

Respect at Kent Policy

The University of Kent aims to provide an environment which respects and values the positive contribution of all its students, enabling them to achieve their full potential and to gain benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the University.

We are creating an inclusive university community and a society where:

- People are treated with dignity, equality and respect
- Inequalities are challenged
- People are treated fairly with regards to all procedures, assessments and choices
- We anticipate, and respond positively, to different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their potential

Our equality and diversity principles:

- We are committed to nurturing an inclusive and diverse community that is open and accessible to all.
- We do not tolerate discrimination, harassment or bullying of any groups or individuals, on the basis of gender, age, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, gender identity and pregnancy or maternity.
- We respect the rights of individuals, including the right to hold different views and beliefs.
- We will not allow these differences to be manifested in a way that is hostile or degrading to others.
- We expect commitment and involvement from all our students, staff, partners and providers of goods or services in working towards the achievement of these principles.

Scope

This policy relates to all students registered on University of Kent courses and taught at University of Kent campuses, and operates in the context of the academic and social community.

The Student Charter

The [Student Charter](#) clearly outlines the mutual expectations of the University, Kent Union and the student body to ensure an inclusive and welcoming community, highlighting academic freedom, integrity and accountability. The Student Charter recognises that the fair and equal treatment of every person, and diversity in the student and staff community, is a key component of the student experience.

General Principles

The University is committed to supporting a positive learning culture through the provision of:

- A wide range of training for staff to provide a better understanding of equality and respect;
- Clear guidance on appropriate behaviours and conduct to support a positive culture;
- Appropriate mechanisms to address concerns about behaviour which may breach this Policy.

All allegations of breach of this Policy will be taken seriously and appropriate action will be taken. See Appendix 1: Complaints and Confidentiality for details.

Student Services

Appendix 1: Complaints and Confidentiality

What to do if I wish to submit a complaint?

Disciplinary action will be taken where there are serious or repeated breaches of the Respect at Kent Policy.

1.1 Informal Resolution

Where possible, in the first instance there should be an initial approach to the person responsible for the behaviour to advise the person that you find it inappropriate, unacceptable or unwelcome.

It is NOT expected that an individual be required to approach the subject of the complaint alone or unsupported. The University of Kent operates a Mediation Service which can be contacted to provide advice and support for cases involving alleged discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation.

Initial remedial action will focus on informal resolution via mediation to enable relationships to continue in a positive and acceptable environment wherever possible. All allegations will be taken seriously and appropriate action will be taken.

Contact information for the Mediation Service can be found in Appendix 2: Sources of Advice and Support

Additional advice can be sought from a variety of different sources as detailed in Appendix 2: Sources of Advice and Support of this document. The focus for initial discussions should be to identify steps to address any concerns and the provision of support and advice.

1.2 Formal Resolution

If informal resolution fails, then concerns about the **behaviour of a student** may be taken forward formally under the [Regulations on Student Discipline in Relation to Non-Academic Matters](#) by the appropriate College Master. The complainant should contact their [College Master](#) outlining the nature of their complaint.

Concerns about a member of staff may be raised with the line manager of the member of staff concerned and subsequently as set out in the [Complaints Procedure for Students](#). You can find staff details on [The University Directory](#). Please include the following information in a letter of complaints:

- Applicant's name
- Applicant's student number
- The staff member the complaint is about
- The time and date of the incident
- The nature of their complaint and any supporting evidence
- A reasonable outcome that the applicant feels would be an appropriate resolution to the complaint.

Where a breach of this policy is solely related to the use of IT, the [Regulations for the Use of Information Technology \(IT\) Facilities at the University of Kent](#), and the [IT Code of Conduct](#) should be followed.

If the complaint is in relation to a Kent Union activity, the [Kent Union Student Disciplinary Procedure](#) should be followed. However, further disciplinary action may be taken by the University and will be considered on a case by case basis.

A flowchart summarising the above is attached as Appendix 4

The support networks outlined in Appendix 2: Sources of Advice and Support of this document are available to those who are subject to a complaint as well as the complainant and can be accessed for the Formal Resolution stage as well as the Informal Resolution stage.

Confidentiality

All discussions regarding complaints under this Policy will be treated confidentially unless the safety of students or members of staff is at risk.

