



# **Rules and Regulations**

## **For Students**

**2024-2025**

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# University of Bristol Student Agreement

## Definitions

**We/Us/Our** means the University of Bristol.

**You/Your** means a registered student of the University of Bristol or someone who has been formally offered a place at the University.

## Introduction

This Agreement forms the basis of the relationship between you and the University from the time you accept an offer of a place for your programme. Through annual registration you will be subject to the terms of the Student Agreement in force for the academic year for which you are registering.

We have produced this Agreement in consultation with the University of Bristol Students' Union to enable both you and us to be clear about the relationship that exists between us once you accept our offer of a place at the University. This includes acceptance through UCAS (or another agency if applicable)<sup>1</sup>.

To keep this Agreement to a sensible length, we refer to other documents which also form part of it. In particular we refer you to:

- Rules and regulations for students which cover, among other matters: health, safety and welfare, student discipline, examination regulations, fees, fitness to practise, acceptable behaviour expected of you, academic integrity, research conduct and misconduct and the use of computer and library facilities
- Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes and Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Programmes.

If you have been offered University accommodation this is subject to separate agreements managed by our Accommodation Office, setting out terms and conditions, and payment arrangements. Your right to accommodation under any such agreements is dependent upon your remaining a registered student of the University.

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<sup>1</sup> Your ability to take up your place may depend on meeting certain conditions. If you fail to meet the conditions of our offer or if you have not already registered at the time of termination, we shall be entitled to refuse to register you on your programme.



## Terms of this Agreement

### 1. Studies and learning environment

Higher education is a two-way activity, requiring commitment on both sides. This section sets out what you can expect of us and what we expect of you in the key areas of teaching and learning.

#### **1.1. You can expect us to:**

- 1.1.1. provide you with tuition and learning support appropriate to your programme of study with reasonable care and skill
- 1.1.2. provide suitable teaching and learning spaces, library and ICT facilities and other appropriate resources to support your studies
- 1.1.3. provide clear information about your programme and units of study and give guidance on what is likely to be required to complete them successfully
- 1.1.4. encourage a professional and responsible learning environment and suitably support you academically
- 1.1.5. provide a range of pastoral support services which you can access to support you in your studies
- 1.1.6. return marked work in good time and according to the guidance set out in the taught and research codes of practice
- 1.1.7. make reasonable efforts to ensure your programme of study meets the relevant specification for the appropriate academic year, while also ensuring that it is informed by, and updated in line with, current research and developments in the relevant discipline
- 1.1.8. let you know as soon as possible if we need to alter anything to more effectively deliver your programme
- 1.1.9. communicate with you via your University email address

#### **1.2. We expect you to:**

- 1.2.1. take responsibility for your own learning and development, working in partnership with staff to become a self-reliant, independent learner
- 1.2.2. Ensure your English language abilities are of satisfactory standard to ensure you can engage with your studies and the University processes and regulations
- 1.2.3. work hard and diligently, contributing effectively to your programme and respecting the needs of your fellow students
- 1.2.4. take an active interest in all aspects of your programme and ensure you are aware of updated information
- 1.2.5. attend educational activities (lectures, seminars, tutorials, laboratory classes and so on) as are defined in your programme, subject to absence for medical or other agreed reasons and engage with University attendance monitoring systems and processes
- 1.2.6. make appropriate use of the resources available, including staff, library and ICT facilities, and the shared knowledge of the wider academic community
- 1.2.7. comply with all University regulations, including the Regulations for the Use of Library Services and Facilities, the Examination Regulations and the Acceptable Use Policy for Computing Facilities
- 1.2.8. act with academic integrity in all aspects of your studies, evidencing your

- independent thought, presenting accurate data, complying with ethical obligations, engaging with relevant training in this area and clearly referencing other people's ideas
- 1.2.9. be aware of the information provided about the University and your programme, and of where to find more detailed information and guidance, whether electronic or on paper
- 1.2.10. complete and submit by the required deadlines any work to be assessed as part of your programme
- 1.2.11. participate in the academic community, cooperating with fellow students to support each other's learning, and responding to requests to give your opinion about your learning and other experiences at the University
- 1.2.12. check your University email account regularly and frequently both during and outside term time so that you are aware of relevant information in good time
- 1.2.13. have met the entry requirements for the programme for which you are registered and to be able to evidence these qualifications at any time during your period of registration as required by the undergraduate and postgraduate admissions policies

## 2. Quality and representation

We aim to provide you with the highest possible quality of education. To do this we have a number of relevant policies in place. We also actively encourage you to get involved and tell us your views.

### 2.1. You can expect us to:

- 2.1.1. maintain formal University policies, including regulations, codes of practice and guidelines, setting out how we manage and support your programme of study
- 2.1.2. consult your representatives (Students' Union officers and course representatives) on any proposed significant changes to the regulations and policies that govern your programme, to make improvements that will benefit you and other students
- 2.1.3. give you the right to be represented in University governance, usually through the Students' Union, and encourage student representation on relevant University committees, boards and working groups
- 2.1.4. regularly monitor the quality of learning and teaching offered as part of your programme

### 2.2. We expect you to:

- 2.2.1. familiarise yourself and comply with relevant University policies and procedures, including those relating to your programme and the qualification you are working towards.
- 2.2.2. take up the opportunities we provide to enable you to give us your views
- 2.2.3. read and understand information we provide about changes that are taking place and what they mean for you
- 2.2.4. contribute to internal and external procedures for assuring the quality of learning, teaching and assessment

## 3. Openness, accountability and conduct

This Agreement places an expectation upon both you and us to act with integrity, share relevant information, be accountable for our actions and show mutual respect, as set out in this section.

**3.1. You can expect us to:**

- 3.1.1. make publicly available (and regularly update as required) details of the tuition fees and any other expenses relating to programmes of study offered by the University
- 3.1.2. provide you with a fair, equitable and supportive environment in accordance with the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy statement.

**3.2. We expect you to:**

- 3.2.1. share with the University in a timely manner any circumstances affecting your study
- 3.2.2. make sure all tuition fees and other expenses relating to your programme are paid in time and agree to be bound by our regulations on the payment of fees and refunds (and the consequences of non-payment) should you cease to be a registered student at the University
- 3.2.3. take care, when acting as a student representative on school, faculty or University committees, to consult fellow students and to represent their views accurately and in a balanced way

**3.3. Changes to your programme**

- 3.3.1. Keeping your programme up to date is an important academic endeavour and where necessary and reasonable we may need to make changes to your programme. For example, we may need to alter the timetable, location, number of classes, method of delivery, content, assessment methods or syllabus.
- 3.3.2. We will not withdraw a programme unless and until all students enrolled on it have completed their studies, with the exception of programmes which have not yet commenced.

**3.4. You can expect us to:**

- 3.4.1. consult you and elicit your views in relation to any proposed material changes to your programme, taking account of these views in reaching our decision
- 3.4.2. give you reasonable notice on any material changes we decide to make
- 3.4.3. attempt to minimise any adverse impact that any changes may have on you.
- 3.4.4. make arrangements, where reasonably necessary, for you to complete your original programme.
- 3.4.5. explore with you, where necessary, the opportunities for transferring to another programme at Bristol or at another institution
- 3.4.6. ensure, if you transfer to another programme, that you receive recognition or credits for any units you have successfully completed
- 3.4.7. in the event that it is not possible for the University to deliver the education agreed under this Agreement we will refund tuition fees and other reasonable costs subject to section 9 of this Agreement.
- 3.4.8. If between the time of your acceptance of an offer and registering for a programme at the University we make fundamental changes to it, you will be entitled to withdraw your application.

## 4. Disciplinary matters, appeals and complaints

A key purpose of this Agreement is to ensure that you know what we expect of you, and you understand what to expect of us. Our disciplinary procedures and complaints system are there to address situations where we believe you have breached our rules, or where you believe we have not acted fairly.

### 4.1. You can expect us to:

- 4.1.1. operate a fair and transparent disciplinary procedure as set out in our Student Disciplinary Regulations
- 4.1.2. enable you to make a complaint about matters that affect you and to handle any complaint fairly, in accordance with our Student Complaints Procedure
- 4.1.3. enable you to submit an appeal against an academic decision under the Assessment Regulations

### 4.2. We expect you to:

- 4.2.1. be aware of and comply with University rules and regulations regarding student behaviour (including in University residences and in the community), attendance and other matters concerning your time as a student of the University
- 4.2.2. be aware of regulations relating to your programme whether a taught or research programme, and the Assessment Regulations, including the rules relating to extenuating circumstances
- 4.2.3. raise any concerns when they first arise, by giving staff in your school or faculty the opportunity to resolve them with you in accordance with the Student Complaints Procedure
- 4.2.4. contact your course/programme and or other student representatives about any concerns that are not easily resolved
- 4.2.5. submit any complaint in a timely manner and in accordance with the deadlines set out in the Student Complaints Procedure

## 5. Intellectual property<sup>2</sup>

### 5.1. Our intellectual property:

We own or have licensed to us the intellectual property in all course materials produced by us (or on our behalf) and such materials must only be used for your own personal study purposes. They may not be shared publicly by you or anyone else, including on the internet, without our consent in writing. Unauthorised public sharing of University Intellectual Property will constitute misconduct under the Student Disciplinary Regulations.

### 5.2. Your intellectual property:

As set out in the Intellectual Property Policy for Students we may require that you transfer to us intellectual property you create during your time at the University. You hereby agree that where required by the policy, you will enter into the necessary agreements to give effect to the policy.

### 5.3. Use of your intellectual property for non-commercial purposes:

In consideration of our obligations under this Agreement, you hereby grant us (the University)

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<sup>2</sup> UK Government definition of intellectual property

the right to use intellectual property created by you during your programme and owned by you for non-commercial purposes. 'Non-commercial' means things like educational use, research use, publication in academic journals, University promotional materials, websites, exhibitions, prospectuses and catalogues. Our rights will be unlimited in time and geographical area. We may sub-licence such intellectual property rights to other organisations and academic institutions for non-commercial purposes. If the work created by you is tangible (such as a work of art, sculpture or 3D model), we may borrow the work for non-commercial purposes for a reasonable period.

#### **5.4. Use of your intellectual property for commercial purposes:**

We may also use intellectual property created by you for commercial purposes. If we wish to do this you will be required to enter into a formal licence or assignment with us to permit this. In these circumstances you will be entitled to a royalty and the amount of this will be determined under the University's Revenue Sharing Scheme.

## **6. Recording of educational activity**

We may allow you to record academic teaching in accordance with our Policy on Live Streaming and Recording Educational Activity.

In exchange for you being allowed to record lectures or other academic teaching and use such recordings as set out in the policy, you hereby assign to us all copyright in the recordings you make and all other rights in the recordings of whatever nature.

