

## **Student Behaviour Policy**

<b>Name of Policy :</b>	Student Behaviour Policy
<b>Purpose of Policy :</b>	To inform students and staff of the behaviour it expects of its students
<b>Approval for this Policy given by :</b>	Academic Board
<b>Responsibility for its update :</b>	Dean of Students and Academic Registrar
<b>Policy applies to :</b>	To all students at Staffordshire University
<b>Date of Approval :</b>	29 June 2011
<b>Proposed Date of Review :</b>	May 2012

### **1.0 Introduction**

Staffordshire University is a large community of staff and students and a microcosm of society as a whole. It is, itself, also a part of the local community in which staff and students live and work. We work, study and live alongside colleagues from all walks of life, from different educational and cultural backgrounds, from different faiths, from different countries and with varying abilities and disabilities.

Students and staff of the University, visitors and members of the community have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. The University has a firm commitment to equality of opportunity and as such will not tolerate harassment and bullying by students or any anti-social or criminal behaviour which can damage and disrupt the lives of other students, staff or other members of the community or bring the University into disrepute.

The University welcomes diversity and believes that every individual has the right to work and study in an environment which is free from discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, race, physical ability, sexual orientation or religion.

The University's Commitment to Diversity and Equality sets out a number of values which form the basis of our equal opportunity strategy:

- A spirit of co-operation and understanding between all students and staff based on mutual respect and trust
- A community that is built on tolerance and openness within high professional standards
- An environment of equality of opportunity that encourages an understanding and appreciation of the needs of others
- A commitment to dealing with oppressive behaviour, harassment or bullying
- A culture where diversity is celebrated and all students and staff are valued equally
- A culture where consideration and respect is given to members of the local community.

All students, staff and partners have responsibility to act in a way which supports and promotes these values.

Every individual is also personally liable under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 for their conduct. Certain incidents of harassment may also render individuals liable to prosecution in courts of law, under either civil or criminal legislation. The University therefore has a legal as well as moral responsibility to eradicate harassment and bullying in those areas within its control.

## **2.0 General Principles**

- 2.1 All students are expected to behave in a courteous and respectful manner to fellow students, staff and members of the outside community.
- 2.2 Poor behaviour will not be tolerated by the University and the University's Disciplinary Procedure may be invoked. Examples of breaches of discipline are attached. (Appendix 1).
- 2.3 Harassment and bullying can take a variety of different forms ranging from repeatedly ignoring a fellow student or subjecting them to unwelcome attention, to intimidation, humiliation, ridicule or offence. More extreme forms of harassment and bullying include physical threats or violence. Harassment and bullying may consist of a single incident or a series of incidents. Behaviour that may appear trivial as a single incident can constitute harassment or bullying when repeated. Harassment and bullying behaviour may not always be intentional, but

is always unacceptable, whether intentional or not. Differences in individuals' attitude, background or culture can mean what is perceived as harassment by one individual may not seem so to another.

#### 2.4 Harassment and bullying may include the following:-

- **Sexual harassment** can take the form of ridicule, sexually provocative remarks or jokes, offensive comments about dress or appearance, the display or distribution of sexually explicit material, unwelcome sexual advances or physical contact, demands for sexual favours or assault.
- **Racial harassment** may include jokes about, or gratuitous references to a person's colour, race, religion or nationality. It can also include offensive remarks about dress, culture or customs which have the effect of ridiculing or undermining an individual or fostering hatred and/or prejudice towards individuals or particular groups.
- **Harassment of disabled people** can take the form of individuals being ignored, disparaged or ridiculed because of their disability. The disability rather than their ability can become the focus of attention. Harassment can include inappropriate personal remarks, jokes or inappropriate reference to an individual's appearance.
- **Harassment on the grounds of a person's sexuality** may include homophobic remarks or jokes, offensive comments relating to a person's sexuality, threats to disclose a person's sexuality to others or offensive behaviour/abuse relating to HIV or AIDS status.
- **Bullying** is the exercise of power over another person through negative acts or behaviours that undermine him/her personally and/or professionally. Bullying can be threatening, insulting, abusive, disparaging or intimidating behaviour, which places inappropriate pressure on the recipient or has the effect of isolating or excluding them. Bullying can take the form of shouting, sarcasm, derogatory remarks concerning academic performance or constant criticism. Bullying can be carried out by an individual or groups of individuals.

2.5 Harassment may also take place on the grounds of a person's age, religion, socio-economic status or any other characteristic that makes them different from the majority or from the person who harasses or bullies them. Any difficulty in defining what constitutes harassment should not deter individuals from complaining about behaviour that causes them distress. These examples are by no means exhaustive.

