Mutual Respect Policy
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Contents

1. Statement of policy.................................................................................................................. 2
2. Purpose of the policy................................................................................................................. 3
3. Who is this policy for? ............................................................................................................ 3
4. Roles and responsibilities....................................................................................................... 4
5. What constitutes inappropriate behaviour? ............................................................................... 5
6. Code of Behaviour .................................................................................................................. 7
7. What to do when you have experienced inappropriate behaviour ........................................ 9
   Informal resolution.................................................................................................................... 10
   Mediation and facilitated conversations.................................................................................. 11
   Formal resolution...................................................................................................................... 11
   Reporting.................................................................................................................................. 12
   Raising alleged inappropriate behaviour without making a complaint ............................. 12
8. What to do when you are the subject of concerns being raised ............................................. 13
9. What happens if you have behaved inappropriately .............................................................. 13
10. How we will support you...................................................................................................... 14
    Support services.................................................................................................................... 14
    Confidentiality........................................................................................................................ 15
    Victimisation.......................................................................................................................... 15
    Malicious or vexatious complaints......................................................................................... 16
11. Training and development opportunities .............................................................................. 16
12. How to raise complaints not directly covered by this policy ............................................... 17
13. Associated policies and statements ..................................................................................... 17
14. Review.................................................................................................................................. 18
1. Statement of policy

1.1. The University is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, welcoming and inclusive community which nurtures a culture of mutual respect and courtesy. **There is no place for any form of bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or victimisation in our community** and each of us is responsible for the way we interact with and treat others.

1.2. **Bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct and victimisation are referenced collectively throughout this policy as “inappropriate behaviour”** and wherever this term is used in the policy, it refers to the definitions of these behaviours in section 5 (What constitutes inappropriate behaviour?). The negative actions included in section 6 (Code of Behaviour) also illustrate the different ways in which inappropriate behaviour may be demonstrated within our community.

1.3. **The University will take a zero tolerance approach to inappropriate behaviour**, whether by a University employee or worker, a visitor to the University, a third party such as a supplier, or a member of the public. This means that allegations of inappropriate behaviour should always be taken seriously, and **action taken to stop inappropriate behaviour as quickly as possible**, including the use of disciplinary processes where necessary and where such behaviour is proven.

1.4. University staff and workers should be able to informally disclose or formally report incidents without fear of repercussion and trust the processes that are in place to address their concerns. The University will not tolerate the victimisation of an individual for raising concerns in good faith or supporting someone to raise such concerns.

1.5. **Nothing in this policy may undermine or conflict in any way with the University’s commitment to freedom of thought and expression, as stated in the University’s Statement on Freedom of Speech.** This policy actively supports the University’s commitment to academic freedom and freedom of thought and expression. Our community must be one in which we are all enabled to question and test received wisdom, express new ideas and explore controversial or unpopular topics and opinions within the law. Maintaining a culture of mutual respect at the University must not close off debate and topics that some may find disagreeable, distasteful or even offensive, and we are expected to be tolerant of the views and opinions of others in line with the principles of the University’s Statement on Freedom of Speech. It does mean, however, that we should treat one another courteously, professionally and with recognition of the individual behind the content when the debate and discussion of those issues are robust and challenging. By fostering a culture of mutual respect in the workplace, we strengthen academic freedom and freedom of
thought and expression by ensuring that all voices can be heard clearly and all views discussed responsibly.

2. Purpose of the policy

2.1. The policy aims to prevent inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. In support of this aim, the policy:

- sets out the expected behaviour from University employees and workers to ensure a common understanding of how everyone should behave towards one another
- ensures that staff are able to disclose inappropriate behaviour if it does occur and are supported in the process of resolving it
- promotes the early resolution of inappropriate behaviour wherever possible and appropriate, to prevent the psychological, health, and work-related problems such behaviour can cause
- refers to what actions can be taken through the informal and formal resolution processes set out in the University’s grievance policies if this policy’s principles are not observed.

2.2. This policy supports the University in its duty to provide a safe environment in which to work under the Health and Safety at Work Act. Experiencing inappropriate behaviour often impacts an individual’s physical and mental health and can also affect those who witness it.

2.3. This policy replaces the University’s Dignity at Work policy and the associated procedures under that policy. It is not contractual and may be amended from time to time, as necessary, in light of any changes in legislation or operational requirements.

