

Harassment, Bullying & Victimisation

As a student at Anglia Ruskin University, you are entitled to treatment that is fair and equitable, ensuring dignity, courtesy and respect in or outside the University.

Unacceptable behaviour at work or in the learning environment could be harassment, bullying or victimisation. It is any inappropriate form of behaviour or language that creates an environment which is antagonistic and intimidating for the person on the receiving end.

Unsuitable behaviour can generate feelings of ridicule, offence and loss of privacy for individuals who suffer from it. Most importantly, it is how the behaviour is interpreted by the victim.

Harassment

In UK law, harassment is defined as 'unwanted conduct that creates the effect of violating people's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment'.

There are a number of forms of harassment including:

Sexual harassment

Any unwanted sexual attention as well as discrimination on the grounds of an individual's sex:

- Suggestive looks, jokes, use of insulting language or pornography and physical contact to which the individual objects.
- Unfair allocation of work or exclusion based on an individual's sex.

Racial harassment

Any offensive behaviour, language or conduct that is directed at a person or group of one racial or ethnic origin towards a person or group of another.

Racial harassment can include disparaging name-calling/jokes/material, mocking an individual for cultural difference and excluding an individual from everyday conversations, proceedings or opportunities due to their race or ethnicity.

On grounds of disability

Any behaviour, language or conduct towards a person with a disability, either mental or physical that is derogatory or demeaning and lacks respect and courtesy. This can include patronising language and exclusion from everyday conversations, events or opportunities on the grounds of an individual's disability.

On grounds of sexual orientation

Any behaviour, language or conduct that relates to a person's sexual orientation that offends or demeans, including the displaying of offensive homophobic material.

On grounds of religion or belief

Any offensive behaviour, language or conduct that relates to a person's religion or personal convictions, or to their *not* prescribing to a particular religion or belief.

- It may include offensive remarks or jokes, refusal to work with someone because of their religion or belief, or exclusion from activities relating to work, study or opportunities.
- It also includes subjecting people to evangelising during times allocated for work or study.

On grounds of age

Ageist remarks and generalisations relating to a person's ability or potential which relate only to their age as well as excluding a person on the grounds of their age. With effect from 1 October 2006, age discrimination at work and study is illegal.

Bullying

A psychological form of persecution that is present behind all forms of harassment and

direct discrimination, normally involving the misuse of power, position or knowledge. It may be more subtle and not have such an obvious focus as the kinds of harassment referred to above but it is persistent over a period of time. In any form of bullying the victim will feel threatened, humiliated or undermined and may even blame himself or herself.

- Examples of bullying are personal insults or unjustified criticism, name-calling, outbursts of anger, shouting or swearing, public humiliation or excluding or ignoring someone.
- In common with harassment it may take the form of person to person abuse, or be via email, texting or other forms of electronic media.

Victimisation

Victimisation is when a person is punished or treated unfairly because they have made a complaint, are believed to have made a complaint or have supported someone who has made a complaint against the University, a Faculty, department or individual.

What support can you expect as a student at Anglia Ruskin University?

A student who experiences harassment, bullying or victimisation from an individual or group will have the support of the University in making sure it is stopped.

Student Services or the Students' Union can provide you with the assistance to do this. However, the University does recognise that, on rare occasions, complaints of harassment may be brought with malicious or spurious intent. This can result in disciplinary action being taken against the complainant.

The University will observe and maintain confidentiality wherever possible but it must be recognised that preserving anonymity may make it difficult to resolve the issue.

Dignity at Study

Informal procedure

It is best to deal with unacceptable behaviour informally in the first instance whenever possible. It may be that the person causing you distress is unaware that you find their behaviour offensive.

- Keep records detailing witnesses, times, dates and a full description of events.
- Act quickly rather than waiting for the situation to escalate until you find it intolerable.
- You may feel that you can approach the person yourself and explain that their behaviour towards you is causing distress. You may prefer to write a letter to the person concerned.
- Ask for assistance from Student Services, the Students' Union, your personal tutor or another member of staff within your Faculty. Counsellors with Student Services are another source of support.

However, if you feel your personal safety is at risk, do not delay but take action immediately by reporting the incident to University Security on ext. 6444.

If the above does not resolve the problem or you do not wish to address it in this way, you may contact your Dean of Faculty or the Director of Student Services, who will contact the alleged harasser informally on your behalf.

Formal procedure

If the above does not put an end to the inappropriate behaviour, the matter may be raised formally. If your complaint relates to another student, you should refer to the University's Student Disciplinary Procedure contained within the Rules, Regulations & Procedures for Students. Also, see the SU Advice Service leaflet 'Discipline'. If your complaint relates to a member of University staff, you should refer to the University's

Student Complaints Procedure contained within the Rules, Regulations & Procedures for Students. Also, see the SU Advice Service leaflet 'Complaints'.

What do you do if harassment occurs outside the University?

Alongside the relevant anti-discrimination laws which deal specifically with harassment on the grounds of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age, the introduction of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 made it illegal for an individual, whether in or outside of work or the learning environment, to 'pursue a course of conduct which amounts to harassment of another'. Seek support from Student Services or the Students' Union or the Citizens Advice Bureau if you find yourself a victim of harassment outside of the University.

Useful Contacts

Anglia Ruskin University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy is contained within the Rules, Regulations and Procedures for Students. It is also available on the University's website: http://web.anglia.ac.uk/equalops/Dignity_at_Work_and_Study_revised.doc

Student Services, Counselling website is at the following link: <http://www.anglia.ac.uk/ruskin/en/home/central/studentsupport/services/counselling.html>

Anglia Ruskin Students' Union Advice Services:

Cambridge

Tel: 01223 460008
E-mail: cambs.advice@angliastudent.com

Chelmsford

Tel: 01245 258178
E-mail: essex.advice@angliastudent.com

www.angliastudent.com



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