If you fail to comply with the policy this may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

The policy also covers recordings that we make and/or make available to you.

## **7. Liability**

We will be liable to you for any direct loss or damage you suffer if we fail to carry out our obligations under this Agreement to a reasonable standard, or if we breach any legal duties of care that we owe you (including causing death or personal injury by our negligence). This does not apply if such omission is attributable to your own fault or to that of a third party.

Our liability to you in the case of loss or damage (other than for death or personal injury or fraud) is limited to a reasonable amount having regard to such factors as whether the damage was due to a negligent act or omission by us.

We will not be liable to you for events outside our control that we either could not have foreseen or could not have prevented even if we had taken reasonable care, such as:

- a) government restrictions or policy (for example unexpected significant changes to higher education funding)
- b) over- or under-demand from students
- c) staff illness or industrial action
- d) severe weather or fire
- e) civil disorder or political unrest

- f) a public health emergency (for example concern with regard to the transmission of a serious illness)

In such circumstances we reserve the right to change or cancel all or part of your programme.

## 8. Our legal obligations

In addition to the principles set out in this Agreement, we have certain obligations under UK law that may be relevant to you. This section explains how we fulfil these obligations and how you support us in doing so.

### 8.1. Data protection

When you join our academic community you give us the right to hold and process your personal data including sensitive personal data. How we do this is set out in our [Student Fair Processing Notice](#) and in accordance with our obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018.

#### 8.2. We expect you to:

- 8.2.1. ensure that the personal details we hold about you, including your current term-time and home address and personal email address, are accurate, and are updated as soon as they change (this will help us to contact you quickly as and when needed)
- 8.2.2. maintain your emergency contact details and confirm whether or not you agree to the University using the contact in the event of significant concerns about your wellbeing where there is not an automatic legal right to do so, as outlined in the [Emergency Contact Procedure](#)
- 8.2.3. protect the authentication details used to access your personal information and University services. This includes not sharing the password you use to access University services with anyone, being mindful of fraudulent attempts to steal your password (e.g. phishing emails) and keeping your University password unique from other internet services
- 8.2.4. be aware of our [Policy on Live Streaming and Recording Educational Activity](#) so that you understand your rights and obligations when we record lectures or other educational activities in which you may be involved

### 8.3. Immigration requirements

We have legal obligations to comply with UK immigration requirements including monitoring your engagement with your Programme and updating the government about your attendance on your Programme.

If you are an international student you must ensure that your immigration status is up to date. Further guidance is available from our [Student Visa Services](#)

### 8.4. Criminal convictions

'Unspent convictions' and 'protected convictions and cautions' are defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. For some programmes, including, but not limited to, social work, PGCE and medicine, you will also be required to disclose spent convictions and cautions that are not 'protected' and obtain a check and certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We require students to disclose any unspent criminal convictions and cautions that are not 'protected' when applying to us, or if these arise during their studies. We conduct fair procedures for dealing with students who disclose criminal convictions either before or after registration.

## **9. If things don't work out**

We anticipate that your relationship with the University of Bristol will be a happy and fulfilling one on both sides. Occasionally, however, things don't work out and a student leaves their programme without completing it.

The relationship, and this Agreement between us, will end if **either** you withdraw from the University **or** we require you to withdraw for any of the reasons set out below.

We may require you to withdraw from the University, and reserve the right to terminate our relationship with you, in writing, with immediate effect if:

- a. you fail to comply with our Student Disciplinary Regulations or any of the other policies that apply to you
- b. the relevant Board of Examiners for your programme makes a decision, based upon your academic performance or lack of attendance, that you should not be permitted to continue with your programme
- c. The Dean of your faculty makes a decision that you be required to withdraw following a Registration Review Panel in accordance with the Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes
- d. you fail to pay your fees in accordance with the Student Fees Regulations
- e. you are expelled from, or refused admission to or membership of, any organisation that you are expected to belong to or participate in as part of your programme, or you fail to meet fitness-to-practise criteria for the profession for which you are training
- f. your circumstances change between your acceptance of our offer and the start of your programme such that, in our reasonable opinion, our offer is no longer viable
- g. we become aware of information about you that we were previously unaware of and that, in our reasonable opinion, makes it inappropriate for you to study on your programme
- h. it comes to our attention that you have failed to provide us with all relevant information, or have supplied false or misleading information, in relation to your application
- i. your behaviour represents a significant risk to the health, safety or welfare of yourself or others, as detailed in the Support to Study Policy and Procedure
- j. your continuing registration at the University puts us in breach of any of our legal obligations to comply with UK immigration or other legal requirements

If we require you to withdraw from the University for any of the reasons set out above, and you disagree with the decision, you will have the right to appeal under the Assessment Regulations or submit a complaint under the Student Complaints Procedure dependant on the reason for the requirement to withdraw.

If you withdraw, or are required to withdraw, from the University, you must:

- a. stop studying on your programme

- b. immediately return your student identification card, together with all property owned by us, to your faculty office
- c. pay all outstanding fees immediately
- d. leave the University and any University accommodation (any contract you have for University accommodation will terminate in accordance with its terms)

Any action we take under the above provisions will not restrict our ability to take any other action against you that we have the right to take, should this be necessary.

## 10. Notices

Any legal notice given under this Agreement will be in writing. Any notice will be sent by email to you at your University email address or, if you have not yet registered, to whatever email address you have provided us with. We may also send any notice to either your term-time or your home address as appropriate.

We consider notice to have been served when the information has been delivered by hand, or 48 hours have passed after if it was posted (if sent by pre-paid first class post) or sent by email. Please note your obligation to keep your contact details up to date.

Notice to the University should be addressed to the Registrar by email, pa-registrarsoffice@bristol.ac.uk, or at **Beacon House, University of Bristol, Queen's Road, Bristol BS8 1QU**.

## 11. General Legal Provisions

This Agreement is personal to you; you are not permitted to transfer it, or assign any of the rights and obligations under it, to a third party.

These terms and conditions, and the documents referred to in this Agreement, are the entire understanding between you and us about your programme. They replace and/or override any other undertakings or representations, communications or documents issued by us, either in writing or orally.

If either you, or we, do not insist on a particular right under this Agreement being fulfilled, this does not invalidate any of the rights set out in the Agreement, or the obligation to fulfil them or ability to enforce them. If any section of this Agreement becomes void, illegal, invalid or unenforceable, this will not affect the legality, validity or enforceability of the other sections. Each Party intends that the terms of this Agreement will not be enforceable by any third party, by virtue of the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999.

References to statutes or regulations include any amendments made from time to time to those statutes or regulations. The Agreement is governed by, and in accordance with, the laws of England and Wales and is subject to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.

## 12. Your right to cancel



- 12.1. For the purposes of the Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013, if this Agreement is a 'distance contract' or and 'off premises contract', you have the right to cancel your acceptance of it within a period of 14 days after you have accepted the terms of this Agreement without giving us any reason.
- 12.2. To meet the cancellation deadline, it is sufficient for you to have sent your cancellation before the 14 day period has expired. You must clearly state your decision, by means of a letter sent by post or email, or by completing our online model cancellation form. If you use the online form we will acknowledge receipt of your notice by email without delay.
- 12.3. If you exercise this right to cancel we will reimburse to you all payments you have already made without undue delay and not later than 14 days after the day on which we are informed about your decision. We will make the reimbursement using the same means of payment as for your initial transaction, unless you have expressly agreed otherwise. You will not incur any fees as a result of the reimbursement.

**Consumer Contracts Regulations 2013: model cancellation form**

*(Complete and return this form only if you wish to withdraw from the contract)*

To University of Bristol of Senate House, Tyndall Avenue, Bristol BS8 1TH:

I hereby give notice that I wish to cancel my contract for the supply of the following service:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Course name and number)

Ordered on \_\_\_\_\_ (insert date of acceptance of place on course)

Name of consumer: \_\_\_\_\_,

Address of consumer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of consumer (only if this form is notified on paper): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# University Acceptable Behaviour Policy Statement

## Policy

The University is committed to providing a positive working and learning environment that enriches lives and where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. The University expects the highest standards of behaviour from staff and students, whether on University premises or elsewhere.

All members of the University should be aware of their own behaviour, and how it impacts on others. All are expected to conduct themselves in a reasonable and acceptable manner.

Unacceptable Behaviour means words, actions or practices that are experienced as inappropriate, unreasonable or offensive. This can include bullying, harassment (including online bullying and harassment), sexual misconduct, demeaning initiation ceremonies, threatening behaviour and malicious posting on social media. It can also include discrimination or abuse relating to, but not exclusive to, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion/beliefs and age.

Steps for dealing with unacceptable behaviour by staff and students is set out at the links below:

### **For Staff - wishing to raise an allegation about staff**

[Tools to promote positive behaviours and equip staff to challenge unacceptable behaviour](#)

[Acceptable Behaviour at Work Policy Statement and Guidance](#)

[Mediation Service](#)

[Staff Grievance Procedure](#)

### **For Students - wishing to raise an allegation about students**

[Procedure for Students raising Allegations of Unacceptable Behaviour by a Student](#)

[Mediation Service](#)

### **For Students - wishing to report an allegation about staff**

[Procedure for Students reporting Unacceptable Behaviour by a member of Staff](#)

### **For Staff - wishing to raise an allegation about a student**

[Procedure for Staff raising Allegations of Unacceptable Behaviour by a Student](#)

[Mediation Service](#)

## REPORT OF STUDENT UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

This form should be used to report unacceptable behaviour by a student.

If you are reporting any form of sexual misconduct please complete the form here.

**Please submit your completed form to the Student Resolution Service:** [srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk)  
A member of the Student Resolution Service will contact you to help progress your report.

### Support available from the University:

- Students - please complete the Wellbeing Request Support form and a member of the Student Wellbeing Service will be in touch.
- Staff - the Staff Counselling Service can provide support to staff experiencing difficulties as a result of unacceptable behaviour.

### 1. PERSONAL DETAILS

**Full Name:**

**Student ID number (if applicable):**

**School / Faculty:**

**Address for correspondence:**

**Email address:**

**Telephone Number:**

Please indicate your **preferred method of contact** (in relation to this report only – all other communications with the university remain the same):

### 2. DETAILS OF THE PERSON YOU ARE REPORTING

The incident involves a University of Bristol student [ ☐ ]

**Name of the person(s) - (if known):**

### 3. DETAILS

Provide details of the incident. Give as much detail as possible including the type of behaviour, what happened, date, time, location, people present and how you have been affected by the incident. Where possible present the events in chronological order.

Please set out the steps you have taken to address the matter informally prior to reporting. If this has not been possible, please set out why.

