



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES

VERSION 3.0 (NOVEMBER 2022)

Community Engagement Guidelines for Positive Psychology Academy Students

We are delighted to welcome you into the Positive Psychology Academy (PPA) community! The Academy is an online community where you will find your learning content and be able to interact with other students (your peers) and our Education team as you progress through your course.

Please read through this document carefully as it includes a code of virtual conduct at the end that we kindly request all of our students to follow.

What is PPA?

PPA stands for the Positive Psychology Academy. It is an online learning platform for students following courses under the Positive Psychology and Autism & Neurodiversity Programmes. Its website address is: www.ppacademy.online

What is PPG?

PPG stands for the Positive Psychology Guild. This is our official name. It encompasses PPA as well as our Professional and Organisational Membership wing (for Positive Psychology Practitioners and Positive Psychology Training Organisations), the Positive Psychology Network (our communications hub), the Positive Psychology Centre, and the Positive Psychology Autism Centre.

What is Our Teaching Philosophy?

As an education provider, our teaching philosophy is based on education for all. Our students join us from all walks of life and all phases of personal and professional development. Each student matters to us; so too does the purpose behind what, why and how they want to learn.

We keep in mind the teachings of ancient Greek philosophers, who believed in questioning and reasoning, and fostering good judgment, moral virtue, and wisdom, as well as contemporary leaders, activists, educators, and philosophers who advocate for intelligence and character, and an active student-teacher dialogue.

Our aim is to empower students and give them autonomy over their own learning whilst supporting them through each stage of the process. Underpinning this philosophy is our love of learning. This has led us to create an environment where we can all flourish through the desire to learn, share, and apply what we are learning in our everyday lives and work.

Key Terms

What is a Student?

A student is an individual enrolled in any of PPG's courses that are delivered via the Academy platform. We also refer to students as "adult learners", "trainees" during practitioner training, and "researchers" during research studies.

What is a Student Mentor?

A student mentor is someone who is currently enrolled on a PPA course, has reached an advanced level of study, and is voluntarily supporting other students through earlier stages of their course on request and with Academy permission.

What is a Tutor, Trainer, and Supervisor?

A tutor is a member of the PPA team who is available for support and guidance during your academic studies and assignments. You will also encounter trainers and supervisors who will support and guide you through practitioner training and research projects. Trainers will have professional experience in their field of practice while supervisors will have Masters degree or PhD research experience.

What is a Lecturer?

A lecturer is a member of the PPA team or an individual invited by PPG to deliver PPA webinars. Their role is to enrich thinking around the course subjects. They will hold a Masters degree or PhD in a relevant topic and will be actively engaged in postgraduate, doctoral, or postdoctoral research.

What is an Assessor?

An assessor is a member of the PPA team who assesses, marks, and gives formal feedback on assignments submitted by our students. They do this according to our Student Assessment Strategy and Guidance.

What is a Course Coordinator?

A course coordinator is a member of the PPA team who creates, develops, and/or oversees the delivery of courses. They also oversee course administration and enquiries and may perform other roles such as tutor, trainer, or supervisor. You will likely have encountered a course coordinator during your enquiry phase.

What is a Community Member?

A community member is anyone who possesses a private login and user profile on the Academy, and/or attends online community events (with or without having login details to the Academy). They may be a student, student mentor, tutor, lecturer, assessor, or course coordinator. The community is the online space where members connect - this includes the Academy website and online events (e.g. webinars) that typically take place via Zoom. All community members are expected to follow the Community Engagement Guidelines.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I connect with others on the Academy?

The Academy is a space to share thoughts and ideas with other students. You may connect with your peers via the 'follow' or 'connect' button on the list of members. You may also privately message other members on the Academy, or tag them in an update status post. Please see the PPA Navigation Guide for further details. This is shared during Academy enrolment.

What type of peer support can I find on the Academy?

Peer exchange and support is an important part of learning. Some of you will be engaging in group-based tutoring and training that is timed to a course delivery schedule. Others may be following a self-paced course with one-to-one tutor or trainer or supervisor support. All courses are linked to online study groups within the Academy. You will be added to your respective group during enrolment. We encourage you to look first for peer connections in your group. If you are struggling to find a connection, please let your tutor, trainer, or supervisor know as they may be able to link you up with another student.

What if I do not want to socially engage on the Academy?

There may be times when you do not want to socially engage with other students, or you are trying to spend more time offline (e.g. to support your wellbeing). In such cases, please make sure you are in contact with your tutor and feeling engaged and motivated in your course.

How do I find out about Academy events?

During your course enrolment, your email will have been added to the Academy's monthly newsletter. Please make sure this newsletter isn't diverted to spam in your inbox. It is usually released during the first half of the month and contains all the information you need on upcoming events and how to sign up. You will also receive a course schedule during enrolment if you are on a group-based course. Updates will also be shared in your online study group.

Are Academy events recorded?

Most of our group-based learning and training courses are not recorded as live participation is required for certification. Some courses (e.g. CPD) are recorded for student learning purposes. You will be told if an event is to be recorded. The Zoom platform also informs you of this. Please note PPG owns the intellectual property rights to all recorded events. While we encourage you to keep your camera on and participate during a recording, it is also your choice if you do.

