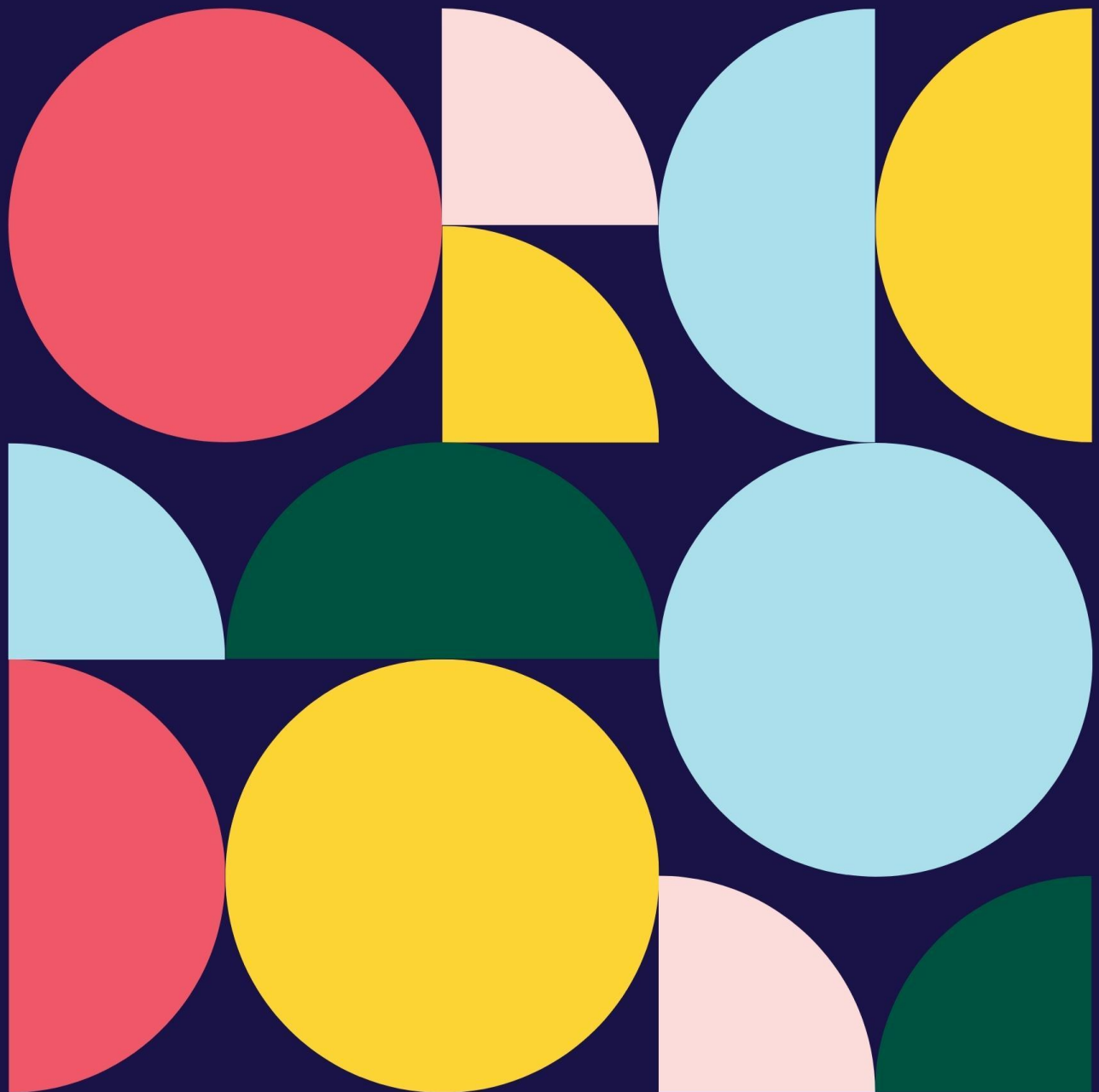




Bristol SU Student Conduct and Disciplinary Policy

Owner: Director of Student Opportunities and Community

Approval: Trustees



Bristol SU

Date created: Aug 2024

Date approved: Sep 2026

Date next review: May 2028

Bristol SU

Student Conduct and Disciplinary Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out the standards of conduct and expected behaviour from all students when engaging or interacting with University of Bristol Students' Union (Bristol SU) facilities, activities, services, events, spaces or affiliated student groups (groups).
- 1.2 It is also used where a student fails to abide by these standards of conduct and expected behaviour.
- 1.3 It sets out how we manage allegations of student misconduct or unacceptable behaviour and where necessary disciplinary action is applied fairly and consistently.
- 1.4 It complements the **Bristol SU Student Groups Conduct and Disciplinary Policy**, which relates to the conduct and expected behaviour of student groups. If you are involved in any student group, especially if you are on committee or a leader of the group, it should be read alongside this policy.
- 1.5 All students at the university of Bristol are also subject to the university's [Acceptable Behaviour Policy Statement](#) and [Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedure](#), as well as the law.
- 1.6 Students should also undertake the [University of Bristol Student Community Induction](#).

2. Principles

- 2.1 Bristol SU is committed to promoting an environment that is welcoming, inclusive and safe; where individuals are treated with dignity, fairness and respect.
- 2.2 We have an ethical and legal responsibility to protect the safety and wellbeing of students, our staff, trustees, Full-Time Officers and others that engage and interact with Bristol SU and to reduce the risk of harm, injury, nuisance and harassment.
- 2.3 We stand against bullying, harassment and discrimination in all its forms, including overt, covert and systemic.
- 2.4 We promote behaviours that are in line with our organisational values.
- 2.5 Conduct will be assessed in consideration of its impact, as well as the intention behind it. Even where there was no obvious intent to cause harm, the perception of the person/s affected, the wider circumstances of the case, and whether it is reasonable for the conduct to have that effect, will be taken into account.
- 2.6 It is important that all students understand the standards of conduct expected of them.
- 2.7 Our aim is to encourage improvements in conduct and to help build an understanding of why certain behaviours are not acceptable.