All individuals should recognise that to address concerns through the appropriate procedures it is necessary to share some information regarding the specific complaint with the person or people against whom the complaint is made. This sharing of information will be kept strictly to those directly involved in the investigation or remedial processes and will be discussed with the person raising the complaint in the first instance. Individuals who consider that they are subject to bullying or harassment should not discuss this widely but should follow the appropriate procedure to raise their concerns.

Appendix 2: Sources of Advice and Support

Mediation Service

There are a number of trained mediators at the University of Kent who are able to assist with facilitating an informal resolution meeting between the complainant and the subject of the complaint. The role of a mediator is to:

- Arrange a meeting between the complainant and the subject of the complaint (either student/student or student/staff member);
- Facilitate discussion; and, where possible,
- Find a resolution that is agreeable to all parties mitigating the need for further complaint escalation.

All discussions are confidential and non-judgemental towards either party.

Harassment Contacts

The University has a network of [Harassment Contacts](#) to provide advice to anyone subject to inappropriate behaviour or who wishes to report that another person is being harassed. A conversation with a harassment contact will not lead to formal action without the consent of the complainant except in cases where there are concerns about the complainant's safety and well-being. Further information can be found via the HR Equality and Diversity website at: <http://www.kent.ac.uk/hr-equalityanddiversity/>

The role of the harassment contact is to:

- Offer a 'listening ear'
- Offer support, guidance and advice as to whether the alleged behaviour falls within this Policy
- Talk through and advise on the process for resolving the problem, including providing guidance on speaking or writing to the alleged harasser
- Refer the matter to another source of help or pursue more formal action.

Other sources for advice and support:

Support	Telephone	Webpage
Senior Tutor or Student Support Officer	Local to School/Centre	Local to School/Centre
College Master	Local to the College	https://www.kent.ac.uk/student/colleges/
Wellbeing Team (Counselling - Canterbury)	01227 823206	http://www.kent.ac.uk/counselling/
Wellbeing Team (Counselling - Medway)	01634 888875	http://www.kent.ac.uk/counselling/
Medical Centre (Canterbury)	01227 823583	http://www.kent.ac.uk/medical/
Medical Centre (Medway)	01634 283847	https://www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/see-a-gp/the-sunlight-centre/
Chaplaincy (Canterbury)	01227 827491	www.kent.ac.uk/chaplaincy/
Chaplaincy (Medway)	01634 888959	www.kent.ac.uk/chaplaincy/
Kent Union Vice-President (Welfare)	01227 827724	union-welfare@kent.ac.uk
Kent Union Advice Centre	01227 827724	www.kentunion.co.uk/welfare/advice
GK Unions Advice Centre	01634 88 89 89	www.gkunions.co.uk/advice/aboutus
Nightline	01227 824848	www.canterbury.nightline.ac.uk
TG Pals (Trans Support)	01233 623556	www.kent.ac.uk/student/support-and-wellbeing/diversity.html

Metro (LGBT+ Support)	020 8305 5000	www.metrocentreonline.org
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Additional Advice on Cases of Serious Assault and Rape

A student who has been attacked during office hours may seek help at the Canterbury campus from the University's Medical Centre/ Campus Security/ College Receptionists. At the Medway campus help should be sought from the College Master's Office.

If an attack occurs between 5pm and 9am or on a Bank Holiday or weekend at Canterbury or Medway campus, Campus Security can contact a [University Sexual Assault Responder](#) who will support you and inform you of your options.

An attack does not need to have occurred on campus for you to seek support

The following support services are also available for you to approach at a later date, if no action is taken at the time.