### 4. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

When submitting the form please provide evidence of the incident wherever possible, including the names of any witnesses. Evidence may include photographs, copies of emails, screenshots or comments/messages posted in social media. List below the evidence that you are providing:

### 5. OUTCOME BEING SOUGHT

Please suggest any outcome or further action you are seeking. We will be clear if your preferred outcome is or is not possible in line with the Disciplinary regulations.

### 6. REPORTING THE INCIDENT ELSEWHERE

Have you reported the incident to a School, Faculty or another Service at the University?

Have you reported the incident to any external agent or service, such as the Police?

<b>7. DECLARATION</b>
<p>I declare that the information provided in this form is to the best of my knowledge true, and that I would be willing to answer further questions relating to it if necessary.</p> <p>Signed:</p> <p>Date:</p>

More information about the disciplinary process is available here:

- [Report unacceptable behaviour](#)
- [Student-Disciplinary-Regulations.pdf \(bristol.ac.uk\)](#)

## REPORT OF STAFF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

This form should be used by registered University of Bristol students to report unacceptable behaviour by a University of Bristol staff member.

**Please submit your completed form to the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager (SCMM) at [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk).**

You can contact the SCMM for help and advice before submitting your report.

### Support available from the University:

Please complete the [Wellbeing Request Support form](#) and a member of the Student Wellbeing Service will be in touch.

### 1. PERSONAL DETAILS

**Full Name:**

**Student ID number:**

**School / Faculty:**

**Address for correspondence:**

**University email address:**

**Personal email address:**

**Telephone Number:**

Please indicate your **preferred method of contact** (in relation to this report only – all other communications with the university remain the same):

*In the case of a Group Complaint, please attach a list of complainants and their details on a separate sheet of paper.*

### 2. DETAILS OF THE PERSON YOU ARE REPORTING

**Name of the member of University of Bristol staff - (if known):**

**Division/School/Department – (if known):**

### **3. DETAILS**

**Provide details of the complaint. Give as much detail as possible including the type of behaviour, what happened, date, time, location, people present and how you have been affected. Where possible present the events in chronological order.**

**Please set out the steps you have taken to address the matter informally prior to reporting.**

### **4. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

**When submitting the form please provide evidence wherever possible, including the names of any witnesses. Evidence may include photographs, copies of emails/text messages/messages on messaging services such as WhatsApp or Telegram, screenshots or comments/messages posted on social media. List below the evidence that you are providing:**

### **5. OUTCOME BEING SOUGHT**



Please suggest any outcome you are seeking.

#### 6. REPORTING THE INCIDENT ELSEWHERE

Have you reported the incident to a School, Faculty or another Service at the University?

Have you reported the incident to any external agent or service, such as the Police?

#### 7. DECLARATION

I declare that the information provided in this form is to the best of my knowledge true, and that I would be willing to answer further questions relating to it if necessary.

Signed:

Date:

More information about the disciplinary process is available here:

- [Report unacceptable behaviour](#)
- [Make a complaint | Current students | University of Bristol](#)
- [Student-Complaints-Procedure.pdf \(bristol.ac.uk\)](#)

# How the University uses student personal data (Fair processing notice)

## About this notice

The University needs to collect and process personal data in order to function effectively as an educational institution and to provide students with the support they require while undertaking their studies. Personal data is processed for a variety of reasons (as set out below) and all such personal data will be collected and processed in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (**GDPR**) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

This notice explains how the University collects, uses and shares personal data relating to applicants and prospective, current and former students (**you/your**) and your rights in relation to the processing of your personal data.

In this notice:

- **personal data** means any data which can identify you directly or indirectly (whether itself or when combined with other data), regardless of the format or media on which the data are stored. This includes data that can identify you when combined with other data that is held separately (pseudonymous data) but does not include data that has been manipulated so that you can no longer be identified from it (anonymous data).
- **processing** means any activity relating to your personal data including collection, use, alteration, storage, disclosure and destruction.

Unless the University processes your personal data on behalf of another organisation for purposes that have been determined by that organisation, the University is a 'controller' in relation to your personal data and is registered as such with the Information Commissioner's Office (**ICO**) (registration number Z6650067).

## Changes to this notice

The University may update this notice at any time and may provide you with further notices on specific occasions where we collect and process personal data about you. You should check this notice regularly to take notice of any changes, however where any change affects your rights and interests, we will make sure we bring this to your attention and clearly explain what this means for you.

## Questions or comments

If you have any questions or comments regarding this notice or you wish to exercise any of your rights (see below), you should contact our Data Protection Officer by email at [data-protection@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:data-protection@bristol.ac.uk) or by phone on ext. 41824.

## How we collect your personal data

We may collect your personal data in a number of ways, including:

- personal data provided by you when you express an interest in applying to the University (for example, by booking a place on one of our open days or requesting a printed prospectus).
- personal data provided by you when you apply to be a student at the University (for example, by applying online through the Universities and College Admissions Service

(UCAS), or directly to the University).

- personal data provided by you when you register as a student with the University.
- personal data provided by you when you communicate with us by telephone, email or via our website and social media (for example when you contact us or any member of our staff to make an enquiry or raise a concern).
- personal data collected from or observed about you in the course of your studies including your use of University resources, services and systems and other interactions with the University.
- personal data from third parties in the course of the application and admissions process, or during the course of your studies (for example, UCAS, other institutions that deliver joint programmes with the University, Government departments such as the Home Office, the Student Loans Company and your previous or current school, college, university or employer who may provide a reference about you or who may sponsor your studies).

## **Types of personal data processed**

Personal data the University may process includes:

- your unique University student number and other examples of unique system IDs (e.g. UCAS personal ID)
- contact information (including name, term-time and holiday addresses, date of birth, phone numbers and email addresses)
- photographs
- information provided as part of your application to study at the University, or created during the application process (e.g. interview scores and notes)
- financial information
- attendance information (for teaching and pre-registration events such visit days and interviews)
- visa and immigration information (including visa and passport details)
- academic marks and progress
- information provided in relation to extenuating circumstances, appeals and complaints
- references
- disciplinary information
- caring responsibilities
- information regarding hobbies and interests
- other legitimate personal data relating to academic and pastoral support

We may also collect, or you may choose to provide us with, the following **special categories** of more sensitive personal data:

- information revealing your race or ethnicity, religious beliefs, sex life or sexual orientation (whether or not indicated by your gender or gender identity) and political opinions
- information about your health, including any disability or medical condition, and dietary requirements
- information about criminal convictions or offences

These types of personal data require us to take additional steps to ensure their security and confidentiality.

## **Personal data provided by you about others**

You may provide us with personal data about other individuals, for example, emergency contact details and information about your family circumstances and dependents (for

example to assess bursary and grant eligibility and provide pastoral care services). Students should notify the relevant person that they are providing their contact details to the University as their listed emergency contact.

## **How the University uses personal data about you**

The University may process personal data (including special categories of personal data) about you for the following purposes:

- administration of applications (for example, receiving and processing UCAS forms and applications, compilation of statistics, assessments of applications and interviews including offers at different stages of progression)
- educational administration (for example, programme and unit registration, progress monitoring, timetabling, calculation and publication of assessments and results, provision of references and assessing eligibility for bursaries and grants)
- provision of library and information services (for example, administration of membership, cards, loans and fines)
- provision and maintenance of computing facilities (for example, email accounts and internet access)
- financial administration (for example, payment of tuition fees and other services administered by Finance Services, provision of loans and bursaries via the Student Funding Office, and the use of debtor information to make decisions about withholding bursary payments, preventing re-registration of returning students and inviting students to graduation ceremonies)
- administration of student welfare/pastoral care services (for example, contact with personal tutor, Counselling Service, Disability Services, Careers Service and financial advice services)
- administration and provision of health care services (for example, Student Health Service and Counselling Service)
- security and crime prevention/detection (for example, the use of regulated CCTV, security incident reports)
- provision of student ID card (UCard)
- provision and management of University owned and privately-owned property for students
- promotion of the University (for example, providing information about programmes that may be of interest to you, summer schools and events hosted, co-hosted or supported by the University on and off-campus)
- auditing compliance with the University's legal and regulatory obligations and policies (including those relating to visa/Tier 4 requirements)
- handling complaints, appeals and disciplinary actions

The University will also use student personal data to produce non-identifiable statistical data for analysis to fulfil its commitment to equality monitoring, to provide a more targeted response to improving the student experience, and to respond to freedom of information requests.

## **Lawful grounds for processing your personal data**

We will only use your personal data when we are permitted to do so by law. Most commonly, we will use your personal data:

- **to perform a contract** the University has entered into with you or take steps before entering into a contract with you at your request (for example, as part of the admissions process and once you have enrolled as a student, to provide you with the services set out in the [Student Agreement](#)).
- **to comply with the University's legal obligations** (for example, complying with

immigration, anti-money laundering, health and safety and safeguarding laws, preventing and detecting crime, assisting the police and other authorities with their investigations).

- **to perform tasks carried out in the public interest** which are mainly set out in the University's Charter (and related Acts, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations).
- **where necessary for our legitimate interests** or those of a third party provided your interests and rights do not override those interests (for example, providing services that do not form part of the Student Agreement, monitoring the effectiveness and performance of the University's teaching, promoting equality and diversity, providing administrative and management services and recovering monies owed to us).
- **to protect your vital interests** or those of another person (for example where we know or have reason to believe that you or another person may suffer harm)

In circumstances, where you have a genuine choice as to whether we should process your personal data, we will ask you for your **consent**. The method used to obtain your consent will depend on the scope and context of the processing that we propose.

In relation to special categories of personal data and personal data relating to criminal convictions and offences, we may request your **explicit consent** unless a condition applies which allows us to process such personal data without doing so.