- 2.8 When the complaint is complex, serious, of a sensitive nature or if the university are investigating and we have put a precautionary measure in place, we may offer you a named person within the SU you can contact for support
- 2.9 Where possible, we try to resolve concerns and complaints informally. This may not always be possible depending on the context or severity of the alleged breach.
- 2.10 Breaches of our standards will be treated in a consistent, fair and reasonable manner.

3. Scope – who does the policy apply to?

3.1 This policy applies to the conduct or behaviour of:

3.1.1 any current registered student or students at the university of Bristol

3.1.2 and is committed while engaging in Bristol SU facilities, activities, services, events, spaces or part of a student group including attending a Bristol SU fixture, student group social or trip, online, on social media, or in correspondence.

3.2 This applies to Bristol SU student group leaders and committee members, Bristol SU volunteers, community organisers, academic representatives, and any student who is representing, acting on behalf of, or perceived to be representing/acting on behalf of Bristol SU.

3.3 There are separate code of conducts and policies for Bristol SU staff, Full Time Officers and Bristol SU Trustees.

3.4 There is also a separate protocol for governing Bristol SU elections, however conduct related issues within elections may be considered breaches of this policy.

3.5 The complaints team or safeguarding team will make the final decision on whether allegations of misconduct or unacceptable behavior fall within the scope of this policy

Student Code of Conduct

4. Expectations and Standards of Behaviour

4.1 Students are expected to:

4.1.1 Behave in a responsible manner and avoid actions which could unreasonably endanger others or bring Bristol SU, the university or our partners into disrepute;

4.1.2 Conduct themselves in a reasonable manner relating to language, noise and behaviour;

4.1.3 Be aware and take responsibility for their own behaviour and how it impacts on others;

4.1.4 Treat others with respect, dignity, courtesy and consideration within both the SU, university and wider community;

4.1.5 Actively avoid discriminatory behaviour and as far as able. Call out inappropriate language and behaviours or raise concerns where this is not possible.

4.1.6 Ensure all students feel welcome and included to participate in discussions, activities or events;

4.1.7 Treat all Bristol SU, university or external property, resources, equipment or spaces with respect and not misuse or intentionally damage them.