Support	Contact
University Medical Centre (Canterbury)	01227 823583
Medical Services (Medway)	www.kent.ac.uk/student-services/medway
Campus Security (Canterbury)	01227 823333 (emergency) 01227 823300 (non-emergency)
Campus Security (Medway)	01227 823333 (emergency) 01227 823300 (non-emergency)
College Masters Office	www.kent.ac.uk/student/colleges
Wellbeing Team (Counselling)	www.kent.ac.uk/student-wellbeing/contact
Nursing Services (Canterbury)	www.kent.ac.uk/medical 01227 823503
East Kent Rape Crisis Centre	0800 458 2818
Sexual Assault Referral Centre (Maidstone)	01622 726461 / 0800 133 7432
Rape Crisis Centre (National)	020 8683 3311 / 020 8683 3300
Nightline	01227 824848

Other relevant policies, procedures and documents

[Complaints Procedure for Students](#)

[Regulations on student discipline in relation to non-academic matters](#)

[Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy](#)

[Information Services: Regulations for the use of information technology facilities at the University of Kent](#)

[IT Code of Conduct](#)

[Student Charter](#)

[University Policy Statement concerning Alcohol](#)

[University Policy Statement concerning Drugs \(Substance Misuse\)](#)

[Support to Study Procedure](#)

[Personal Relationships Policy](#)

[Religion and Belief Guidelines](#)

[Safeguarding Students: Policy and Procedure](#)

[Guidance for Students who have been sexually assaulted or raped](#)

Appendix 3: Definitions and Examples of behaviour

Definitions

Harassment is unwanted behaviour or conduct which is related to a legally protected characteristic defined in the Equality Act 2010 (as detailed below). It has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. Whether it is deliberate or unintentional, the salient point is that the individual feels it is unwelcome and unwanted. It may be against an individual by an individual or involve groups of people.

Examples of harassment could be (but are not limited to):

- Harassment or intimidation arising from current or historical conflict between people of different ethnic or religious groups;
- Deliberate or unintentional harassment brought about by differing perceptions of attitude, culture and/or the misrepresentation of social signals.

Protected characteristics are legally defined as age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. The complainant does not necessarily have to possess the characteristic. **Discrimination by perception** is where the conduct or behaviour is based on the perception that an individual has a protected characteristic, and **Discrimination by association** is where an individual is treated less favourably because of that person's association with another individual who has a protected characteristic. Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and bigotry are examples of harassment by perception or harassment by association.

Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

Examples of bullying could be:

- abuse of power or authority
- verbal, written and/or physical intimidation e.g. threats, derisory remarks
- persistent unjustified criticism
- public humiliation
- the setting of impossible deadlines or intolerable workload burdens
- having responsibilities or decision-making powers withdrawn without good reason or explanation
- unwarranted exclusions
- open and obvious, for example, shouting at people, threats or physical intimidation, personal/offensive remarks, inappropriate physical touching
- hidden, disguised or not immediately apparent, for example, innuendo, excluding someone or other methods of ostracism, intrusively questioning a person regarding his/her personal circumstances
- through verbal exchanges, face to face conduct, or the display or circulation of physical material in any media, which could be offensive and is not approved for academic purposes

Vigorous speech and comment, academic debate and legitimate management of the performance of staff or students can be distinguished from bullying behaviour. However care should be taken to ensure that neither staff nor students are made to feel intimidated.

Victimisation occurs where an individual is subjected to detrimental conduct or behaviour because that person has raised a complaint of discrimination, or because the person has supported another person in raising a complaint of discrimination. This may involve groups of people.

The Student/Teacher Relationship is one of special trust. Teaching staff are required to recognise their professional and ethical responsibilities to protect the interests of students, to respect the trust involved in the staff/student relationship and to accept the obligations inherent in that responsibility. The University's Personal Relationships Policy may be found at: <https://www.kent.ac.uk/hr-staffinformation/policies/relationships.html>.

The protection of young people, under the age of 18, and vulnerable adults is governed under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. All members of the University have a duty to raise concerns about behaviour that may be harmful to young people and vulnerable adults. The University of Kent Safeguarding Policy for Students may be found at: <https://www.kent.ac.uk/governance/policies-and-procedures/Safeguarding-Policy-and-Procedure%20Feb2017.pdf>

Third party harassment concerns the conduct and behaviour of people who are not students of the University but who are on campus for academic or other purposes. Examples would include students of other universities visiting to attend research seminars or to discuss their work with Kent students or staff. Where the University is aware that third party harassment has taken place it will take reasonable steps to prevent it from happening again.

Examples of behaviour

The following is an indicative list of positive or negative behaviours provided for guidance purposes only.