### Sharing your personal data with third parties

Where there are lawful grounds for doing so, the University may share your personal data with the following third parties:

- Individuals employed or engaged by the University, to the extent necessary to perform their duties
- The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Every year the University is required to send some of the information it holds about you to HESA. HESA is an official source of data about UK higher education. Your HESA information is used for a variety of purposes by HESA and by third parties. For example, it is used by Higher Education funding and regulatory bodies for their statutory and/or public functions including funding, regulation and policy-making purposes. It is also used for statistical and research purposes, such as the Graduate Outcomes survey for which you may be contacted by phone, SMS or email after you graduate. On 4 October 2022 HESA merged with Jisc. HESA is now part of Jisc, a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, registered in England (company number: 05747339; charity number: 1149740). This means that Jisc is now the data controller for all data sent to HESA. See more information about HESA/Jisc's use of your personal data
- The Office for Students, or parties acting on its behalf (for example, Ipsos MORI conducting the National Student Survey)
- Student Loans Company and other bodies involved in student finance (for example, Student Awards Agency Scotland, Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland, Student Finance European Union) - to allow students to receive their loans
- Department of Education and Local Education Authorities
- Local authorities (primarily Bristol City Council, but potentially other neighbouring authorities) - in relation to Council Tax exemption, maintaining the electoral roll and administration of housing benefit
- UK Visas and Immigration - information on immigration and visas
- General Medical Council (GMC) - for medical graduates, to process and maintain registration with the GMC
- General Dental Council (GDC) - for dental graduates, to process and maintain registration with the GDC
- Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) – for veterinary graduates, to process

and maintain registration with the RCVS

- The Students' Union (Bristol SU) - the University will provide Bristol SU with student personal data to allow it to create and manage its membership list, though students can decide not to be a member
- JISC Plagiarism Detection Service (Turnitin®)
- External accommodation providers - where student accommodation is provided on behalf of the University
- Research Councils
- External parties assisting with admissions or examination procedures (for example, interviewing for certain programmes)
- Agents assisting the University with international admissions (limited to what is strictly necessary for the performance of the agent's role) - this may include the disclosure of personal data outside the European Economic Area
- Internal and external auditors
- External examiners
- Other education institutions, partners or research organisations where a student's programme is being run collaboratively, or where such parties host students for elements of their programme (for example, other universities, schools, NHS and industry bodies)
- Sponsors of students - information will only be disclosed when in compliance with sponsorship agreements and will be kept to the minimum required (for example, providing award verification letters)
- Third parties performing administrative functions on behalf of the University (acting as data processors)
- Debt collection agencies – when students have not paid fees that they owe
- Police and other investigative agencies - only where the disclosure of personal data would assist with the investigation of a crime or other alleged misconduct, and such disclosures are necessary and proportionate to the aims of the investigation
- Organisations seeking student views to enable the University to endeavour to improve the experience offered to students (for example, the National Student Survey)
- The Government and local authorities during information gathering exercises when the University is legally obliged to provide data
- Potential employers and other educational institutions requesting a reference for a current or past student (consent is implied by providing the University's details as a referee). This includes confirmation of awards.
- Academic and research staff for the purposes of research (potentially involving disclosures to external organisations or regulators, under contract and properly assessed) – steps will be taken to protect your identity, which will not be published, and data will not be used to take decisions about you individually.

Where the University uses third parties to process personal data on its behalf (acting as data processors), a written contract will be put in place to ensure that any personal data shared will be held in accordance with the requirements of data protection law and that such data processors have appropriate security measures in place in relation to your personal data.

Parents, family members and guardians are considered to be third parties and your personal data will not be disclosed to such persons unless you have given your consent at application or registration to the disclosure of limited information in certain circumstances, or the disclosure is otherwise made in accordance with data protection law.

**Please note that we may need to share your personal information with a regulator or to otherwise comply with the law.**

### **Where your personal data are stored**

Most personal data about you, including your core student records, will be stored on servers

within the UK or elsewhere within the European Economic Area (**EEA**). However, some personal data that the University processes about you may be accessed from, transferred to, or stored in, a country or territory outside of the EEA. The University will only transfer your personal data outside of the EEA:

- to a country or territory that has been determined by the European Commission as providing an adequate level of protection for your personal data.
- where the transfer is subject to one or more appropriate safeguards prescribed by law, including the standard contractual clauses approved by the European Commission.
- in the case of a third party based in the United States of American, where such third party is certified under a relevant certification scheme approved by the UK Government.
- if the transfer is otherwise permitted by law, or necessary for the performance of a contract, or where you have given your explicit consent.

### **How the University keeps your personal data secure**

The University has put in place appropriate technical and organisational security measures to prevent your personal data from being accidentally lost, used or accessed in any unauthorised way or altered or disclosed. In addition, the University limits access to your personal data to the persons and organisations described above who have a need to access it. For further information, visit the University's [Information Security](#) page.

The University has also put in place procedures to deal with any suspected personal data security breach and will notify you and any applicable regulator of a suspected breach where legally required to do so.

### **How long the University will retain your personal data**

The University must only to retain your personal data for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes for which it was collected and to satisfy any legal, regulatory, accounting or reporting requirements.

Specified retention periods are applied to each category of personal data that we may process about you. In setting these retention periods, the University has taken into account:

- the nature, sensitivity and volume of the personal data
- the potential risk of harm to you arising from the University's continued retention of the personal data
- the purposes for which the University may process your personal data
- whether the University is required to retain any personal data by law or in accordance with its legitimate interests

Generally speaking, all relevant correspondence in relation to your application and studies will be held by the University and retained for six years after your graduation or departure, after which time it will be securely disposed of. Core information about your studies and academic awards (e.g. dates of study, courses studies, main academic details etc) will be retained indefinitely.

In some cases, the University may anonymise your personal data so that it can no longer be identified with you, in which case the University may retain such data indefinitely.

If notice of a legal claim or other proceeding is received, then the University may retain and process relevant personal data in order to defend the claim for the duration of the same.

Whilst the University may dispose of any personal data after the conclusion of the claim, please be aware that all litigation documents disclosed, or evidence given, may be a matter of public record.

### **Collaborative programmes of doctoral training**

Please be aware that if you are applying for or enrolling on a collaborative programme of doctoral training (such as those listed on the [Bristol Doctoral College website](#)) then the University will need to make some further uses and disclosures of your personal data to administer your place on the programme. For further information, please see the relevant [Data Protection Statement](#).

### **Contact directories**

The name and email address of all students will be included in the University [contact directory](#), the contents of which are accessible to all University staff and students, but not to external audiences.

Postgraduate Research students' details will be included in the [Explore Bristol Research](#) and [Pure](#) directories, which are public-facing.

If students do not wish their details to feature in these directories they need to contact the University Secretary's Office who will consider their request. Please contact [data-protection@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:data-protection@bristol.ac.uk).

### **Email**

Email for students is provided by a third party. This requires the University to disclose some personal data (name and email address) to this third party. Students using the service are also subject to the third party's terms of use and privacy policy and are notified of these terms when issued with their account.

### **Your responsibilities**

You must ensure that any personal data collected and processed by you in the course of your studies is held in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy. Any research involving the use of personal data should only be conducted following an ethical review. You are also subject to the [University's Information Security Policy](#).

You have a responsibility to ensure your personal details are up to date. Registered students can do this online at [Student Info](#), and applicants should contact UCAS or the University.

### **UCard (University ID card)**

The [UCard Privacy Policy](#) sets out how personal data, and other information related to the UCard, is handled.

### **CCTV**

The University operates CCTV around its properties for security and crime detection purposes. For further information, please see the University's [CCTV Code of Practice](#).

### **Alumni**

Once you graduate, you will automatically become a member of the University's alumni



community and your data will be held securely on the University's alumni database. The University keeps alumni up to date with news from Bristol and information about activities including events, volunteering opportunities and fundraising. You can change the way the University communicates with you at any time by emailing [alumni@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@bristol.ac.uk). You can read more about the alumni data policy here: [www.bristol.ac.uk/alumni-your-data](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alumni-your-data).

## Your rights

You have a number of rights in relation to the processing of your personal data by the University:

- **Access:** You have the right to request access to and be provided with a copy of the personal data held about you together with certain information about the processing of such personal data to check that the University is processing it lawfully and fairly.
- **Correction:** You have the right to request correction of any inaccurate or incomplete personal data held about you.
- **Deletion:** You have the right to request erasure of any personal data held about you where there is no good reason for the University to continue processing it, or where you have exercised your right to object to the processing of your personal data.
- **Restriction:** You have the right to request restriction of how the University processes your personal data, for example, to confirm its accuracy or the University's reasons for holding it or as an alternative to its erasure.
- **Objection:** You have the right to object to the University's processing of any personal data which is based on the legitimate interests of the University, or those of a third party, relating to your particular circumstances. You also have the right to object to the University processing your personal data for direct marketing purposes.
- **Portability:** You have the right to receive or request that the University transfers a copy of your personal data in an electronic format where the basis of the University processing such personal data is your consent or the performance of a contract, and the information is processed by automated means.
- **Complaints:** You have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) or any other EU supervisory authority in relation to how the University processes your personal data.

Applications to study at the University may be subject to elements of automated decision making; for example, identifying qualifications from non-accredited institutions and scoring grades against those required for a particular course. If you wish to object to these processes or to find out more please contact the University's Data Protection Officer.

To exercise any of these rights you will need to contact the University's Data Protection Officer at [data-protection@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:data-protection@bristol.ac.uk). The University may be entitled to refuse any request in certain circumstances and you will be notified accordingly where this is the case.

Where the lawful ground relied upon by the University to process any of your personal data is your consent, you have the right to withdraw such consent at any time without having to give any reason. However, if you do so, the University may not be able to provide some or all of its services to you or the provision of those services may be affected.

You will not have to pay any fee to exercise any of the above rights, though the University may charge a reasonable fee or refuse to comply with your request if any request is clearly unfounded or excessive. Where this is the case, you will be notified accordingly.

To protect the confidentiality of your personal data the University may ask you to verify your identity before fulfilling any request in relation to your personal data.

**June 2023**

# Student Complaints Procedure

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The University aims to promote a culture in which students feel confident to raise their concerns. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about action or lack of action by the University, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the University. The University aims to operate a fair and transparent student complaints procedure and no student will be treated less favourably as a result of making a complaint.
- 1.2 Wherever possible, the University will seek to resolve concerns raised by students informally. If a student has a complaint about any aspect of University life, it should be raised with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity. Faculties, schools and divisions that provide services to students should inform students who to contact in the first instance if they have a complaint.
- 1.3 If the University is unable to resolve the complaint informally, or the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, the student may make a formal complaint under this Procedure. Complaints by students with a registered disability about the provision of reasonable adjustments for teaching and assessment shall be given priority, in order to prevent prejudice to the student that might be caused by any delay.
- 1.4 The complaints procedure involves two stages:
  - (i) The Local Stage
  - (ii) The University Stage
- 1.5 Students may raise complaints jointly.
- 1.6 Complaints must be brought promptly. The University will not accept complaints that are made longer than **30 days** after the matters complained about, unless there is an exceptional reason for the delay.
- 1.7 Any registered student may bring a complaint under this procedure. A former student may also bring a complaint under this procedure after the matters complained about, but only if the complaint could not reasonably have been brought while they were a registered student. In such cases the complaint should be raised within 30 days of the end of their registration.
- 1.8 Complaints about appealable decisions of an academic body on student progress, assessment and awards may not be brought under this procedure and may only be raised under the academic appeals procedure set out in the Assessment Regulations. Complaints about teaching and supervision will not be considered in an academic appeal unless they were raised by the student promptly at the time they first arose and pursued under this procedure. A complaint against the decision to terminate registration for non-engagement can be brought under this Procedure where the student is deemed withdrawn by the School or Faculty.

