



**Northumbria
University
NEWCASTLE**

Student Unacceptable Behaviours Policy

Overview

Northumbria University seeks to provide a working environment where students can flourish academically and personally. We aspire to a community that is welcoming, respectful and free from bullying, discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. Our [Student Charter](#) and [Values and Behaviours](#) set out agreed standards of behaviour and expectations. We do not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, examples of which include:

- Unwelcome remarks, gestures, or physical contact
- Deliberately ignoring or excluding others
- Offensive jokes or comments (explicit or by innuendo)
- Display or circulation of offensive words, pictures, or other materials
- Verbal abuse or threats
- Physical abuse or violence of any nature
- Sexual misconduct
- Hate crime
- Coercive Control

This policy includes but is not limited to, behaviours relating to the protected characteristics within the [Equality Act 2010](#).

If a student experiences or witnesses unacceptable behaviour involving any person connected to their studies at Northumbria, they are strongly encouraged to seek support and report it. For the avoidance of doubt, any person includes students, University staff and third parties such as partners, agency workers, visitors and consultants.

The University is committed to ensuring that all concerns raised are taken seriously and dealt with thoroughly and sensitively. If at any point another University policy is considered more appropriate, concerns may be re-routed through discussion with those involved.

Resolve It

If any student experiences unacceptable behaviour, they should get support quickly to help them to deal with the immediate situation. Next, they need to think through their options in order that the concern can be resolved as early as possible. They can consider talking with:

- A person they know and trust, this might be a friend, fellow student, colleague, or family member
- A tutor or a member of their academic support team
- The Students' Union
- A member of our Student Life and Wellbeing Team
- University 24/7 Security Team

Sometimes, it may be possible to resolve the matter informally. For example, if the other person is not aware that their behaviour has caused offence or concern, or their actions or words have taken on a meaning they did not intend an informal discussion may help to resolve the situation quickly. Our Student Life and Wellbeing Team or the Academic support

team can advise on the range of support available to help resolve concerns informally. This could include mediation.

Report It

If it is not possible, or it is not appropriate, to resolve the situation informally students can report concerns using the [online reporting tool](#). Alternatively, students can talk with their programme team, the Students' Union, our Security Service or Student Life and Wellbeing who will report it on the student's behalf. Students can also use our [SafeZone app](#) or their [Student Portal](#).

Students will be asked to provide information about what happened, the impact and, whether it has affected anyone else, and if there are any witnesses. Once they have submitted the report, the University Specialist Support Adviser will contact them to discuss the information provided and next steps.

Reports of unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with confidentially to the maximum extent possible and we will respect students right to choose how they want to take the situation forward. If the matter is very serious however, for example there is someone else at risk, the University may take further action.

Students can submit a report anonymously if they wish. The University will record these concerns and explore the matter as far as possible, while the ability to act may be limited.

Formal Resolution Processes

The University may take disciplinary against a student if there is a complaint from anyone (from either within or outside the University community) that they may have displayed behaviour which the University judges amounts to misconduct as defined in this student [Handbook of Regulations](#) (Taught) and (Research).

Students on professional programmes should note that 'Misconduct' of any form may have implications for their fitness to practise (see Section 9 of the 'Handbook of Student Regulations' (Taught)).

Where the case is more complex and concerns have arisen about the risk that the individual or other members of the University Community may be exposed to, a case conference will be convened (Appendix C of the Handbook of Student Regulations) and any report will be considered in line with the Precautionary Action on the Basis of Duty of Care Procedures (Section 17 of the Handbook of Student Regulations).

If the allegation is against a student, the matter will be considered in line with the Student Complaint Procedure (Section 3 of the Handbook of Student Regulations). If the allegation is against a member of staff, the report will be considered in line with the Student Complaint Procedure (Section 10 of the Handbook of Student Regulations (Taught) and (Section 3 of the Handbook of Student Regulations (Research)).

If the incident constitutes a criminal offence

Some incidents, for example sexual assault or violence, might constitute a criminal offence. Where appropriate, the University investigation may be postponed pending the outcome of the Police investigation and the University may also exceptionally inform the Police the purposes of protecting the victim and / or for the prevention of further serious offences.

Malicious or vexatious allegations and false statements

Malicious or vexatious allegations and false statements will not be tolerated by the University and shall be considered misconduct by the complainant, and disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with Section 3 of the '[Handbook of Student Regulations](#)' (Student Disciplinary Procedure) and / or Section 9 of the 'Handbook of Student Regulations (Taught)' (Student Fitness to Practice Procedures).

University use of data and reporting

Anonymised data relating to reports of unacceptable behaviour will be collated and reported via the appropriate University Committee and required External bodies on a regular basis.