3. Who is this policy for?

3.1. This policy applies to all University employees and workers.

3.2. This policy does not apply to employees and workers solely engaged by the Colleges, who should refer to their College’s policies and procedures on bullying, harassment and other inappropriate behaviour. College employees and workers are expected, however, to behave in a manner that is consistent with the Code of Behaviour set out in section 6 of this policy if undertaking their work or services specifically in the University environment.

3.3. Academic visitors, University volunteers, retired staff, suppliers and others will be expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with the Code of Behaviour set out in section 6 of this policy.
3.4. Information about how to make complaints that fall outside of the scope of this policy is included in section 12 (How to raise complaints not directly covered by this policy).

4. **Roles and responsibilities**

4.1. **All staff and workers** have a responsibility to maintain a working environment where everyone is treated with mutual respect and courtesy by acting in line with the University’s Code of Behaviour set out in section 6 of this policy. All staff and workers also have a responsibility for completing the relevant mandatory training courses set out in section 11 (Training and development opportunities) and being informed about issues around inequality and how these issues can impact the treatment of others.

4.2. **All those responsible for leading, managing and supervising people** are in a position of trust and have additional responsibilities in the application of the Code of Behaviour in their area, which include:

- Setting a positive personal model of behaviour
- Ensuring standards in the Code are established, communicated and understood and that regular visitors to their area have access to the Code
- Taking appropriate action at the earliest opportunity to manage non-compliance with the Code, and to encourage a culture of early conflict resolution
- Ensuring their staff are aware of and able to undertake the relevant mandatory training courses set out in section 11 (Training and development opportunities).
- Ensuring their staff are aware of and know how to report inappropriate behaviour through the relevant policies/procedures (link to Report + Support when live)

4.3. **Staff responsible for HR in their area** are responsible for providing advice to those alleging they have experienced inappropriate behaviour, those who are alleged to have behaved inappropriately and those supporting both informal and formal resolution processes.

4.4. **Staff responsible for HR in their area** and the HR Schools Team are responsible for providing advice and support to institutions.

4.5. **Mutual Respect Contacts** are a group of trained volunteers from across the University responsible for providing support to those alleging they have experienced inappropriate behaviour and those who are alleged to have behaved inappropriately.
5. **What constitutes inappropriate behaviour?**

5.1. All University employees and workers are expected to **behave professionally and appropriately and have the right to expect professional and appropriate behaviour** from others. Inappropriate behaviour for the purposes of this Policy means **bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct and victimisation**.

5.2. **Behaviour that is perceived by one individual as inappropriate may not necessarily be perceived in the same way by another.** When deciding whether behaviour is inappropriate, factors that will be taken into consideration include the impact on the individual and whether that impact or effect is reasonable in the circumstances, the specific context, the standards set out in the **Code of Behaviour**, and the motive or intent of the individual demonstrating the behaviour. The University’s policy on Freedom of Speech protects the right to express or describe views within the law that others may find offensive; this will also be taken into consideration where relevant.

5.3. Inappropriate behaviour may:

- be perpetrated by an individual or a group
- be intentional or unintentional
- take place either on or off University property, via University IT systems, or online via email, the internet or social media
- range from overt and easy to recognise one-off instances, to numerous, small remarks and acts sending denigrating messages to the recipient, linked to an individual’s characteristics or status (known as microaggressions)

5.4. Although the terms are often used interchangeably, the terms “bullying” and “harassment” describe different types of behaviour. **Bullying** is unwanted behaviour from a person or group that is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting to the recipient and often involves the misuse of power. Bullying can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority but can include both personal strength, status and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation. Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. Such behaviour is considered unacceptable in the workplace by the Health and Safety Executive.

Examples of bullying can include:

- Spreading a false rumour about a colleague
- Consistently giving heavier workloads to one particular individual in a team you supervise
- Cutting off or preventing a colleague from reasonably expressing their views in a meeting
- Always being prevented from joining social events by your team
5.5. **Harassment** is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct that has the purpose or reasonable effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment can be a single incident or repeated behaviour and can include imagery, graffiti, gestures, mimicry, jokes, pranks, and physical behaviour that affects the recipient. It can also include treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to such behaviour in the past.

5.5.1. **Unlawful harassment** under the Equality Act 2010 may be related to the following protected characteristics: **age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation**.