- 1.9 If at any time during the complaints procedure, the student fails to pursue the complaint or to respond to enquiries in a timely manner without good reason, the University Secretary may after a delay of more than 28 days on the part of the student, determine that no further action should be taken in respect of the complaint and that the complaint procedure is concluded.
- 1.10 Claims for compensation for personal injury cannot normally be brought under this procedure but may be accepted at the discretion of the University Secretary.
- 1.11 Reports about unacceptable behaviour of students should be raised under the Student Disciplinary Regulations.
- 1.12 Reports about the unacceptable behaviour of staff should be raised by submitting a Report of Unacceptable Behaviour by Staff to the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager ("SCMM") by email at student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk. The report will then be referred to the University's HR team for consideration under the relevant staff procedures.
- 1.13 'Days' for the purposes of this procedure includes weekends but excludes bank holidays and University closure days, unless specifically referred to as working days – see Dates | About the University | University of Bristol.

## **2 Safeguards and Confidentiality**

### **A Confidentiality**

- 2.1 An appropriate level of confidentiality is fundamental to the operation of an effective complaints process and must balance transparency and the requirements of natural justice against a legitimate expectation of personal privacy. In order to ensure the integrity of the process all parties involved in the operation of this Procedure including those who are the subject of the complaint, those bringing the complaint, any witnesses and those operating the Procedure must ensure that they maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- 2.2 In imposing an expectation of confidentiality, the University recognises that it may be necessary and therefore appropriate for those involved in this Procedure to share certain confidential information with third parties, as set out below.
- 2.3 The University may disclose information:
  - (a) to those who need to know in order to discharge their responsibilities at work;
  - (b) where it considers that disclosure is necessary in the interests of health and safety at work or the welfare of other staff, students or the public interest;
  - (c) where disclosure is required by law;
  - (d) to witnesses and/or attendees at the meetings within the Procedure.
- 2.4 Students and staff members may disclose information:

- (a) with professional advisers for the purpose of obtaining advice;
- (b) with family members and support services for the purpose of obtaining guidance and support;
- (c) with relevant sector bodies such as the OIA or the University's regulator, the OfS.

## **B Safeguards**

- 2.5 The University aims to promote a culture in which students feel confident to raise their concerns. Consequently, anyone raising a concern or complaint is expected to identify themselves. Anonymous complaints may only be accepted at the discretion of the University Secretary.
- 2.6 The investigation process under this Procedure may require that the source(s) of the information and the individual raising the complaint provide a statement as part of the evidence or to assist in further investigations. It is normally expected that such information is given without being anonymised. In any event even if anonymised, depending on the circumstances, it may be possible from the nature of the information supplied in the investigation process to identify its source. Accordingly, unless there are exceptional circumstances a person raising a complaint or concern should expect to be identified in the investigation process.
- 2.7 The University recognises that people may act out of character in times of trouble or distress. Complaints raised with the University may, for instance, relate to upsetting or distressing personal circumstances. However, the actions of a minority of complainants who are angry, abusive, demanding or persistent may result in unreasonable demands on the University, or improper behaviour towards staff. The University considers such actions to be unacceptable. When this happens, the University will consider the impact of such behaviour on the safety and well-being of staff and the ability of the University to provide a service to others and reserves the right, following assessment, to determine that a complainant's actions and behaviour are unacceptable or that their complaint is vexatious.
- 2.8 If the University finds that a complainant's behaviour is unacceptable, or that the complaint is vexatious, it will advise the complainant in writing why this has been found to be the case, and the steps that are to be taken which may include a decision not to consider the complaint further. Should the complainant wish to seek a review of any decision reached, they should state this in writing to the University Secretary (email [university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk)) within 10 days of the date of the decision. The University Secretary will confirm their decision in writing normally within 10 days. The Complainant will be advised of any steps they may take to seek a review of any decision reached.

## **3 Raising an informal complaint: Informal Resolution**

- 3.1 The University encourages informal resolution of any student complaint. If a Student wishes to raise an informal complaint about:

- their teaching or education - they should contact their Unit Director or Programme Lead
  - their accommodation - they should email [student-accommodation@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-accommodation@bristol.ac.uk) and follow the informal process on the [accommodation “Make a Complaint” Pages](#)
  - any other matter - they should contact the SCMM by emailing [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk) who will be able to direct them to the appropriate person to raise their complaint with.
- 3.2 Students can seek advice and support about how to raise a complaint from Bristol SU which provides a free and confidential student advice service - Bristol SU Academic Advice Team available at [Bristol SU | Academic Advice](#)
- 3.3 It is expected that all individuals will enter into the process in good faith with the aim of resolving complaints at the earliest opportunity. However, it is recognised that some complaints may not be capable of informal resolution. If this is the case the student should be informed at the earliest opportunity and referred to section 4 below.
- 3.4 If, following discussion of the concerns raised with the student, or where the concerns raised involve interpersonal relationships, the person considering informal resolution may recommend the matter is referred to [mediation](#). Mediation is voluntary and will only take place if all participants agree.
- 3.5 Where appropriate, the person to whom a complaint is brought informally may refer the concerns to be dealt with under the [Acceptable Behaviour Policy](#) or the appropriate disciplinary procedures.

## **4 Making a Formal Complaint;**

- 4.1 Where for any reason informal resolution of the complaint is not possible, or the student is dissatisfied with the informal resolution proposed the student may raise their complaint formally by completing a [Complaint Form](#) and submitting it to the SCMM (email: [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk)).
- 4.2 The SCMM will act impartially and will be able to give advice to students about any procedural matters. Students may also obtain support and advice from the Bristol SU Academic Advice Team (contact details are set out above)
- 4.3 The Complaint Form should set out details of the complaint and state the remedy sought. Any relevant evidence on which the complaint is based should be submitted with the Complaint Form.
- 4.4 Complaints should be raised within 30 days of the matters complained of. An extension of this time limit may be permitted by the University Secretary. If a student raises a complaint outside this time period they must complete a [Late Complaint request form](#) and submit it to [university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk) setting out the exceptional, evidenced reason for the delay.

## **5. The Local Stage**

- 5.1 On receipt of the Complaint Form the SCMM will refer the complaint to an appropriate person for consideration at the Local Stage. In the case of complaints relating to academic matters, this will normally be the Faculty Head of Student Administration or Faculty Education Director. Complaints about other services will be referred to an appropriate member of staff in Professional Services. In some cases, the SCMM may be able to resolve the student's complaint without recourse to the Local Stage.
- 5.2 The person considering the complaint at the Local Stage may decide to meet with the student to discuss the complaint. If so, the student may bring an adviser, friend or representative to the meeting.
- 5.3 The outcome of consideration at the Local Stage will be conveyed to the student in writing. The University aims to complete the Local Stage within 35 days of the submission of the complaint.

## **6 Seeking Review of a Complaint: The University Stage – Complaint Review Panel**

- 6.1 If it has not been possible to resolve the complaint at the Local Stage the student may request that the complaint is progressed to the University Stage. Complaints where a requested outcome has been implemented or agreed at the Local Stage may not be progressed to the University Stage.
- 6.2 The student should complete the Student Complaint Progression Form and submit it to the SCMM, at [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk), within fourteen days of receipt of the Local Stage outcome.
- 6.3 Upon receipt of the Student Complaint Progression Form, the SCMM will obtain all the evidence considered at the Local Stage from the Local Stage decision maker. If the SCMM considers that further information from the student, school or faculty is required in order for the complaint to be considered, they may call for such information and this must be provided promptly.

The SCMM will invite the student to respond to the Local Stage decision. If substantive new information is provided by the student after the Local Stage decision has been made, the SCMM will normally refer this information back to the Local Stage for reconsideration before referring the complaint to the University Stage. Where appropriate, the SCMM may also intervene to suggest a resolution of the complaint before referring it to the University Stage.

- 6.4 When all the required information has been received, the SCMM will refer the complaint to a Complaint Review Panel, normally within 35 days.

- 6.4 The Complaint Review Panel will normally consist of three senior members of University staff who have had no prior involvement with the complaint.
- The proceedings of the Review Panel will not involve a hearing.
- 6.5 The Review Panel will consider the complaint and may:
- a) ask the parties to reconsider any decision not to enter into mediation;
  - b) refer the matter back to the Local Stage or to another appropriate person with an instruction or recommendation for resolution. If the instruction or recommendation is not carried out, the student may refer the matter back to the Review Panel for reconsideration;
  - c) dismiss the complaint, giving reasons, and issue a Completion of Procedures letter;
  - d) recommend that a Committee of the Board of Trustees be appointed to hear the complaint.
- 6.6 The University Secretary will appoint a clerk to the Review Panel. The role of the clerk shall be to prepare the documentation, make arrangements for the Panel meeting and advise the Panel. The student will normally receive the decision of the Review Panel in writing within 21 days of the Panel meeting.

## **7 The University Stage – Committee of the Board of Trustees**

- 7.1 If the Review Panel recommends that a Committee be appointed to hear the complaint, a Committee will be convened, which shall normally consist of three members and which may include among its members Trustees of the Board of Trustees, University staff who are not Trustees, and persons from outside the University. At the request of the student, the Board of Trustees may appoint a Students' Union officer as an additional member. In the event of the Committee being divided in its view, the Chair will have a casting vote.
- 7.2 The University Secretary will appoint a clerk to the Committee. The role of the clerk is to assist the Committee by collating the evidence, preparing the documentation, making arrangements for the hearing, taking a note of the proceedings and advising the Committee. The clerk may on behalf of the Committee ask for written witness statements or documents such as medical certificates to be produced in advance of a hearing. The student will be entitled to see all statements and documents seen by the Committee.
- 7.3 The student is entitled to be present at hearings of the Committee, and to be accompanied by an adviser, friend or representative. The Students' Union employs student advisers in the Academic Advice Team who may be asked to act in this capacity. If a complaint is being made against a particular person, they are also entitled to attend hearings and to be accompanied by an adviser, friend or representative. In the event that either party is without good reason unable to attend, the hearing will either be held in that party's absence or rescheduled. If the party concerned has good reason for non- attendance the hearing will be rescheduled.

- 7.4 The order of any hearing will be at the discretion of the Committee, which may ask for enquiries to be undertaken and witnesses to attend. The Committee may ask questions of anyone present. The student will be given a full opportunity to state their case, and will be able to address the Committee at the conclusion of any evidence that has been presented.
- 7.5 The Committee will report to the Board of Trustees, setting out its findings and any recommendations, and a copy of the report will be sent to the student and to any person against whom the complaint was made.
- 7.6 A Committee of the Board of Trustees that is convened to consider an appeal against a finding of guilt or against a penalty imposed under section 13 and 14 of the Student Disciplinary Regulations will be conducted in accordance with this process.
- 7.7 A Committee of the Board of Trustees that is convened to consider an appeal against a decision to suspend or requirement to withdraw made under stage 2 of the Support to Study Policy will be conducted in accordance with this process.