4.1.8 Act in accordance with Bristol SU's policies, byelaws and values and operate within the rules related to the activities in which you participate;

4.1.9 Comply with any relevant laws e.g Equality Act 2010;

4.1.10 Comply with this policy in good faith and not attempt to circumvent or manipulate its processes;

4.1.11 Not pressure or encourage others to breach these standards of behaviour

- 4.2 Bristol SU will not accept or tolerate language, behaviours, policies and/or structures that constitute: Bullying and harassment; Sexual Harassment and sexual violence; Racism; Sexism; Classism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism; Homophobia and biphobia; Transphobia; Domestic abuse (including dating abuse); Ableism; or any other form of discrimination. **See appendix 2 for definitions**
- 4.3 **Annex 1** highlights examples of misconduct and unacceptable behaviour. Page 11 of the university's [Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedure](#) sets out examples that breach the university standards of expected behaviour (which align with our standards of expected behaviour).

5. Bullying and Harassment

- 5.1 Harassment is unwanted and unwarranted physical, sexual, verbal or non-verbal behaviour which (intentionally or unintentionally) violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- 5.2 Harassment by an individual, group or organisation is unlawful when it targets someone on the grounds of a protected characteristic, this includes: age; sex; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; or sexual orientation.
- 5.3 Bullying is characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or the abuse or misuse of power (which does not always mean being in a position of authority) through means intended to undermine, humiliate, or denigrate a person.
- 5.4 Bullying and harassment are not necessarily related to a 'protected characteristic'.
- 5.5 Examples of bullying and harassment include but are not limited to offensive or intimidating comments; verbal abuse, insults, or jokes; graffiti or vandalism; unwanted sexual comments, groping, touching or stalking; threatening behaviour or physical violence.
- 5.6 Bullying and harassment may occur in person, via written communications, visual images, online, email, social media or over the phone and can occur in public or in private.
- 5.7 Passionate speech and comment, and legitimate debate can be distinguished from bullying behaviour and harassment. However, care should be taken to ensure that others are not made to feel intimidated, and what might be appropriate to say in one situation may not be in another.

6. Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

- 6.1 Sexual Misconduct covers a broad range of inappropriate and unwanted or attempted unwanted behaviours of a sexual nature. It covers all forms of sexual violence, including sex without consent, sexual abuse (including online and image-based abuse), non-consensual sexual touching, sexual harassment, stalking or abusive or degrading remarks of a sexual nature
- 6.2 Sexual violence and abuse is a general term to describe any kind of unwanted or coerced sexual act or activity, including rape, sexual assault, sex trafficking and exploitation, sexual harassment and intentionally causing another person to engage in sexual activity.
- 6.3 Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual behaviour which violates someone's dignity, makes someone feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, or creates a hostile or offensive environment
- 6.4 It can include a wide range of behaviours such as sexual comments, noises or gestures,

‘leering’, sending unwanted sexual content (such as ‘dick pics’), intrusive sexual questions, comments about someone’s body, displaying or sending sexual images/pornography, indecent exposure and unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature.

- 6.5 Some forms of sexual harassment, such as stalking, indecent exposure, ‘upskirting’ and anything involving unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature are automatically crimes.
- 6.6 Other forms of sexual harassment might also break criminal law, depending on the situation. For example, if someone carries out sexual harassment behaviours on more than one occasion that are intended to cause another person alarm or distress.

7.Discrimination

7.1 Discrimination can occur in both overt (direct) and covert (indirect) ways, and may be intentional or unintentional. We are committed to identifying, challenging, and preventing all forms of discrimination to maintain a safe, inclusive, and equitable environment for all students. **See Annex 2**

7.2 Forms of Discrimination:

- 7.2.1 Overt or direct discrimination: Explicit exclusion, slurs, or denial of opportunities based on identity.
- 7.2.2 Covert or indirect discrimination: Policies, practices, or behaviours that disadvantage certain groups, even unintentionally.
- 7.2.3 Structural/systemic discrimination: Embedded patterns in group decision-making, leadership selection, or allocation of resources.

7.3 Discrimination can occur through:

- 7.3.1 Excluding members from decision-making, leadership, or group activities.
- 7.3.2 Tone-policing or coded silencing (e.g., undermining someone for their manner of speaking).
- 7.3.3 Undermining, erasure, or differential scrutiny of contributions from certain members.
- 7.3.4 Emotional erasure (ignoring or invalidating a member’s feelings or experiences).