How and when do I contact my tutor or trainer or supervisor?

Please contact your tutor or trainer via email for topics related to your learning such as assignment support. They are there to support your learning journey via email and Zoom video or audio calls. While they may be available earlier on request, we kindly ask you to plan ahead and schedule tutor calls 2 weeks in advance of your desired timeframe. For email responses, they will respond to you at the earliest opportunity. Please allow them a few days to respond particularly as some may be working part-time.

What is tutor or trainer or supervisor feedback and when do I ask for it?

Tutor or trainer or supervisor feedback relates to your assignment planning and drafts. Please let your tutor or trainer or supervisor know when you start planning your assignment. Please share your assignment title (if you have chosen it yourself) and your assignment outline to check you are on track. You may submit assignment drafts for general feedback. On some courses, deadlines are given for draft feedback and submission. On other courses, you will set these within a study plan that your tutor, trainer, or supervisor signs off on.

Please note that your tutor, trainer, or supervisor cannot give you the "right" answers, nor is this exchange a form of assessment. The nature of this exchange is designed to support your critical thinking and reflection process. It is also to check you have understood the objective of the assignment.

How do I submit my assignments and move onto the next unit?

Assignments should be uploaded and submitted on the designated section of your Academy course. The deadline for submission is the 27th day of each month just before midnight (UK). The expected turnaround for marking is 4-8 weeks and occasionally up to 12 weeks during busy periods. You will find instructions on assignment submission on your course pages.

Whom do I contact if I have a need or concern?

If your need or concern is related to how to use or access the Academy and its features (e.g. course content, unit support groups, private study groups, student discussion threads, assignment uploads), or course engagement (e.g. assignment marking, specific learning needs such as dyslexia, autism, or ADHD, or certification dates), please contact your tutor, trainer, or supervisor.

If your need or concern is related to course administration or finance, or you wish to submit a complaint or offer feedback on your course or community engagement experience, please contact the Academy Director (Claire Higgins) at: claire@ppnetwork.org

Academy Code of Conduct

A Place to Flourish

The Academy should be a virtual space where students can flourish. Our aim is to provide a positive space that is psychologically safe and welcoming to all.

Respectful Communications

We do not tolerate foul language, bullying, harassment, intimidation, or aggression. If you feel that you have encountered such behaviour, please report the incident as soon as you are able to the Academy Director.

Diversity & Inclusion

We also do not tolerate discrimination of any kind. This includes discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, religion, age, and neurodiversity. If you feel you have been discriminated against, please report this incident as soon as you are able to the Academy Director.

Commercial Intentions

The advertising or selling of products or soliciting of services is not permitted under any circumstances. In the event of such posts, you may be contacted by the Academy Director and asked kindly to remove the post.

Intellectual Property

All learning material is the intellectual property of the Positive Psychology Guild. You may not share any of your learning content with students who are not enrolled on your course or people beyond the Academy (i.e. a third party).

As a student member of the Academy, we request that you:

- Communicate with care and respect for others;
- Be open to opinions and beliefs that may differ from your own;
- Respect diversity, neurodiversity, and differences (e.g. age, faith, gender);
- Not advertise or solicit services under any circumstances;
- Not share your course learning material with a third party.

If you have any questions about this code of conduct and what is expected of you, or you have suggestions for its development or improvement, please contact the Academy Director.

Appendix 1

Bi-Annual Review 1 - Lodging Concerns & Complaints (February 2022 - updated in November 2022 with new contact points)

Towards the end of 2021, the Academy team conducted the first bi-annual review of the Community Engagement Guidelines and its Code of Conduct. This was a participatory process where students were invited to participate by reviewing the guidelines and conduct, and offering their perspectives on how the Academy can continue to be an inclusive and supportive community for all.

As a result of this process, a procedure for lodging concerns and complaints was established. This procedure applies to all Academy community members. The following Q&A offers guidance on this procedure and which steps to take if you wish to lodge a concern or complaint.

What should I do if I wish to express a personal concern or complaint that the Code of Conduct has not been respected?

Please contact our Academy Director, Claire Higgins (claire@ppnetwork.org). The second point of contact is your tutor, trainer, or supervisor. Please email one or both of them with your concern at the earliest opportunity.

How will you respond if I submit a concern or complaint?

Within the Academy, our intention is to practice and embody compassion, respect and humanity towards all of our Academy members, regardless of their age, gender, gender pronouns, ethnicity or cultural background. If a community member causes upset or distress to another student, we will do our utmost to **correct** the issue at the time of the event if witnessed, or via feedback.

If brought to our attention that our guidelines have not been followed, we will seek to **support** the community member/s involved. Our first step will be to listen, understand, and then look for solutions by working with the community member/s to reach an acceptable outcome. We may offer or request a private Zoom call to check on wellbeing, and work with the member/s involved to seek an appropriate resolution through reflection and action.

We hope that by putting these measures in place, any issues can be resolved but if a community member persistently causes distress and upset, further action will be taken. This may be in the form of a written warning and/or result in the student being asked to leave their course and the Academy. Our overall aim is to **protect** the community and this would be a very last resort.