Examples of harassment relating to protected characteristics can include:

- Racist behaviour, such as purposefully touching the hair of a Black colleague without invitation
- Using derogatory terms in connection with a team member’s age
- Putting down a colleague because of their disability
- Disclosing a colleague’s transgender status without their permission

5.5.2. **Unlawful harassment** under the Equality Act 2010 can also be conduct of a sexual nature. **Sexual harassment** is a form of **sexual misconduct**, an umbrella term that describes all types of unwanted and unpermitted behaviour of a sexual nature including **sexual abuse**. The intention of this type of harassment is to violate the recipient’s dignity or create an environment that is intimidating, humiliating or offensive for the recipient. It can happen to and be demonstrated by women, men and people of any gender or sexual orientation.

Examples of sexual harassment and misconduct can include:

- Emailing, texting or messaging sexual content or making sexually offensive jokes to your team, unless relevant to course content or academic debate
- Flirting, gesturing or making sexual remarks about a colleague’s body, clothing or appearance
- Touching a colleague against their will, such as hugging them
- Sexual assault or rape

5.6. **Discrimination** is when the recipient is treated unfairly or less favourably because of the following protected characteristic: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. This behaviour is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010.

Examples of discrimination can include:

- Not offering a promotion to an individual because they are a woman and offering it to a less qualified man instead
• Excluding a colleague from team social events specifically because they are close friends with a LGBT person
• Drawing inferences about an applicant’s religion because of their name or determining a candidate would not “fit” the culture of a team because they are Black, and rejecting that individual for those reasons

5.7. **Victimisation** occurs when a person is subject to a detriment because they made a complaint of discrimination or provided evidence or information in connection with a complaint of discrimination or someone believes that they have done so or may do so.

6. **Code of Behaviour**

6.1. In an environment that encourages and celebrates freedom of thought and expression, it is vital that our behaviour towards one another remains courteous and professional. The following Code, developed in conjunction with the Trade Unions and representatives across the University, sets out the University’s expectations around how we should behave and not behave towards other members of our community.

The negative actions listed in the Code below are based on actual accounts of inappropriate behaviour shared by respondents to recent University surveys and show how the inappropriate behaviours defined in section 5 may be demonstrated within our community. Understanding the ways in which inappropriate behaviour may be demonstrated can help each of us appreciate the impact of the way we behave, and set a positive personal model of behaviour.

6.2. The Code of Behaviour

We are each individually responsible for our own actions and for recognising the impact of our behaviour on others. This Code is not exhaustive but models both the positive behaviour expected of us in our interactions with one another and the behaviours we should avoid.

Acknowledging the University’s core values of freedom of thought and expression and freedom from discrimination, we should always strive to:

• Foster a trusting environment which enables honest and supportive working and studying conditions
• Recognise that our actions can impact others and show courtesy and consideration in our interactions with others, even if we disagree with their views
• Discuss views that others may find disagreeable or distasteful, in a constructive and lawful way, in line with the [University Statement on Freedom of Speech](#)
• Treat each other fairly and without bias
• Recognise and acknowledge the contribution of others to our work
• Honour the need for confidentiality when the nature of our work requires it
• Maintain appropriate and professional relationships with all members of the University
• Promote a culture where colleagues can speak out about inappropriate behaviour
• Support our colleagues experiencing inappropriate behaviour by intervening, speaking out and helping where we feel able.

In order to maintain a community of mutual respect, courtesy, trust and inclusion, we should strive never to bully, harass, discriminate, victimise or behave in a way that can be construed as sexual misconduct, by avoiding such behaviour as:

• Humiliating others by shouting at them, either publicly or privately
• Talking down to, belittling, gratuitously interrupting or preventing others from speaking
• Directing inappropriate language, such as swearing, towards others or making degrading comments about individuals or groups of individuals
• Making inappropriate derogatory remarks about a colleague’s performance in public, whether directly (such as in a meeting) or indirectly (for example, by needlessly copying people into an email)
• Maliciously ignoring individuals or groups of individuals, or inhibiting the ability of others to perform their roles by withholding information or excluding them from necessary meetings and discussion
• Imposing overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision or management
• Undermining the reputation of another through malicious rumours or false allegations
• Making racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist, or ageist jokes, remarks or microaggressions, which may demean or discriminate independently of our intentions
• Mocking, mimicking or belittling a colleague, student or visitor because we perceive them as different to us, or using this difference as a reason to treat them unfairly.
• Behaving in a controlling or coercive way, such as pressurising others to subscribe to a particular political or religious belief
• Circulating or displaying any type of communication on any form of media that could reasonably be perceived as offensive, intimidating or degrading, including pornographic material, unless relevant for the direct purpose of academic debate or teaching or otherwise protected by the University Statement on Freedom of Speech.
• Making unwelcome and unpermitted sexual advances, suggestive behaviour or touching someone against their will, even if we perceive it as harmless
• Retaliating to allegations of inappropriate behaviour, including threatening those who have made the allegations, providing unfair or misleading references, or blocking access to career development opportunities.