7.4 Protected and Marginalised Groups & Intersectionality:

- 7.4.1 Discrimination affects individuals differently depending on their identity, and members may experience multiple, overlapping forms of discrimination (intersectionality)
- 7.4.2 Groups commonly affected include global majority, LGBTQ+, women, gender-diverse, disabled and religious people as well as students from lower socio-economic backgrounds

7.5 The SU considers the compounding effects of multiple marginalised identities when assessing conduct and providing support

8. Online Behaviour

8.1 You are expected to conduct yourself online just as you would in any other situation

8.2 When using online platforms when engaging and interacting with Bristol SU (such as social media, WhatsApp, messaging, e-mail, groups and forums), you must:

- 8.2.1 Act in line with this policy;
- 8.2.2 Not create or share malicious or misleading content;
- 8.2.3 Not share any confidential information, or any personal information without permission;
- 8.2.4 Avoid actions that might discredit other students, SU staff, trustees or the SU

9. Freedom of Speech

- 9.1 Nothing in this policy seeks to limit your ability to exercise your right to free, lawful speech.
- 9.2 We believe in and actively encourage free and open discussion for students. This is an essential foundation for a democratic society.
- 9.3 This applies to information or ideas that are favourably received and uncontroversial, but also to those that have the potential to offend, shock or disturb the listener.
- 9.4 Tolerance and open-mindedness are essential parts of an inclusive learning environment, and all lawful views, including those that can be difficult to hear, should be able to be expressed and heard with tolerance and mutual respect.
- 9.5 Where your speech or actions are seen to incite hatred, violence or impact on the safety of others, then you may be in breach of the law, policies and subject to a disciplinary.
- 9.6 Peaceful protest is also a protected form of expression and this policy does not seek to limit your right to engage in peaceful protest. However, protest that shuts down debate, infringes on the rights of others or causes damage to property may be seen to be a breach of this policy.
- 9.7 For further information, please read the Bristol SU guidance on [Free Speech and External Speakers](#).

10. Leadership Roles and Conduct

- 10.1 Some students are involved in leadership roles within Bristol SU. This includes Bristol SU student group leaders and committee members, Bristol SU volunteers, community organisers and academic representatives
- 10.2 If you are in a leadership/volunteer position within Bristol SU it is recognised that you are in a position of responsibility and power, and therefore there are additional expectations you need to adhere to:
 - 10.2.1 Fulfil your role and responsibilities to the best of your ability;
 - 10.2.2 Actively engage in induction and training to help you understand your role, responsibilities and expectations. If you do not undertake mandatory training, you will not be allowed to continue in the role;
 - 10.2.3 Ensure you are familiar with the policies and procedures that may impact on your role and/or the people you represent/lead/support;
 - 10.2.4 Ensure you are familiar with the **Bristol SU Safeguarding Policy** and are aware of what to do if someone discloses a safeguarding concern or serious issue to you;
 - 10.2.5 Actively seek to enhance and continue your learning around leadership, inclusion and diversity;
 - 10.2.6 Be honest and reliable, sticking to promises and fulfilling actions you commit to
 - 10.2.7 Work hard to create a positive and inclusive environment for those that you represent/lead/support;
 - 10.2.8 Role-model and champion the positive behaviours set out in Section 4;
 - 10.2.9 Engage with Bristol SU communication and support channels including emails, website and development meetings;
 - 10.2.10 Contact Bristol SU if you have any concerns or need support or advice around your role or duties;
 - 10.2.11 Act as an ambassador and representative of Bristol SU and the university, in a professional and positive way;

- 10.2.12 When using social media or online platforms as part of a role with Bristol SU always remember that you are representing Bristol SU and the university;
- 10.2.13 Take all reasonable steps to ensure opportunities within your group are accessible regardless of background, identity or financial standing;
- 10.2.14 Strive to create equitable, inclusive, and positive group cultures.
- 10.3 Failure to meet these expectations may be addressed in a range of ways, including support, training, through democratic processes or a formal complaint and potential disciplinary action as highlighted below