## **8 Nominees**

Unless the context indicates otherwise, an officer of the University may act through their nominee.

## **9 Support**

- 9.1 The Bristol SU offers support to students who are encountering difficulties, and can raise issues which affect a number of students at one of the regular meetings of the University's Student Affairs Committee. The SU also provides a free and confidential student advice service available at Bristol SU | Academic Advice
- 9.2 Students can also access support from the Student Wellbeing Service see Request wellbeing support | Current students | University of Bristol

## **10 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)**

If the student is still dissatisfied, they may take the case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education, which provides an independent scheme for the review of student complaints. The OIA will consider cases only when the University's own internal complaints procedure has been exhausted. It will not intervene on matters which turn purely on academic judgment. Further information about this scheme is available at [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)

## **11 Office for Students (OfS)**

The OfS notification process is in place for students, staff or members of the public to raise with the OfS as the regulator for higher education in England, concerns or issues about a university or college that are relevant to the OfS's regulatory remit. Notifications may lead to investigation by the OfS in terms of providers meeting the



requirements of their conditions of registration. The OfS does not have a direct role in dealing with individual complaints or with disputes between students and their university or college. Information on the notification process is available on the OfS website at: Notifications - Office for Students. Students seeking individual redress or compensation should contact the OIA.

*Last amended August 2024*

# Student Complaint Form

This form is to be completed when submitting a formal student complaint under the [Student Complaints Procedure](#). Submission of a complaint must be made within 30 days from the date of the matter(s) complained about (see section 1.6 of the [Student Complaints Procedure](#)). Students who are seeking to submit a complaint outside of the prescribed 30-day deadline must complete a [Late Complaint Request Form](#), which must be sent to the University Secretary at: [university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk).

Please send this completed form to the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager (SCMM) at: [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk). Advice on completing the form can be obtained from the [Bristol SU Academic Advice Service](#) in the Students Union.

Formal complaints regarding any form of [sexual misconduct](#), or any other potentially unlawful behaviour by a student, should be sent to the Student Resolution Service at: [srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk). Sexual misconduct complaints must be submitted using the [Report of Sexual Misconduct Form](#). Students may also submit this anonymously via the 'Report Anonymously' online portal. Support and advice with completing forms in relation to sexual misconduct or other potentially unlawful behaviour can be obtained from the Student Resolution Service.

[Reports](#) of any form of sexual misconduct or unlawful behaviour by a member of staff should be sent to the SCMM at: [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk). The SCMM will send your report to Human Resources (HR) to be dealt with under the relevant HR Procedure.

Wellbeing support can be accessed by completing the [Wellbeing Request Form](#).

## Section 1:

Personal details:	
Date:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Title:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Forename:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Surname:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Student number (7-digit number on UCard):	Click or tap here to enter text.
Fee status (home or overseas):	Click or tap here to enter text.
Level of study (UG/PGT/PGR):	Click or tap here to enter text
Year of study (eg. year 2/recent graduate):	Click or tap here to enter text.
Mode of study (full-time or part-time):	Click or tap here to enter text
Faculty and School (eg. Faculty of Engineering, School of Electrical, Electronic and Mechanical Engineering):	Click or tap here to enter text.

<b>Email addresses</b> (University and alternative contact):	Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 2:

<b>Complaint details:</b>
<p><b>Date of the matter you wish to complain about:</b></p> <p><i>For example: "I want to complain about an incident that occurred in my University accommodation on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2024".</i></p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Brief summary of your complaint:</b></p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Steps taken to resolve your complaint informally:</b></p> <p><i>For example: "I met with the Residential Life team on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2024 to discuss the issues I have been experiencing in my Halls of Residence".</i></p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

**Why it was not possible to resolve your complaint informally:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Have you attached all relevant evidence in support of your request?**

*Please clearly list all documents provided and ensure your accompanying files are named to match this list (eg: "GP letter dated 12/05/2024"). Evidence must support the reason for your complaint and relate to the time period in question.*

*If you are unable to provide the relevant evidence with your complaint form, please specify when you will be able to provide it. Please note that we cannot begin processing your complaint until all documents have been received.*

YES ☐ NO ☐

**What outcome are you seeking?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Does your complaint relate to a disability that you have previously disclosed to the University?**

*If yes, please specify the nature of the disability and the date of disclosure.*

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Is there a wellbeing or visa concern that we need to be aware of?**

*Should you have any questions regarding your student visa, please contact the Student Visas team. Wellbeing support can be accessed by completing the Wellbeing Request Form.*

Click or tap here to enter text.

**I declare that the information given in this form is true, to the best of my knowledge, and that I would be willing to answer any further questions relating to it if necessary.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Information:**

- **Student visa holders - Please note that lodging a complaint does not extend your immigration permission in the UK as a student.** If your student visa is due to expire prior to receiving a decision on your complaint, you are still expected to leave the UK before your visa expires. Should you have any questions regarding your student visa, please contact the Student Visas team.

# Student Late Complaint Request Form

This form is to be completed when requesting permission to submit a complaint outside of the prescribed deadline of 30 days from the date of the matter (see section 4.4 of the [Student Complaints Procedure](#)). Please send this form, with all accompanying documents, to the University Secretary at: [university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk).

All late complaint requests are considered by the University Secretary. Should your request be upheld, you will be able to submit a formal complaint, in accordance with section 4 of the [Student Complaints Procedure](#).

## Section 1:

Personal details:	
Date:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Title (e.g. Mr. Ms. Mx.)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Forename:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Surname:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Student number (7-digit number on UCard)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Fee status (e.g. home or overseas)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Level of study (UG/PGT/PGR)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Year of study (e.g. year 3, recent graduate)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Mode of study (full-time or part-time)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Faculty (e.g. Faculty of Engineering): School (for academic complaints e.g. Computer Science):	Click or tap here to enter text.
Email addresses (University and alternative contact)	Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 2:

Complaint details:
<p>Date of the matter you wish to complain about:</p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

**Brief summary of the complaint:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**The outcome you are seeking:**

*Please note that academic outcomes are not possible via the Student Complaints Procedure, and should be submitted via the [academic appeals process](#).*

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Exceptional reason for inability to submit the complaint within the prescribed deadline (namely, 30 days from the date of the matter):**

*This will need to be supported by relevant evidence relating to the entire period since the complaint deadline.*

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Have you attached all relevant evidence in support of your request?**

*If you are unable to provide the relevant evidence at the time of submission of your late complaint request form, please specify when you will be able to provide it. Please note that we cannot begin processing your late complaint request until we have received all the supporting documents.*

YES ☐ NO ☐

**Is there a wellbeing or visa concern that we need to be aware of?**

*Should you have any questions regarding your student visa, please contact the [Student Visas](#) team. Wellbeing support can be accessed by completing the [Wellbeing Request Form](#).*

Click or tap here to enter text.

**I declare that the information given in this form is true, to the best of my knowledge, and that I would be willing to answer any further questions relating to it, if necessary.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Information:**

- **Student visa holders - Please note that lodging a late complaint request does not extend your immigration permission in the UK as a student.** If your student visa is due to expire prior to receiving a decision on your complaint, you are still expected to leave the UK before your visa expires. Should you have any questions regarding your student visa, please contact the Student Visas team.

# Student Complaint Progression Form

This form is to be completed when progressing a formal student complaint to the **University Stage** of the Student Complaints Procedure (see section 6). Progression of your complaint to the University Stage must be made within 14 days (including weekends) of the date of the Local Stage outcome.

Complaints where a requested outcome has been implemented or agreed at the Local Stage may not be progressed to the University Stage.

Please send the completed form to the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager at: [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk). Advice on completing the form can be obtained from the Bristol SU Academic Advice Service in the Student Union.

Wellbeing support can be accessed by completing the Wellbeing Access Form.

## Section 1:

Personal details:	
<b>Date:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Title (Mr. Ms. Mx):</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Forename:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Surname:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Student number</b> (7-digit number on UCard):	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Fee status</b> (home or overseas):	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Level of study</b> (UG/PGT/PGR):	Click or tap here to enter text
<b>Mode of study</b> (full-time or part-time):	Click or tap here to enter text
<b>Faculty</b> (e.g. Faculty of Engineering): <b>School</b> (for academic complaints e.g. Computer Science):	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Email addresses</b> (University and alternative contact):	Click or tap here to enter text.



## Section 2:

### Complaint details:

**Date of Local Stage outcome:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Are you introducing any new documentary evidence that was not provided at the Local Stage of your complaint? All evidence must relate to your complaint.**

YES ☐ NO ☐

**If yes, please clearly list the new pieces of evidence. Please ensure your accompanying files are named to match this list (eg: "GP letter dated 12/09/2023"). Evidence must support your complaint and relate to the time period in question.**

*Examples of evidence may include (but are not limited to) – a letter from a medical practitioner confirming a diagnosis; a police incident report form and crime reference number; relevant email correspondence/screenshots.*

*If you are unable to provide the relevant evidence with your complaint progression form, please specify when you will be able to provide it. Please note that we cannot begin processing your complaint until we have received all documents.*

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Does the new evidence introduce any new information that was not disclosed at the Local Stage of your complaint? If yes, please clearly summarise this below.**

*Please note that new information may only be considered if a clear explanation is provided as to why this was not made available at the Local Stage.*

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Please insert your University Stage response below (i.e. the reasons you disagree with the Local Stage decision).**

***Please ensure this response does not exceed 500 words. The Bristol SU Academic Advice Team can assist with the preparation of your response, if required (bristolsu-advice@bristol.ac.uk)***

Click or tap here to enter text.

**What outcome are you seeking from your complaint at the University Stage?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Does your complaint relate to a disability that you have previously disclosed to the University?**

*If yes, please specify the nature of the disability and the date of disclosure.*

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Is there a wellbeing or visa concern that we need to be aware of?**

*Should you have any questions regarding your student visa, please contact [Student Visas](#). Wellbeing support can be accessed by completing the [Wellbeing Access Form](#).*

Click or tap here to enter text.

**I declare that the information given in this form is true, to the best of my knowledge, and that I would be willing to answer any further questions relating to it, if necessary.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Information:**

- **Student visa holders - Please note that lodging a complaint does not extend your immigration permission in the UK as a student.** If your student visa is due to expire prior to receiving a decision on your complaint, you are still expected to leave the UK before your visa expires. Should you have any questions regarding your student visa, please contact [Student Visas](#).

## Make a complaint

Guidance for registered students on how to make a complaint about any part of your university experience.