Positive behaviours which can work with the principles of equality and respect include:

- Respect for an individual's differences;
- Value being placed on an individual's contribution;
- No tolerance of prejudice;
- Every individual has a responsibility to behave in a way that is not offensive to others and to acknowledge that views and opinions held by others may differ from their own.

The following examples of behaviour (not exhaustive) shall be treated as a breach of this Policy and may result in disciplinary action being taken. Further information can be found in Section 14 of the [Regulations on Student Discipline in relation to non-academic matters](#).

Note that what one person believes is discrimination, harassment or bullying may not seem so to another, however the underlying factor is **whether the behaviour is unwanted or unwelcome in the recipient's perception**.

Misconduct in relation to people	
Disciplinary offence	Examples (not exhaustive)
<p>1. Physical misconduct</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Punching b. Kicking c. Slapping d. Pulling hair e. Biting f. Shoving
<p>2. Sexual misconduct <i>Sexual misconduct is a broad term encompassing any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that is committed without consent or by force, intimidation, coercion, or manipulation. Sexual misconduct can be committed by anyone of any</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sexual intercourse or engaging in a sexual act without consent. b. Attempting to engage in sexual intercourse or engaging in a sexual act without consent. c. Sharing private sexual materials of another person without consent.

<p><i>gender/non-gender and can occur between anyone, whether they are the same or different gender/non-gender. Sexual misconduct may vary in its severity and consists of a range of behaviour or attempted behaviour. It can occur between strangers or acquaintances, including people involved in an intimate or sexual relationship.</i></p> <p>Further advice and information can be found in the Guidance for Students who have been Sexually Assaulted or Raped</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Kissing without consent e. Touching without consent. f. Inappropriately showing sexual organs to another person. g. Making unwanted remarks of a sexual nature.
<p>3. Unacceptable behaviour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Threats to hurt another person. b. Abusive comments relating to an individual's sexual orientation, religion or belief, race, pregnancy/maternity, marriage or civil partnership, gender, gender identity, disability or age. c. Acting in an intimidating and/or hostile manner. d. Use of inappropriate language, in person, by word deed or online, including cyber bullying. e. Repeatedly contacting another person (by phone, email, text or on social networking sites) against the wishes of the other person. f. Bullying or harassment, including repeatedly following another person without good reason. g. Disorderly behaviour.

Behaviour in Class

Students are expected:

- To arrive on time for meetings with staff and teaching events such as lectures, seminars, supervisions and laboratories
- To refrain from using mobile phones and other electronic devices for non-educational purposes during teaching events, unless specifically authorised by the responsible lecturer, and in areas where use is forbidden e.g. library
- To treat staff and students with dignity and respect
- Not to behave in a way that distracts other students
- Refrain from indecent or abusive language or behaviour.

This list is not exhaustive.

A student, whose behaviour is considered inappropriate, may be asked to leave a teaching event and, if so, will be reported to the student's Head of School. Serious or repeated instances may lead to disciplinary action under the [Regulations on Non-Academic Student Discipline](#).

Drugs and Alcohol

The University has Policies concerning the misuse of [alcohol](#) and [drugs](#). The Policies cover the University's intent to provide a healthy and safe environment for students and others; to support students with drug or alcohol problems and to deal with drug or alcohol-related problems or incidents which affect the conduct, safety or academic performance of an individual student, other students, staff, campus life and/or the wider community.

The University will take action to prevent injury, damage or other serious risk where, as a result of alcohol or drug misuse, a student acts in such a way as to endanger him/her and/or others. A student

believed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs may, for example, be asked to leave a lecture, seminar, practical workshop, laboratory session or other teaching event. In appropriate circumstances the procedures on Support to Study may be invoked to help a student to receive professional help and advice in relation to his/her academic work. An on-going alcohol or substance misuse problem will not constitute an acceptable excuse for bad behaviour or performance or exempt the student(s) concerned from the normal consequences of inappropriate performance or misconduct.

University Staff

All university staff play a critical role in demonstrating appropriate behaviour and setting the expectations they have of students and colleagues. They should demonstrate professional behaviour and foster an inclusive University culture which encourages positive, supportive and open interactions.

If you wish to report a breach of this Policy, or submit a complaint, please see Appendix 1: Complaints and Confidentiality.

Appendix 4: Respect at Kent Flow Chart