7. What to do when you have experienced inappropriate behaviour

7.1. Allegations should always be taken seriously, and action taken as quickly as possible to stop inappropriate behaviour. This section summarises the procedures available in the University’s grievance policies to do this and explains the direct support available to individuals to address inappropriate behaviour. It also explains the options to report alleged inappropriate behaviour through the University’s Report + Support site.

7.2. Both informal and formal options are available in the University’s grievance policies to resolve issues.

• **Informal approaches** are intended to help resolve one-off or minor incidents of inappropriate behaviour, to stop such behaviour early and to prevent it escalating. They include:
  - a direct informal resolution process
  - an informal resolution process with support
  - mediation and facilitated conversations

  This type of collaborative approach has been found to be the most effective way of resolving conflict, tackling inappropriate behaviour and minimising any negative impact on the individuals involved.

• **Formal grievances** are more appropriate for serious instances or repeated patterns of inappropriate behaviour where previous informal attempts may have failed.

7.3. When considering which option to use, individuals are encouraged to speak in the first instance with any of the following:

• the person responsible for HR in their area or local HR team
• their line manager (or equivalent)
• their central HR Schools Team
• a Mutual Respect Contact
• a trade union representative.

Individuals may also discuss the matter and any guidance received on options for resolution with a colleague in confidence when considering how to proceed.

7.4. *Individuals are encouraged to keep a record of the nature and frequency of the alleged inappropriate behaviour.* This is to support them in raising their
concerns and help the other party understand better the issues raised during the course of these discussions and the impact they have had on the complainant.

7.5. If, through the course of raising an issue for resolution, it is identified that the nature of any complaint is instead a matter for a College, the University may refer the issue to the relevant College to be addressed under its policies and procedures.

7.6. If, through the course of raising an issue for resolution, it is identified that the nature of any complaint is instead a College matter, the University may refer the issue to the relevant College to be addressed under its policies and procedures.

7.7. Informal resolution

7.7.1. An individual wishing to resolve issues informally should use the informal procedure set out in the grievance policy relevant to their staff category as set out in section 13 (Associated policies and statements). There are normally both a direct resolution process and a supported informal resolution process set out in these policies.

7.7.2. A direct informal resolution process is where the individual experiencing the behaviour directly addresses the issue themselves. It is likely to be most effective when done in the early stages of experiencing the behaviour and in a constructive way, including specific examples of the unwanted behaviour, explaining why this made the individual feel uncomfortable or gave distress, and what the individual feels would resolve the issue.

7.7.3. Support is also available to help the individual prepare what they want to say from any of the following:

- the person responsible for HR in their area or local HR team
- their line manager (or equivalent)
- their central HR Schools Team
- a Mutual Respect Contact
- a trade union representative.

7.7.4. The individual raising the concerns may wish to try informal resolution but, understandably, feel unable or reluctant to directly approach the other party on their own. In an informal resolution process with support, the individual may ask for support to achieve an informal resolution.

This approach can particularly help when addressing issues concerning a line manager or a more senior colleague and help can be requested from:

- their line manager (or equivalent)
- the person responsible for HR in their area or their local HR team
- their HR Schools Team
the Head of Institution

As part of this process, the supporting person can meet directly with the individual reported to have demonstrated the inappropriate behaviour to discuss what has happened and how to resolve it, or they can be part of any meeting between both parties. Where they are standing in for the individual raising the concerns, they provide regular updates on progress back to the individual. This approach can particularly help when addressing issues concerning a line manager or a more senior colleague.