It is a normal part of life that you may have a complaint. We view complaints positively as they help us learn how to do things better. You will not be treated differently in any part of your university life if you make a complaint.

- [Timeframe to raise a complaint](#)
- [Informal complaints](#)
- [Formal complaints](#)
- [Late complaints](#)
- [Support with raising a complaint](#)
- [If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of a formal complaint](#)

### Timeframe to raise a complaint

Raise complaints promptly within 30 days of them arising. If you miss this deadline, you must have a good reason for [a late complaint](#).

If your complaint relates to sexual misconduct or any other potential criminal behaviour, email [srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk). The team can advise you on next steps.

Specialist support is available for those who have experienced [sexual misconduct](#).

### Informal complaints

If you think your complaint can be resolved informally, contact the relevant person to discuss it:

- teaching or education: contact your Unit Director or Programme Lead
- accommodation: contact [student-accommodation@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-accommodation@bristol.ac.uk) or follow the [accommodation complaints advice](#)
- any other matters: contact [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk) who will be able to direct you to the appropriate person.

You should receive acknowledgement of receipt of your complaint within 7 days and a response within 21 days.

If you do not receive a response within 21 days or are unsatisfied with the proposed resolution or outcome, you have an additional 30 days to make a formal complaint.

### Formal complaints

- You must submit your complaint on time. If you do not have all the documents that you wish to submit with your complaint, you can submit these later.
- Explain your complaint clearly and concisely.
- Clearly set out the outcome that you would like to achieve from your complaint.
- Be polite. We understand that making a complaint may be a challenging time for you, but we will not tolerate [unacceptable behaviour](#) towards our staff who are trying to deal with your complaint. If we deem your behaviour to be unacceptable in this matter, we may terminate your complaint.
- If you would like us to talk to other people to seek further information, include their contact details and confirm that they have given their consent for us to contact them.

- If we are unclear about any part of your complaint, we will come back to you to ask you for confirmation that we have understood your complaint.

### **Formal reports about sexual misconduct**

Sexual misconduct covers a broad range of inappropriate and unwanted behaviours of a sexual nature.

If you would like to make a formal report, complete the sexual misconduct form.

Help and advice is available if you need support or would like to discuss your options.

### **Formal reports about unacceptable behaviour**

Unacceptable behaviour is any unwanted actions or practices that are inappropriate, unreasonable or offensive.

### **Reporting a student**

If you wish to report a student, complete the student unacceptable behaviour form and email it to [srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk).

### **Reporting a member of staff**

If you wish to report a staff member:

1. complete the staff unacceptable behaviour form (document)
2. email it to the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager (SCMM): [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk).

### **Who reviews the unacceptable behaviour complaint**

The SCMM will send it to:

- the relevant line manager and copy in HR. They will review the complaint under the suitable staff procedure. They may explore informal resolution first, such as mediation.
- the Faculty Education Director (if the report is about academic matters). They will review it using the Student Complaints Procedure (PDF).
- an Assessor (if its about free speech and academic freedom (PDF)).

They might send it to any combination of them.

### **What is not unacceptable behaviour**

Unacceptable behaviour does not include:

- Legitimate criticism of a student's performance or behaviour
- Reasonable requests made by staff member

### **Advice and support**

- If your report is about another student, email [srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk)
- If your report is about a member of staff, email [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk)

## **Any other formal complaints**

Complete [the complaint form](#) and email it to [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk)

## **Late complaints**

If you submit a late complaint, you must have good reason why it is late. If you wish to raise a complaint outside the time period specified:

- complete a [late complaint request](#) form explaining why your complaint is late
- send it to [university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk).

## **Support with raising a complaint**

- We encourage all students to speak to the [Bristol SU advice team](#) who are experienced in advising and supporting students through the complaint procedure.
- You can also request help from the [University's wellbeing service](#).
- If someone, such as a parent, relative or friend ("supporter"), writes to us to bring a complaint on your behalf, we cannot respond to that complaint unless we have your consent.

## **If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your formal complaint**

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome at the Local Stage, you can request that your complaint be escalated to the University Stage.

Complete the [Student Complaint Progression Form](#) and submit it to [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk). (Complaints where a requested outcome has been agreed at the Local Stage may not be progressed to the University Stage).

You must do this within 14 days of receiving the Local Stage response. A panel will review your complaint, usually within 35 days.

The panel will write to you with a decision usually within 3 weeks of the panel meeting. The decision might be:

- to dismiss your complaint
- to refer it back to the original decision maker with recommendations for resolution
- to ask a committee to consider your complaint.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint at the University Stage, you can ask [The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education OIA \(HE\)](#) to review your complaint.

You have 12 months from getting the University Stage outcome to ask the OIA to review your complaint.

## Guidance for staff dealing with a student complaint

Guidance to help you consider complaints raised by students (informally or formally) in line with the Student Complaints Procedure.

- [Who considers informal complaints](#)
- [Deadlines for submitting complaints](#)
- [Resolving informal complaints](#)
- [Resolving formal complaints](#)
- [Investigating a student complaint](#)
- [Complaints from third parties](#)
- [Conflicts of interest](#)
- [Complainant behaviour](#)

### Who considers informal complaints

Faculties, schools and divisions that provide services to students must inform students clearly about who to contact in the first instance if they have a complaint.

If a student wishes to raise an informal complaint about:

- teaching or education - they should contact their Unit Director or Programme Lead
- accommodation - they should email [student-accommodation@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-accommodation@bristol.ac.uk) and follow the [accommodation informal process](#)
- any other matter - they should contact [student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk), who will be able to direct them to the appropriate person to raise their complaint with.

If a student raises a complaint with you, you should explain that you are not able to take forward the complaint on their behalf and that you will refer it appropriately. You can encourage the student to seek advice from [Bristol SU Academic Service](#) to take forward their complaint.

### Deadlines for submitting complaints

Students must raise a complaint within 30 days of the matter they want to complain about, unless there is good reason for not doing so.

If a student raises a concern informally within the 30 day time period, they can raise a formal complaint later if they do so within 30 days of:

- the matter they are complaining about happening

or

- failing to receive an acknowledgement of their informal complaint within 21 days of raising it

or

- receiving a response to their informal concern either that advises them to raise a formal complaint, or to raise a formal complaint if they are dissatisfied with the proposed resolution.

**Where a current student is raising a concern about a sexual assault or other potentially criminal behaviour they should be referred immediately to the Student**

**Resolution Service (SRS) ([srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk)) irrespective of the time limits involved.**

### **Late complaints**

If a concern is raised outside the 30-day period you should refer the student to the Late Complaint Form, asking them to complete it and send it to [university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk) setting out the reason for the delay.

Where complaints are raised marginally outside of the 30-day period, you can use your judgement to accept the complaint without referring the student to the Late Complaint form.

Things to consider when complaints narrowly miss the 30-day deadline:

- If the concern is about the acceptable behaviour of a current registered student you should contact the SRS ([srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk)) for advice.
- If the concern is about the acceptable behaviour of a member of staff you should contact the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager (SCMM) for advice.
- If a student has a Study Support Plan in place it may be that it is appropriate to adjust the time period for bringing a complaint in line with any reasonable adjustments set out in the plan.
- If you are aware of any other issues that might impact on a student's ability to bring a complaint within time (such as wellbeing or other health issues) you may decide it is appropriate to accept their complaint.

In all cases, remind students that support is offered through Student Wellbeing:

### Request wellbeing support

If you have any concerns you can get advice from the Secretary's Office ([secretarys-office@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:secretarys-office@bristol.ac.uk)) or from the SCMM ([student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk)).

### **Resolving informal complaints**

Aim to acknowledge receipt of the informal complaint within 7 days explaining what steps you are taking to consider and/or resolve it.

Where possible, seek to resolve any informal complaint within 21 days of receipt. You may wish to meet with the student to discuss their complaint to clarify the nature of their concerns and how the student wants to resolve the complaint.

It is your responsibility to deal with complaints consistently.

Consider whether the complaint raised is the result of a misunderstanding. It may be that the student needs further information about the matter raised.

Consider any student or staff wellbeing issues – both for the person raising the complaint and any person who has been named. Student support is offered through Student Wellbeing. Remind the student what is on offer and [how to access support](#). Staff support is accessed through the [Employee Assistance Programme](#);

If an informal complaint cannot be resolved within 21 days you should:

- give the student an anticipated time period in which you expect the concern to be resolved, and the name of the person dealing with their complaint, if it is not you

or

- explain to the student why their complaint has not been resolved, and ask them to fill in a Complaint Form or Acceptable Behaviour Complaint form and send it to student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk. You can suggest that they seek advice and support from Bristol SU Academic Advice. You should also do this if the anticipated time period that you have given to a student expires.

### **Types of complaints that might not be resolved informally**

- If a complaint is about the behaviour of a current registered student, contact the Student Resolution Service (srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk) for advice.
- If a complaint is about the behaviour of a staff member, contact the SCMM (student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk).
- If a complaint is about the decision of an academic body or the student is seeking an academic outcome to a concern, it must be handled in accordance with the academic appeals procedure. Encourage the student to contact the Bristol SU Academic Advice for further information.
- If a concern relates to teaching or supervision and is not capable of prompt resolution, you are not expected to be able to resolve the concern without investigation. The student should be asked to fill in a Complaint Form and send it to student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk.
- If the nature of a complaint warrants an investigation or where multiple concerns relating to different areas of the University have been raised, ask the student to complete a complaint form as above.

### **Resolving formal complaints**

Formal complaints are raised with the SCMM who will refer the complaint to the appropriate person to review at the Local Stage of the Student Complaints Procedure.

The University uses the overall time period set out in the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education OIA(HE) Good Practice framework for the consideration of formal student complaints.

Normally, time period for considering a formal complaint is:

- 30 days from receipt of the complaint form for the Local Stage decision maker to issue their decision
- 90 days in total, from receipt of the Complaint Form to the conclusion of the University Stage of the Student Complaints Procedure.

Where a student is not responding to any requests, you can remind the student that your aim is to resolve the Local Stage complaint within 30 days and that you need their cooperation to do so.

### **Receiving a formal complaint for consideration**

If the SCMM refers a complaint to you for review at the Local Stage of the Student Complaints process, they will send you the complaint form and any accompanying documents from the student and from staff members who considered the matter informally.

You will be asked to make a decision at the Local Stage i.e. consider whether you are able to resolve all or part of the complaint, and to do so within 30 days of receipt of the complaint form and accompanying documents.



The aim of the Local Stage is to seek to resolve the complaint. Proposing a resolution does not necessarily mean that you consider that the complaint should be upheld in whole or in part, only that you are offering a solution to the issues raised.

If the complaint was raised outside the 30-day time period, the SCMM will confirm that it has been accepted.

