

University of Bristol position paper on enforcement re. student behaviour in the community

Bristol Student Community Partnership, 24 January 2022

The University of Bristol is committed to being a good neighbor and encouraging high standards of conduct by all members of its community. We regularly exercise this commitment through our campaigns, our central ongoing communications, our work in partnership (for example, with Bristol City Council and UWE Bristol), through the work and engagement of the Community Liaison Office, and through the additional UoB-funded Police patrols, known as Operation Beech.

All reported student misconduct at the University of Bristol is dealt with in accordance with the Student Disciplinary Regulations (updated for each academic year). Strict adherence to published policies and procedures is scrutinised very closely across the sector by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator and, as such, is non-negotiable.

First breaches of local rules and regulations by students in the community are normally investigated at local level (by UoB's Community Liaison Officer), and there are range of sanctions for this level of proven misconduct provided for in the Regulations. These range from a written reprimand to a referral to the Police for breaches or misconduct which also constitute a criminal offence.

Repeated or more serious first incidences of student misconduct will be referred for formal investigation to the University's Student Resolution Service (SRS). The SRS is a new centralised team, implemented in September 2021, led by a Head of Service, with a team made up of a Case Manager role and Student Case Liaison Officers. The range of sanctions for proven breaches/misconduct following formal investigation range from a caution to being expelled from the University.

The process followed by the SRS is detailed and specific, as required by the Regulations, and requires receipt of a written complaint from a named person(s) to provide details of the allegations and the alleged offenders – including supporting evidence. The students about whom the allegations have been made are notified in writing of the commencement of an investigation under the Regulations. They are required to provide a written response to the allegations made against them.

The SRS hold an investigation meeting with the Responding Student(s), the content of which – along with all the other information provided for the case – is used to inform a summary report and the production of a case bundle. This then goes forward for consideration, decision-making, and the imposition of sanctions as appropriate by a senior member of university staff acting on delegated authority from the Vice-Chancellor.

The University does not have any legal power in relation to Student Disciplinary investigations and decisions are made on the balance of probabilities, having fully considered each case in totality and on its own merits, and hence the reason appropriate evidence is key to the outcome of any case. The meaning of 'appropriate' will be dictated by the nature of the allegations themselves, but should be specific and contemporaneous – for example, a time and date-stamped video of an identifiable individual/individuals causing criminal damage.

The University takes all complaints very seriously, and each one is considered on its merits. However, we also fully recognise the importance of working in partnership with others, particularly in relation to concerns in the local community about excessive noise, waste management, and anti-social behaviour. As per the protocol for coordination of response to noise and environmental

nuisance involving university students¹ (between the University of Bristol, the University of the West of England and the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team, Bristol City Council), UoB works to educate and inform students with regards to rights and responsibilities in private rented accommodation. The Council uses advice and legislation to resolve complaints.

In line with the protocol, the Community Liaison Office encourages:

- complainants who are reporting ongoing noise, or where accusations are disputed, to raise a complaint with Neighbourhood Enforcement Team, who are the relevant legal authorities to deal with such incidents.
- complainants who are reporting ongoing waste and recycling mismanagement to raise a complaint with Bristol Waste Company via the Community Engagement Team. This can be referred on to Neighbourhood Enforcement if deemed necessary.
- residents who have been made aware of a planned party that they feel will cause unacceptable disturbance to report in advance to Neighbourhood Enforcement.

The Community Liaison Office also provides the names of the students to the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team at its request, but only when evidence of an environmental nuisance has been established and notices are to be served.

The University and the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team may, where appropriate, carry out joint visits to student premises about which complaints have been made. Joint proactive and advisory visits may also be made to premises where there has been a history of complaints about previous students.

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¹ [Protocol for Liaison BCC-UWE-UoB 2018 .pdf \(bristol.ac.uk\)](#)