7.8. Mediation and facilitated conversations

7.8.1. It may be appropriate for the matter to be dealt with by way of mediation, depending on the nature of the issue. Mediation is a well-established, confidential process for resolving issues between individuals, involving two impartial mediators helping those involved find and agree their own solutions.

7.8.2. Mediation can be used at any time as a means of informal resolution, including before or after an informal or formal process. The mediation process normally takes around a day, including a preliminary meeting with each party. Further information about this option is available from the University Mediation Service.

7.8.3. The Mediation Service is also able to offer a shorter facilitated conversation between the two parties, involving an impartial facilitator. After an initial meeting with each party, the facilitator supports both parties in a 2 – 3 hour meeting where they can discuss the issue and find a way forward that works for them. This option may be preferable for more minor issues or conflict.

7.8.4. Provided both parties wish to participate, a request for mediation or a facilitated conversation can be made to the Mediation Service directly by the parties themselves or through a referral from the Line Manager, the person or team responsible for HR in the area, or the HR Schools Team.

7.8.5. Both mediation and facilitated conversations are voluntary, confidential and either party can withdraw from the process at any time.

7.9. Formal resolution

7.9.1. There will be instances of inappropriate behaviour where an informal resolution process is not successful or is simply not appropriate due to the nature of the allegations. In these situations, the individual experiencing the inappropriate behaviour should raise a complaint using the formal process set out in the relevant staff grievance procedure as listed in section 13 (Associated policies and statements).

7.9.2. No member of staff is expected to use the informal route before utilising the option of a formal grievance.
7.9.3. Where the member of staff wishing to raise a formal complaint is under the age of 18 or is deemed to be an “adult at risk”, please refer to the Children and Adults at Risk Safeguarding policy.

7.10. Reporting

7.10.1. As well as or instead of using the informal and formal complaint processes available, staff, students and visitors of the University can report any type of alleged bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation using the University’s Report + Support site (hyperlink to be inserted at launch).

7.10.2. This real-time reporting site is simple to use, confidential and secure. Reports can be made on either an anonymous basis or with the reporting individual’s identity disclosed. Reports with the identity disclosed will be passed confidentially to an appropriate colleague for action and resolution. Anonymous reports will be regularly reviewed and used for more general action, such as enabling institutions within the University to identify and target areas needing further training, or initiating a University-instigated investigation. Further details about these options are available at Report + Support (hyperlink to be inserted at launch).

7.10.3. As well as providing a platform for reporting, the Report + Support site also helps those reporting find the most appropriate source of help and support for their situation. Further details of some of these sources of support are detailed in section 10 (How we will support you).

7.11. Raising alleged inappropriate behaviour without making a complaint

7.11.1. It is the aim of this policy to ensure all staff feel able to disclose alleged inappropriate behaviour so that it can be resolved. If an individual reports the behaviour informally but does not feel able to raise a complaint, it is the responsibility of the colleague approached with the disclosure to encourage that individual to reconsider this and explore what support might help reassure them.

7.11.2. If this does not change the decision of the individual, the colleague approached will:

- Discuss ideas for how the individual can respond to the behaviour if it happens again
- Encourage the individual to talk to them again after any future repetition of the behaviour
- Make the individual aware that they may have to take action if the nature of what is disclosed invokes the University’s duty of care, particularly if the reported behaviour is impacting the individual’s mental or physical wellbeing
• Suggest they may wish to report the concern anonymously on the Report + Support site, so that possible patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified if reported by multiple individuals.
• Provide information on University support services.

8. What to do when you are the subject of concerns being raised

8.1. It can be a disconcerting and upsetting experience for an individual to be approached and told that their behaviour could be construed as inappropriate behaviour. If this is done through an informal process, they should be prepared to listen patiently and calmly and allow the member of staff (or the person supporting them in the process) to express their concerns. If it is possible, they should also try to remedy the situation and allow a positive working relationship to be resumed. The individual should also keep a note of what was discussed and, if appropriate, agreed.

8.2. The individual who is the subject of the complaint should also be able to give an account of what happened as part of any informal and formal resolution processes. They can also speak with any of the following for general guidance or to discuss any specific questions about the resolution process:

• their line manager (or equivalent)
• the person or team responsible for HR in their area
• their central HR Schools Team
• a Mutual Respect Contact
• a trade union representative.

Individuals may also discuss the matter and any guidance or information received in connection with the resolution process with a colleague in confidence.

