meetings, teaching observations or collaborative quality assurance activity involve Belmont College staff,

staff should be mindful that they are representing both Belmont College and the quality of the partnership delivery. Professional presentation should support the high standards of teaching, support and academic values expected within collaborative provision.

13. Exceptions, Casual Days, Fieldwork, Weather and Remote Working

Bellmont College may authorise exceptions to normal formal dress expectations where this is appropriate, proportionate and communicated clearly. Exceptions may include approved business-casual days, staff development activities, practical tasks, fieldwork, events requiring branded clothing, emergency response, hot weather, cold weather, building disruption, medical reasons, religious observance or specific operational activities.

Any casual dress day must still require staff to dress in a clean, respectful and professional manner appropriate to a higher education environment. Casual dress does not permit clothing with offensive slogans, unsafe footwear, revealing clothing or attire that would breach equality, safeguarding or professional conduct expectations.

Remote working does not remove the need for professional appearance when staff are visible to students, applicants, partners, regulators, directors or external stakeholders. Where a remote meeting is internal and not student-facing or public-facing, expectations may be applied flexibly, provided that conduct remains professional and respectful.

Managers may approve role-specific variations. Where an exception may affect health and safety, student protection, safeguarding, equality or institutional reputation, the decision should be recorded and escalated where appropriate.

14. Compliance, Supportive Resolution and Non-Compliance

Bellmont College expects staff to comply with this policy and to seek guidance where they are unsure whether particular attire is appropriate. Managers should address concerns at the earliest reasonable opportunity and should normally begin with a private, respectful and supportive conversation.

Where a staff member's attire or presentation is not consistent with this policy, the manager should explain the concern, refer to the relevant policy expectation and give the staff member a reasonable opportunity to respond. Where appropriate, the matter may be resolved by clarification, adjustment, provision of guidance, a temporary practical solution or approval of a reasonable adjustment.

Where immediate correction is necessary because of safety, safeguarding, public-facing duties or significant reputational concern, the manager may ask the

member of staff to take reasonable steps to correct the issue. If the staff member needs to leave site to change, the pay and working time implications will be handled in accordance with contract, HR guidance and employment law principles. Managers must not use this policy in a punitive or humiliating way.

Repeated or serious non-compliance may be managed under the relevant HR, conduct or disciplinary procedures, including (*HRP2 Belmont College Employee Handbook*). Any formal action must be evidence-based, proportionate, consistent and free from discrimination. Staff may raise concerns about unfair application of this policy through the appropriate HR, grievance, whistleblowing or complaints route, including (*QGP8 Belmont College Whistleblowing and Public Concern Policy*) where the concern is in the public interest.

15. Governance and Committee Implementation Framework

Implementation of this policy is embedded within Belmont College’s governance, HR, quality assurance, safeguarding, equality and risk management arrangements. The purpose of the governance framework is to ensure that dress code expectations are not applied informally or inconsistently, but are monitored through appropriate leadership, evidence and review.

The implementation model is: communicate expectations clearly; apply them consistently; consider equality and reasonable adjustment; resolve concerns supportively wherever possible; record and escalate repeated or material concerns; monitor themes through relevant committees; and review the policy annually or earlier where required.

| Committee / Body | How it implements this policy |
|--------------------------|--|
| Board of Directors | Retains ultimate oversight of institutional governance, staff conduct, equality compliance, student protection, risk and public confidence. Approves this policy and receives assurance on material risks or themes. |
| Audit and Risk Committee | Reviews legal, operational, health and safety, data protection, reputational and compliance risks associated with policy implementation. |
| Academic Committee | Maintains academic oversight where staff professionalism, teaching practice, partnership delivery or the learning environment affect academic quality and student confidence. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Senior Management Committee | Coordinates operational implementation, management guidance, HR escalation, resources and action closure where issues affect professionalism, safety or the student experience. |
| Quality Committee | Monitors impact on academic quality, student experience, public information, student feedback, complaints themes and policy implementation within quality assurance activity. |
| Learning and Teaching Committee | Reviews professional expectations in teaching, learning, online delivery, inclusive practice, staff development and student-facing academic activity. |
| Recruitment, Admissions and Registry Committee | Monitors professional presentation in applicant-facing activity, open days, interviews, induction and public-facing administrative processes. |
| Student Staff Committee | Provides a student voice route for feedback on professionalism, inclusivity, safety, accessibility and the learning environment, and escalates themes for action. |