Student Disciplinary Policy

11. Breaching the Student Code of Conduct

- 11.1 If you believe that another student or students have breached the standards of conduct and expected behaviour set out within this Code of Conduct (whether intentional or unintentional) you should raise your concerns with a Bristol SU staff member (ideally within the Development Team or Safeguarding Team) or submit a formal complaint to Bristol SU, the process is outlined in our Complaints Policy.
- 11.2 The Complaints Policy highlights how to complain, details about the Safeguarding Risk Assessment, when a precautionary measure may be put in place, when complaints may need to be referred to the university or the police and how an investigation takes place.
- 11.3 If Bristol SU is informed or becomes aware that a student has breached these standards of conduct and expected behaviour without a reporting party, Bristol SU can initiate the Complaints Policy.
- 11.4 If your conduct or behaviour has also breached the university's standards of acceptable behaviour then you may instead or additionally be investigated under the university's [Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedure](#). This will automatically be the case regarding any allegations that involve serious misconduct including sexual misconduct or that may potentially impact on their fitness to remain a member of the university community.
- 11.5 Where a student makes a clear admission of misconduct or unacceptable behaviour at the start, it was witnessed by staff, where there is clear evidence or they accept a police caution, Bristol SU reserves the right to progress to the disciplinary stage, as appropriate, e.g an investigation may not be necessary
- 11.6 If a student has been convicted of a criminal offence or accepts a police caution in relation to this misconduct or unacceptable behaviour, Bristol SU will accept this as definitive evidence that the behaviour took place.

12. Informal Resolution

- 12.1 Before submitting a formal complaint, you should try to resolve your concern informally, where appropriate.
- 12.2 This could include discussing the matter with the student helping them to make appropriate improvements or speaking to a Bristol SU staff member.
- 12.3 An informal resolution will not be taken if:
 - The student conduct has not improved following a previous informal discussion or warning;
 - It is more appropriate to deal with the situation formally, due to the potential seriousness or risk of the issue (e.g. sexual misconduct)

12.4 In this case, the process in the Complaints Policy will be followed which may invoke the disciplinary process below

13.Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Precautionary Measures

13.1 Where serious concerns come to light about the conduct of a student, a safeguarding risk assessment may be carried out and consideration given to whether precautionary measures are required whilst an investigation is carried out.

13.2 Precautionary measures are used following a safeguarding risk assessment where it is considered necessary to prevent harm or mitigate risk and may include restriction from an event, activity or student group. **See annex 4**

13.3 Please read the **Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Precautionary Measures** section of the **Complaints Policy** for more information

13. Investigation Outcome

13.1 After an investigation takes place, the Investigating Officer will produce a report which will state if the complaint has breached the student code of conduct. They will share with the complaints team.

13.2 The complaints team will review the investigation report and may decide:

1. That further investigation be carried out;
2. That no further action should be taken, in which case the reporting and responding parties will receive an email informing them of this and highlighting the support available to them;
3. That the matter should be dealt with informally by issuing a warning to the responding party;
4. Other informal action to be taken including meetings, training, guidance, mediation and/or requesting an apology;

5. That the matter should be dealt with formally and proceed to a disciplinary hearing for the responding party

13.2 If one of the first 4 options are enacted the complaints team will inform the responding party and let the reporting party know the investigation has concluded

13.3 If they decide on option 5 then a disciplinary hearing will take place and the complaints team will inform the responding and reporting party.

13.4 The complaints team may be advised by the Director of People, Culture and Organisational Development, members of the Management Group, colleagues from the university Student Resolution Service (SRS) and/or external legal or Human Resources (HR) advisors.

14. Disciplinary Hearing

14.1 The Complaints Team will convene a panel, agree a Chair for the Panel, and arrange a hearing as soon as is possible. If two or more responding parties are involved in related misconduct, the Chair may at its discretion deal with their cases together.

14.2 The disciplinary hearing panel will normally be made up of three people who are trained and had no prior involvement with the case. This could be either an SU staff member, university staff

member, SU trustee or an external body. The Panel will normally include a member of the Management Group (Directors/Heads Of).

14.3 The order of the disciplinary hearing, evidence to be considered and witnesses to be called will be at the discretion of the complaints team, in conjunction with the Chair.

14.4 The responding party will receive a copy of the hearing bundle (some information may need to be redacted)

14.5 A member of the People / Governance team will usually act as note-taker to the disciplinary hearing and the Governance and L&D Manager will usually act as the clerk and will assist and advise the Panel.

14.6 The Investigating Officer will usually present the case and evidence on behalf of the Students' Union.

14.7 The responding party will be invited to attend the hearing. The hearing may take place in person or online.

14.8 The reporting party or witnesses may be invited to attend the hearing as witnesses and asked to give evidence (online if appropriate); however they are not a party to the proceedings and will not attend all of the hearing. They will not receive the hearing bundle.