8.3. The support services set out in section 10 are also available to provide support for individuals who are the subject of a complaint.

9. What happens if you have behaved inappropriately

9.1. While this policy emphasises the value of an early, informal resolution process, there will be situations that can only be resolved through a formal grievance. Where a formal grievance is brought and upheld against an individual and the nature of the inappropriate behaviour warrants it, a separate procedure under the relevant disciplinary policy will be undertaken by the University. This may result in a formal warning being issued to the person demonstrating the inappropriate behaviour or, in the case of serious or sustained misconduct, the
termination of employment. Training or other interventions may also be recommended.

9.2. Additionally, where the University has become aware of concerns or complaints of inappropriate behaviour, which may not have been formally reported but give rise to sufficient cause for concern, the University may choose to conduct an investigation to understand the behaviours in more detail and identify and target appropriate support and interventions.

9.3. A University-instigated investigation is intended to ensure effective resolution of concerns raised and prevention of future inappropriate behaviours. The investigation will involve agreed terms of reference with the relevant Institution and interviews with staff (and, if appropriate, students) to ascertain the key concerns and possible solutions. If the findings indicate, this may lead to a disciplinary process under the relevant procedure.

9.4. The University may be required to provide information to grant funders around allegations and/or outcomes of investigations into complaints of inappropriate behaviour and any disciplinary sanctions which follow against staff members, although requirements vary between grant funders. This can apply to those currently in receipt of grant funding and as part of the grant application process. Grant funders are increasingly choosing to incorporate this type of provision into their grant conditions, with a view to driving positive culture change in the sector.

10. How we will support you

10.1. Support services

10.1.1. The University is committed to providing support for staff and workers affected by these issues. The following support resources are available to any staff member or worker whether they are considering raising an issue about inappropriate behaviour, actually disclosing an incident, or the subject of a complaint.

10.1.2. Confidential support can be accessed from the Mutual Respect Contacts on issues relating to bullying, harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct.

10.1.3. The University Mediation Service is available to help find a mutually acceptable resolution as part of an informal, confidential and independent process (see section 7.5 for further details).

10.1.4. Talking confidentially to a member of one of the University’s Diversity Networks may also be helpful, particularly if the inappropriate behaviour is perceived to be microaggressions, harassment or discrimination due to a protected characteristic (see sections 5.4 and 5.5).
10.1.5. Information about further sources of support is also available on the University wellbeing pages and includes an extensive list of internal and external providers. These include:

- the University Staff Counselling Service
- the University Occupational Health Service
- Togetherall (online access to mental health wellbeing resources)
- Qwell (an online counselling and wellbeing platform).

10.1.6. Trade Unions are also a source of guidance for individuals experiencing inappropriate behaviour and can directly support members in the process of resolving these issues.

10.2. Confidentiality

10.2.1. Confidentiality – and trust in that confidentiality – is critical when dealing with allegations of inappropriate behaviour. Details of the complaint (including the names of the person making the complaint and the person accused) must only be disclosed on a ‘need-to-know’ basis (for example, under the University’s duty of care). Breach of confidentiality may give rise to disciplinary action under the relevant disciplinary procedure.

10.2.2. Information about a complaint by or about an individual may be placed on their personnel file, along with a record of the outcome and any notes or other documents compiled during the process. Notes and records will be treated as confidential and be kept no longer than necessary in accordance with the data protection principles set out in the Data Protection Act 2018. This Act also gives individuals the right to request and have access to certain personal data stored about them.

10.3. Victimisation

10.3.1. The University will not tolerate any form of victimisation against an individual who has raised or supported an informal complaint, co-operated in a formal investigation, challenged inappropriate behaviour, or in each case is believed to have or is believed to be likely to take such steps. This includes behaviour targeting an individual’s career progression, such as deliberately providing unbalanced or overly negative references or blocking opportunities for that individual to participate in workshops and other development activities.

10.3.2. If a formal complaint of victimisation is made about a member of staff’s behaviour it will be fully investigated and dealt with in accordance with the relevant disciplinary procedures.
10.4. **Malicious or vexatious complaints**

10.4.1. A malicious complaint is one that is made with the intention to intimidate, to lower the reputation of, or otherwise injure or harm a colleague or manager, through knowingly providing false or misleading information or withholding information about an incident or issue.