2.6 Although the terms 'harassment' and 'bullying' are not synonymous, the guidance in this policy document relates to both issues and the term 'harassment' will be used within this document from this point onwards to encompass both.

2.7 The over-riding principles in dealing with allegations or concerns of harassment are that they must be taken seriously, considered carefully and addressed speedily and, where possible, in confidence.

### **3.0 Responsibility of individual students in relation to conduct and behaviour**

3.1 Every individual has a responsibility to behave in a way that is not offensive to others.

3.2 Every individual has a responsibility to acknowledge that views and opinions held by others may not always coincide with their own; such differences are unlikely to constitute harassment.

3.3 Students are expected to:

- Arrive on time for lectures, tutorials and meetings with staff
- Refrain from using mobile telephones or other electronic devices for whatever purposes during lectures and tutorials and areas where use is forbidden e.g. library
- Refrain from talking to other students during lectures and tutorials unless as part of a discussion instigated by the lecturer
- Refrain from using offensive language.

This list is not exhaustive

3.4 Students, whose behaviour is considered inappropriate, may be asked to leave the class or lecture and, if so, will be reported to the Dean in whose Faculty the student is based.

3.5 Incidents which involve the disruption of others and/or harassment or bullying will be reported by the appropriate Dean of Faculty/School or Director of Service to the Dean of Students and Academic Registrar who will keep a record of such incidents. Depending on the circumstances of the incident(s), action may be taken against the individual student(s) under, the University's Student Disciplinary Procedure.

### **4.0 Advice, support and procedures**

4.1 Individuals who feel that they may be the subject of harassment and wish to make a complaint against another student or member of staff of this University should pursue the issue by using the University's Complaints Procedure. Students may wish to consult staff in the University Equality & Diversity Unit or in the Students' Union Advice Centre for advice, for example, on completing the form.

## **5.0 Conduct which may constitute a criminal offence**

- 5.1 The University expects students to exercise their legal rights so as to protect themselves in cases where a criminal offence may have been committed.
- 5.2 If a criminal offence such as harassing phone calls, texts or emails, physical assault, indecent exposure or rape takes place, nothing in any University policy is intended to prevent or dissuade an individual from contacting the police.
- 5.3 If the police are involved in a case, the University may postpone any internal investigation until the result of the police enquiry is known.
- 5.4 Any issue relating to a criminal offence will usually be dealt with in accordance with Section 3 of the University's Student Disciplinary Procedures.

## **6.0 Sharing of information**

For the purposes of monitoring student behaviour, Faculties, Services and the Students' Union will share information on incidents of poor student behaviour on a 'need to know' basis via the Dean of Students and Academic Registrar.

**Staffordshire University's commitment to equality and diversity means that this regulation has been screened in relation to the use of gender-neutral language, jargon-free plain English, recognition of the needs of disabled people, promotion of the positive duty in relation to race and disability and avoidance of stereotypes. This document is available in alternative formats on request.**

## **Appendix 1**

### **Student Disciplinary Procedures**

#### **Breaches of Discipline**

The following is indicative of types of breaches of discipline but it is not intended to be exhaustive. For the purposes of these procedures the word "University" includes the University's Students' Union.

1. Disruption of, or interference with, academic, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the University.
2. Sexual, racial, physical or other harassment or behaviour which causes fear or distress to others, or threatening, abusive, disorderly or unreasonable behaviour.
3. Behaviour damaging to race relations and equal opportunities policies.
4. Conduct which prevents, obstructs or disrupts the holding or orderly conduct of any meeting or other lawful assembly in the University or which would cause the University to be in breach of its statutory duty to provide education and interfering with the due discharge of the University's duties.
5. Fraud, deceit, deception, dishonesty or misappropriation of University funds or assets, misuse or falsification of any records or documents held by the University, its staff, students or visitors.
6. Any improper access to or disclosure of computerised or other data held by the University or accessible through University equipment or networks.
7. Non-declaration of information which the University judges relevant to the continuation of your registration on your award e.g. non-declaration of a criminal conviction or caution since your last CRB check.
8. Conduct which constitutes a criminal offence.
9. Conduct likely to damage or threaten the reputation of the University.
10. Damage to, or wrongful treatment of, the property (including University controlled student residential accommodation) or equipment of the University or any of its staff, students or visitors, or any action likely to cause injury to any person or impairing the health and safety of the premises or its occupants, or contravening the University's policy on Health and Safety.
11. Action or omission which could cause loss, damage or injury or put others at risk.

12. The possession, use and/or supply of any controlled drugs as covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.
13. A breach of any of the University's rules, regulations, codes of conduct or procedures, or any failure to comply with any ruling made as a result of disciplinary proceedings, whether formal or informal.