14.9 The responding party can bring someone for support or to represent them at the hearing. They are normally expected to answer any questions put to them, unless they have a good reason for not doing so.

14.10 The panel may ask questions of anyone present and will rely only on evidence presented at the hearing, either orally or in the hearing bundle which was sent in advance.

14.11 The Chair may impose time limits on submissions and the panel have the ability to adjourn a hearing to another date, if needed.

14.12 The Panel may find a student guilty of misconduct or unacceptable behaviour if on the basis of evidence, it is satisfied on the balance of probabilities, of the student's guilt.

14.13 If the members of the Panel cannot agree, the decision of the Panel will be that of the majority of its members or the Chair if there is an uneven number.

14.14 The responding party will receive an email detailing the outcome/decision and sanctions imposed. This will usually be within 14 days of the hearing.

14.15 The responding party has a right of appeal as set out in section 16.

14.16 The reporting party will receive confirmation of whether the allegations were upheld (found guilty), partially upheld or not upheld and informed of the sanction where it has a direct impact on their safety and wellbeing, such as a non-contact order, restrictions from an activity or letter of apology.

14.17 The disclosure of further information will be considered on a case-by-case basis due to data protection and confidentiality.

15. Sanctions

15.1 Once a finding of guilt has been established, the Panel can impose any of the sanctions listed at **Annex 3**.

15.2 When determining sanctions, consideration will be given to the seriousness and circumstances of the misconduct or unacceptable behaviour and any mitigating circumstances raised by the responding party or their representative.

15.3 The sanction(s) given are only limited to an individual's interaction with Bristol SU

15.4 Bristol SU will keep a record on the complaints database of the student misconduct or unacceptable behaviour and any sanctions imposed, and will share with the University if appropriate.

16. Appeals

16.1 A responding party may appeal against a finding of guilt or against a sanction imposed.

16.2 The appeal must be made to Bristol SU within 7 days of the email outlining the outcome/decision.

16.3 The responding party must set out the grounds on which the appeal is based and send via email to bristolsu-complaints@bristol.ac.uk

16.4 The potential grounds of appeal are:

- **That the decision was not reasonable;**
- **That the procedure was not correctly followed when making the decision;**
- **That new evidence has come to light that was not available to the original decision maker which may have materially affected the decision.**

16.5 The appeal will be heard by a panel made up of three people who have had no prior involvement with the complaint. This could be either an SU staff member, university staff member, SU trustee or an external body. The panel will normally include a member of the Management Group (Directors/Heads Of).

16.6. The appeal will not involve a rehearing of the case but will consider your grounds for appeal and whether the outcome received was reasonable in the circumstances.

16.7 The responding party may present the appeal in person or in writing, and may be represented by an adviser, friend or other representative.

16.8 The Panel considering the appeal may:

- **Reject the appeal and confirm the original sanction/s;**
- **Uphold the appeal and revoke the original decision and sanction/s;**
- **Partially uphold the appeal and confirm the finding of guilt but amend the sanction/s to impose a lesser or greater sanction.**

16.9 The decision of the Appeals Hearing is final and binding. No further appeals will be considered, and the SU's disciplinary process is exhausted.

17. Confidentiality and Safeguarding

17.1 An appropriate level of confidentiality is important for an effective complaint and disciplinary process and must balance transparency and the requirements of natural justice against a legitimate expectation of personal privacy.

17.2 To ensure the integrity of the process, all parties involved will be expected to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality, as well as ensuring confidentiality of documents.

17.3 We recognise that in some circumstances it may be necessary and appropriate for those involved in complaints and disciplinary cases to share certain confidential information with third parties, including:

- Professional advisers / representatives;
- The university Wellbeing Service, or other wellbeing professionals;
- Bristol SU Academic Advice service for the purpose of obtaining advice and support;
- Family members and confidants (on the basis that those people maintain confidentiality);
- Relevant external bodies such as the police, Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) or the Office for Students (OfS).