10.4.2. A vexatious complaint is either one that is made with the sole or main intention to harass, annoy or subdue somebody, or one that is unreasonable, without foundation, frivolous, repetitive, burdensome or unwarranted.

10.4.3. If it is found that an individual has made a complaint that is malicious or vexatious, the University may instigate a disciplinary process against them. Disciplinary action will not be taken, however, where a grievance is mistaken or otherwise ill-founded but not otherwise malicious or vexatious.

11. **Training and development opportunities**

11.1. It is everyday interactions that indicate mutually respectful environments, whether in informal social situations, agreeing and allocating work, managing change, supporting development, feedback opportunities, being an active bystander or negotiating difficult conversations. All these require skills, practice and ongoing review and are needed at all stages of employment, from recruitment through to end of contact.

11.2. Personal and Professional Development provide a wide range of training and development opportunities for staff, managers and leaders to build skills that support both tackling and preventing bullying, harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct. Relevant courses include Where Do You Draw The Line?, Challenging Conversations: Bitesize (new for 2021), Race Awareness Session: Whiteness and Being an Antiracist Ally, Taking the Lead (new for Heads of Department in 2021), and the Inclusive Leadership training programme. The How to be an Active Bystander session can equip staff with the skills and confidence to challenge inappropriate behaviour and is strongly recommended.

11.3. There are also mandatory courses that need to be undertaken by all staff when they join the University and on a periodic basis afterwards. These include but are not limited to:

- Equality and Diversity Essentials (to build awareness of employment legislation in this area and set the context for expected behaviour)
- Understanding Implicit / Unconscious Bias (to build awareness of our implicit biases and understand the impact these may have on our behaviour and everyday interactions)
- Recruitment Essentials (required only if the individual is involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and students).
12. How to raise complaints not directly covered by this policy

12.1. **University employees or workers who have a complaint against a student** should contact their [HR Schools Team](#) in the first instance who will liaise with the [Office of Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals (OSCCA)](#) to agree an appropriate course of action.

12.2. **University employees or workers who have a complaint against an individual about a College matter** (whether or not the person they wish about whom they wish to complain is an employee of the University or not) should raise their complaint directly with the relevant College in the first instance through the head of department (if known), HR Manager, or Head of House. If the College disagrees that it is a College matter, it may refer the complaint to the University to be addressed under the appropriate grievance procedure or, if appropriate, inform the University about the complaint when addressed under the College’s policies and procedures.

12.3. **University employees or workers who have a complaint against any other third party** (such as contractor) or a member of the public should speak with their line manager or Departmental Administrator in the first instance. In order to address the complaint, it may be necessary to notify third parties and use their local complaints procedure or notify University Security and/or the police when complaints involve members of the public.

12.4. In circumstances where **a student has concerns about the behaviour of a University employee or worker**, these should be raised through the [Office of Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals (OSCCA)](#) complaints procedure.

12.5. **All other individuals who are not University employees or workers who have a complaint against a University employee or worker** will be advised to raise the complaint in writing with the relevant Head of Department (if known) or the Director of HR in the first instance.

13. Associated policies and statements

13.1. Links to other related University policies can be found below:

-  [University’s Statement on Freedom of Speech](#)
-  [Grievance policies](#)
  - All Assistant, Unestablished Academic and Academic-related staff (including contract research staff) should refer to the [University Grievance Policy](#)
  - All University Officers or Established members of staff should refer to [Special Ordinances under Statute C(xii)](#)
o University Clinicians (including clinical consultants, junior doctors, nurses, midwives and all allied health professionals) should refer to the separate clinical Grievance Policy
o UPS workers should refer to the complaint procedure in the University Payment System Handbook for Workers
o TES workers should refer to the complaint procedure in the Temporary Workers Handbook

- Disciplinary policies
  o All University Officers or Established members of staff, who should refer to Schedule to Statute C, Chapter III and Special Ordinances under Statute C(xiii)
  o Unestablished Academic and Academic-related Staff (including contract research staff)
  o Unestablished Assistant Staff
- Personal Relationships between Staff and Students Policy
- Employing and Working with Relatives and Related Matters
- Student Complaint Procedures
- Whistleblowing Policy

14. Review

14.1. The policy will be reviewed 12 months after the implementation date and then every 4 years.

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<th>Version</th>
<th>Summary of Amendment</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>17.05.2021</td>
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