16. Roles and Responsibilities

| Role | Responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Board of Directors | Retains ultimate governance oversight of staff professionalism, equality compliance, student protection, institutional risk and public confidence. |
| Chief Executive Officer (CEO) | Holds executive accountability for ensuring that the policy supports institutional professionalism, lawful employment practice, student protection and regulatory readiness. |
| Head of Quality and Operations | Coordinates policy review, quality assurance alignment, equality considerations, committee reporting and evidence of implementation. Supports managers where a dress code concern has wider implications for student experience, safeguarding, quality assurance or partnership delivery. |
| Head of Academic Programmes | Ensures teaching staff, programme coordinators, academic support staff and visiting lecturers understand professional expectations when engaging with students, delivering teaching or representing Belmont College and its academic partnerships. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Head of Professional Services | Ensures professional services teams, recruitment and admissions staff, registry staff, support staff and public-facing personnel understand and implement this policy consistently. |
| Head of IT and Human Resources | Supports fair employment practice, records management, staff guidance, digital professionalism, reasonable adjustment administration and escalation where dress or appearance issues affect HR or digital working arrangements. |
| Managers and Department Heads | Apply this policy fairly and consistently within their teams. They consider context, equality, reasonable adjustments, health and safety, safeguarding and proportionality before taking action, and seek HR or senior management advice where a matter is sensitive or repeated. |
| All Staff | Maintain a professional appearance appropriate to their role, ask for guidance where uncertain, notify managers of any adjustment or exemption request, comply with health and safety requirements, and treat colleagues and students with respect. Staff do not make inappropriate comments about another person's body, clothing, religious dress, cultural dress, gender expression or personal appearance. |
| Contractors, Visitors and External Representatives | Follow reasonable professional, safety and site requirements when working at or representing Belmont College. Contract or access arrangements may set additional requirements where necessary for safety, security or safeguarding. |

17. Training, Monitoring, Audit and Evidence

Bellmont College ensures that managers receive appropriate guidance on applying this policy fairly, professionally and lawfully. Training and briefing may cover equality and reasonable adjustments, religious and cultural dress, gender identity, health and safety, safeguarding, professional boundaries, data protection and supportive management conversations.

Monitoring will include review of staff feedback, student feedback, complaints or grievances, safeguarding concerns, equality impact, reasonable adjustment requests, HR records, risk assessments, health and safety incidents, public-facing event feedback and committee reports. Belmont College uses this evidence to identify whether the policy is working effectively and whether guidance, training or wording should be improved.

Evidence retained may include policy approval records, staff briefing records, training attendance, adjustment records, anonymised monitoring data, committee minutes, risk register entries, student feedback, HR action logs, audit findings and evidence of corrective action. Personal data will be handled confidentially and securely in accordance with *(BCP7 Belmont College General Data Protection & Regulation (GDPR) Policy)*.

18. Conclusion

Bellmont College is committed to maintaining a professional, inclusive and respectful working and learning environment. This policy supports that commitment by setting clear expectations for formal staff dress and professional appearance while ensuring that standards are applied lawfully, fairly and sensitively.

The College recognises that staff professionalism contributes to student confidence, public trust, partnership delivery, quality assurance and institutional reputation. It also recognises that dress code expectations must not become a source of discrimination, harassment, exclusion or unreasonable burden. The policy therefore balances formal presentation with equality, health and safety, safeguarding, dignity, accessibility and operational judgement.

Bellmont College continues to work within its current Liverpool Hope University partnership while preparing for possible future OfS approval and funding arrangements. Any future changes to governance, operational processes or partnership requirements will be managed transparently and proportionately, with staff supported and students' interests protected.

| Bellmont College Staff Formal Dress Code Policy | | | | | |
|--|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Version | Date | Author(s) | Amendments | Approved by | Next review |
| 1 | June 2025 | Head of Quality and Operations | New Document | Board of Governors | June 2026 |
| 2 | March 2026 | Head of Quality and Operations | Revised Document | Board of Directors | March 2027 |