17.4 Bristol SU may also disclose information to:

- Those who need to know in order to discharge their responsibilities at work; where we consider it in the interests of health and safety at work or the welfare of other staff, students or the public interest
- The university, where it is required to take a coordinated approach
- Witnesses and/or attendees at any meetings relating to the complaint;
- Our professional advisers for the purposes of obtaining advice;
- Other relevant external bodies such as the police, OIA or the OfS, especially where disclosure is required by law

18. Reviewing this Policy

18.1 Bristol SU's Trustee Board oversees and approves this policy, and it is reviewed regularly to ensure it is fit for purpose.

18.2 Conduct and Disciplinary Cases are reviewed and managed by the complaints team and sometimes the safeguarding team. They are responsible for ensuring that cases are managed in a consistent and appropriate way and any learning is identified and actioned.

19. Acknowledgements

19.1 This policy has been developed by Bristol SU Staff, Trustees, Officers and Students.

19.2 Special thanks to Amaan Ali, who supported the review on a voluntary advisory basis, with a particular focus on the addition of a section on discrimination. The review has benefitted greatly from Amaan's inputs and suggestions.

Annex 1: Examples of Misconduct

- a) Any behaviour that breaches the Code of Conduct in this policy;
- b) Any conduct which constitutes a criminal offence;
- c) Any conduct which constitutes sexual misconduct;
- d) Disruption of, or improper interference with, the educational, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of Bristol SU or the university;
- e) Obstruction of, or improper interference with, the functions, duties or activities of any student or member of staff;
- f) Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening, intimidating or offensive behaviour or language, whether expressed verbally or in writing, including online behaviour;
- g) Bullying, harassment or unacceptable behaviour of any student, member of staff, or visitor to the university, including on the grounds of sex, race, religion or belief, disability, sexual

orientation, gender reassignment, age or other grounds, including online bullying and harassment;

- h) Fraud, deceit, deception or dishonesty in relation to the Bristol SU, the university or its staff, students or visitors;
- i) Theft, misappropriation or misuse of Bristol SU property, or the property of staff, students or visitors, including computer misuse;
- j) Misuse or unauthorised use of Bristol SU / university premises;
- k) Damage to Bristol SU / university property, or the property of staff, students or visitors, caused intentionally or recklessly;
- l) Action likely to cause injury or risk the safety of others on Bristol SU premises, at Bristol SU events or on any activity associated with the Bristol SU;
- m) Failure to respect the rights of others to freedom of belief and freedom of speech;
- n) Failure to comply with a reasonable instruction relating to discipline, issued by Bristol SU or the university including failure to comply with precautionary measures.

Annex 2: Glossary of Common Definitions for Discrimination

These definitions act as a reference point for assessing misconduct, however investigators and decision-making panels may consider other definitions where appropriate (for example, where newer or more specific guidance has been produced).

We also acknowledge other definitions or working examples of discrimination from policy that students have passed through Bristol SU democratic processes (e.g. Student Council), including where we have policy to lobby the university on that point.

Racism

Racism is any behaviour, policy, or practice that disadvantages an individual or group on the basis of race, ethnicity, colour, or national origin. Covert or subtle racism can include:

- Microaggressions – small, often unintentional comments or actions that convey bias or exclusion (e.g., remarks about accent, assumptions about intelligence or background).
- Social exclusion – ignoring, isolating, or excluding individuals
- Coded or stereotypical language and assumptions – such as “You’re very articulate” or “Where are you really from?”.
- Indirect bias – rules or traditions that appear neutral but disadvantage particular ethnic or cultural groups (e.g. dress codes or event scheduling conflicting with cultural or religious observances).

Classism

Classism is prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination based on a person’s social class, socioeconomic background, or perceived economic status. This may include both overt and covert behaviours, such as:

- Mocking accents or working-class backgrounds.
- Excluding students from social opportunities due to financial assumptions.
- Using language or norms that implicitly favour middle- or upper-class experiences.

- Making assumptions about intelligence, aspiration, or professionalism

Sexism

Sexism refers to any behaviour, policy, or attitude that discriminates against, demeans, or marginalises someone on the basis of their sex, gender identity, or gender expression.

Subtle or covert sexism may include:

- Interrupting or dismissing contributions
- Assuming certain roles (e.g., note-taking, event organisation) based on stereotypes.
- Jokes or remarks that trivialise issues of gender inequality or bias.

LGBT+ Discrimination

Discrimination against LGBT+ people refers to any unfair treatment, exclusion, or harassment on the grounds of (perceived or actual) sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. This may include both overt and covert behaviours, such as:

- Unwanted jokes, comments, or questions about someone's sexuality or gender identity.
- Exclusion or erasure. Failing to acknowledge LGBT+ relationships or identities.

Annex 3: Potential Sanctions for Breaches of this Policy

A student found guilty of misconduct or unacceptable behaviour may be given one or more of the following sanctions:

- A formal written warning;
- Absolute discharge, which means that although the student may be technically guilty of the misconduct alleged, no blame should be attached to their actions;
- Caution, which means that no further sanction is imposed, but if the student is found guilty of misconduct on a subsequent occasion in the following twelve months, or some other specified period, they will then be dealt with for both offences;
- Required to write a letter of apology to a specified person or persons;
- Required to attend a specified course or programme and to pay the reasonable cost as determined at the relevant time by Bristol SU;
- Non-contact order - required to have no contact, or restricted contact, with a specified person or persons;
- Removal from their Committee position of a student group;
- Suspension from some or all of Bristol SU facilities, activities, services, events, spaces or affiliated student groups for a fixed period of time;
- Limits on access to particular facilities, activities, services, events, spaces or affiliated student groups, e.g. only at specific times or locations
- Permanent exclusion from some or all Bristol SU facilities, activities, services, events, spaces or affiliated student groups, and/or removal of Bristol SU Membership. If membership is removed you will still be able to access Academic Advice
- Any other reasonable sanction deemed to be appropriate by a Disciplinary Panel.

Annex 4: Guidance for Precautionary Measure Decisions

Low	Moderate	High	Urgent
No evidence of pre-planning, targeting the victim or of an unprovoked attack.* No current risk (may be a historical incident) and this incident doesn't bring a risk of harm. The responding student has no allegations under Bristol SU / university Disciplinary Regulations. No threats made against the student and / or the student's personal property on university premises. The circumstances of the current incident do not suggest that the student might commit other offences if not restricted from accessing activities / services / spaces. Student is academically progressing. Student has a support network. No concerns raised by third parties. Issue is singular and other stressors are low. No mention of current or past self-harm. Student has insight into the issues. Student is taking steps to access support / reduce risks.	This incident does not involve a pre-planned or unprovoked attack but there is evidence that the victim was targeted.* This incident does not involve the use of a weapon. The respondent has unproven or a minor proven allegation that does not involve violence, threats of violence or intimidating behaviour. No direct threats made to the student but the incident is such that it might normally provoke strong feelings. The circumstances of the current incident suggest that the responding student may commit offences involving violence, threats of violence or intimidating behaviour, harassment, bullying or damage to property, if not restricted from accessing activities, services and/or spaces. Student is academically engaged. Student has some support network. No concerns raised by third parties. Issue is singular and other stressors are moderate. No current or past self-harm or plans for the future. They have self-insight and plan to engage with support.	This incident involves a pre-planned or unprovoked attack with or without the victim being targeted.* This incident involves physical harm which may be with the use of a weapon. The responding student has a major allegation or pattern of behaviour of minor allegations that involves violence, sexual violence, threats of violence or intimidating behaviour. Direct threats have been made against the student or there are rumours of reprisal attacks. The circumstances of the current incident suggest that the responding student will commit offences involving violence, sexual violence, threats of violence, intimidating behaviour, harassment, bullying or damage to property, if not restricted from accessing activities, services and/or spaces. Student is struggling academically / socially, has minimal support networks or relationships are not supportive. Third parties have raised concerns. Issues are complex. Student sometimes has suicidal ideation. Student is reluctant to engage with support and university processes.	This incident involves a pre-planned or unprovoked attack with the victim being targeted.* This incident involves predatory behaviour or significant physical harm which may be with the use of a weapon. The respondent has a pattern of escalating incidents which may be in close succession that involves violence, sexual violence, threats of violence or intimidating behaviour. There have been reprisal attacks. The circumstances of the current incident suggest that the student will commit other offences if not restricted from accessing activities, services and/or spaces which puts the safety of the university community at significant risk. Student is academically disengaged or struggling. Student is isolated or relationships are not supportive. Third parties have raised concerns. Issues are complex across multiple areas. History of or current self-harm. Student does not have insight into the issues. Student refuses to engage with support and SU / university processes.

*Not applicable to sexual violence cases.