### **Your responsibilities**

Consider if the complaint has been raised in time. Issues relating to time will normally have been resolved before you are asked to consider a complaint at the Local Stage, but if you have any queries relating to this, raise them with the SCMM.

Ensure that you have all the information you need. In some cases, you may be able to resolve the complaint on the documents provided, but in most you will need to investigate.

Consider whether the complaint is clear. It may be helpful either to write to the student seeking clarification on specific points or to meet with the student (and any representative) to ensure that you understand the complaint raised.

At any stage of the procedure it is the responsibility of the person dealing with the complaint to keep the student informed of the progress of the complaint.

You should first write to the student to confirm that you have received their complaint and that you will be considering at the Local Stage of the Student Complaints Procedure. You should confirm when they can expect to hear from you next.

When a complaint may take longer for good reason, such as absence of staff, delay in a response from a student to a query, complexity of the matter etc., it is important to:

- explain any delay to the student
- tell them about any investigation that you are carrying out
- confirm the overall time that you believe that you will need to consider their complaint
- apologise where appropriate

### **Investigating a student complaint**

How you should investigate a complaint will depend upon the matters being investigated and the information available at the start of the information gathering exercise. Below are some suggestions of how you might investigate, but you must use your own judgement based on the nature of the complaint. If you would like further advice, contact the Secretary's Office ([secretarys-office@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:secretarys-office@bristol.ac.uk)).

#### ***Before starting an investigation***

Make sure that you understand all parts of the complaint, and if you do not, then contact the student with a summary of your understanding and ask them to confirm whether you have understood correctly. Once you have this confirmation you can proceed with the investigation.

#### ***During an investigation***

Speak to anyone you think can provide relevant additional information, including the student, faculty, school or division. Take notes and confirm with each person in writing via email that

you have understood their account correctly. This includes information given orally, which is considered as evidence.

It is important to keep these records because if a student is dissatisfied with an outcome at the Local Stage, you will be asked to supply a note of (or exchange of emails) confirming any oral evidence on which you relied together with any additional information supplied by the school, faculty or division to make your decision. The student is entitled to see this information at the University Stage of the Student Complaints Procedure.

Identify which University policies or procedures may be relevant to the complaint raised.

Consider what other documentation may assist with your investigation and where it could be obtained from.

Refer to any relevant guidance including the [OIA\(HE\) guidance “Putting Things right”](#).

### ***Making your decision***

Once you have collated and considered all the relevant information, you can make your decision and send a Local Stage decision letter to the student.

Your letter should include:

- a summary of the complaint with reference to all the component parts
- the evidence you collected, highlighting any undisputed factual matters
- your findings, with a clear explanation of your reasoning
- any proposed resolution. If you cannot propose a resolution, you should state this clearly
- an explanation of the next steps for the student, whether or not you have proposed a resolution. This should include instructions on how the student can refer the complaint to the University Stage.

If your proposed resolution includes financial compensation seek advice from the Secretary's Office on the information that you must give to the student (and will require from the student) to be able to make any payment.

You should also:

- notify the relevant people of your decision (the SCMM and the faculty, school or division involved) highlighting any actions they need to take.
- keep a copy of all the documents, information, emails and other evidence related to the complaint, so that these can be supplied to a Complaints Review Panel at the University Stage if required.

### **Complaints from third parties**

We do not currently have a complaint process to address complaints from members of the public or others.

If you receive a complaint from a third party which does not appear to come from someone connected with a student, where the complaint is about a student or a matter which may be in the public domain, please contact the Secretary's Office for advice on any response. It may not be appropriate to respond, particularly where any response would involve the disclosure of personal data of either a student or a member of staff.

If you receive a complaint from a third party which looks as though it is a complaint about a service which the University has given directly to that third party, please refer it to the head of the division who provides that service.

### **Complaints raised on behalf of students**

If you receive a complaint from someone on behalf of a student, for example, from a parent, relative, or close personal friend (Supporter) you should not respond to the Supporter in any way that reveals that a particular individual is a student at the University, until you have received the student's consent. This applies even if the Supporter has copied in the student to their complaint.

You can:

- respond to the Supporter explaining that you are unable to discuss any matter relating to an individual student unless that student gives their consent and explaining how the student may give their consent. Students might not know that a Supporter has raised a concern with the university.
- depending on the nature of the concern raised by a supporter, confirm that you have received it and that you will follow it up (but not that you will follow it up with the student).
- write to the student, but you must obtain their consent before responding to the Supporter. It is preferable to obtain written consent from the student (e.g. in an email). However, if the student gives oral consent, you should keep a note of the consent given and confirm this in an email back to the student.
- where appropriate, explain to a Supporter that they are not able to raise a complaint with the University but if the student wishes to raise a complaint they may do so. You can explain how they may do this by sending them a link to the Student Complaints Procedure and the complaint form. It is possible to do this without confirming that the student is registered with us. You can simply refer to students in general rather than the particular student.

Students are entitled to be represented if they wish to raise a complaint and can nominate their Supporter as their representative.

If a student confirms that they want their Supporter to represent them in making a complaint, you should explain to the student and to the Supporter the role of a representative, and emphasise that it will be important for the student to play a part in the procedure rather than leave it solely to their representative.

If you would like any advice on responding to a student's Supporter, contact the Secretary's Office.

### **Conflicts of interest**

You should not consider an informal or formal complaint from a student if you:

- have any personal connection with the student or a member of their family.
- if the complaint raises issues involving other members of staff or students where you have a personal connection with either the student, member of staff or their families.
- if the complaint raises concerns about your performance or conduct or the performance or conduct of someone you have a close personal connection.

The SCMM aims to ensure that at the Local Stage an appropriate person considers any student complaint but may not be aware of any personal connections that you have. Please

notify the SCMM immediately if you consider for any reason that there may be a conflict which would mean that you should not consider the student's complaint.

### **Complainant behaviour**

We will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour from those raising a complaint or from a Supporter who is raising a complaint on a student's behalf. In accordance with the Student Complaints Procedure, if the University finds that a complainant's behaviour is unacceptable, it will:

- tell the complainant in writing of this finding, and explain the reasons
- outline the actions to be taken, which may include not taking the complaint further.

If the complainant wants to seek a review of the decision, they should state this in writing to the University Secretary (email [university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk)) within 10 days of the date of the decision. The University Secretary will confirm their decision in writing, normally within 10 days.

### **If you experience unacceptable behaviour from a complainant or their supporter**

Inform your Head of Faculty Administration or if you are a member of a division, inform your line manager.

Students can understandably be emotional when raising complaints, but we do not expect you to tolerate unacceptable behaviour.

A Head of Faculty Administration or a Division may seek advice relating to a complainant or their Supporters behaviour from:

- the Secretary's Office ([secretarys-office@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:secretarys-office@bristol.ac.uk))
- the University Secretary ([university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk)).

# Procedure for considering complaints raised by staff and students relating to Free Speech and Academic Freedom

## (A) Background

This Procedure has been created to provide an appropriate process and forum for addressing grievances and complaints raised by staff and students of the University involving issues relating to Free Speech and Academic Freedom. This Procedure sits alongside the University's existing mechanisms for considering staff and student grievances and complaints.

This Procedure sets out the process to investigate grievances and complaints and to issue a **Local Stage decision** under the **Student Complaints Procedure** or an **Outcome** under the **Staff Grievance Procedure**. Any review of or appeal against that decision will be taken under the relevant procedure.

## (B) Definitions

<i>Academic Freedom</i>	<p>The freedom within the law that academic staff at higher education providers have to question and test received wisdom; and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at the provider.</p> <p>Academic Freedom is one of the public interest governance principles which apply to all registered higher education providers in England.</p>
<i>Freedom of Speech</i>	<p>The right to lawfully express views without fear of censorship.</p> <p>Freedom of Speech is one of the public interest governance principles which apply to all registered higher education providers in England.</p>
<i>Institutional Autonomy</i>	<p>The freedom within the law that higher education providers have to conduct their day to day management in an effective and competent way; to determine the content of particular courses and the manner in which they are taught, supervised and assessed; to determine the criteria for the selection, appointment and dismissal of academic staff and apply those criteria in particular cases; to determine the criteria for the admission of students and apply those criteria in particular cases; and academic freedom.</p>
<i>Staff</i>	<p>An individual employed by the University.</p>
<i>Student</i>	<p>An individual registered as a student at the University.</p>

## **(C) Context**

### **(i) Procedures and wider duties**

This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the University's:

#### **General**

- [External Speakers Code of Practice](#)
- [Freedom of Speech Policy](#)
- [University Acceptable Behaviour Policy](#)
- [Staff Grievance Procedure](#)

#### **Students**

- [Student Complaints Procedure](#)
- [Student Disciplinary Regulations](#)

This Procedure has regard to the University's legal duties under:

- Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015
- Education Act (No.2) 1986
- Education Reform Act 1988
- Equality Act 2010
- Higher Education Act 2004
- Higher Education and Research Act 2017
- Human Rights Act 1998 (and Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights)
- Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023

This Procedure also has regard to the:

- ACAS Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures
- Good Practice Framework, Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA(HE))

### **(ii) Timeframes**

Grievances or complaints must be brought promptly. The University will not accept grievances or complaints that are submitted more than 30 days after the matters complained about unless, there are good reasons for the delay.

The University will consider complaints raised under this procedure without unreasonable delay and will have regard to the normal timeframes for conclusion of formal student complaints within 90 calendar days as set out in the OIA(HE) Good Practice Framework. For most student complaints cases we would expect the 90 day time period to be sufficient to conclude a complaint. However cases involving free speech/academic freedom are complex and there may therefore be good reasons why it may take longer to consider such complaints.

The University will keep both student(s) and staff who make a complaint under this Procedure informed of progress of their complaint.

### **(iii) Support and Advice**

**Staff:** please read the "[Grievance Procedure & Request for Resolution Guidance](#)" which

has been developed to support you through the Staff Grievance Procedure. All staff may access support through the Employee Assistance Programme. If you are a member of a Trade Union, you can seek advice or support from your trade union at an early stage and it can be helpful to involve them in informal resolution where appropriate.

**Students:** University services such as the Student Wellbeing Service can provide advice and support to students experiencing difficulties. Students can also access independent advice and guidance from the Bristol SU Academic Advice Team.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Working and studying at the University offers a unique opportunity to engage in open and free debate from all sides including on issues of political, scientific, moral, ethical and religious significance. Whilst there is freedom to challenge or debate the law, moral or other issues, such debate takes place within the framework of our Freedom of Speech Policy and within the framework of the law of England and Wales.
- 1.2 Academic Freedom is an essential component of Institutional Autonomy and is, alongside Freedom of Speech, necessary to enable higher education providers to contribute independent, informed and creative ideas to society. The University has a legal duty to respect the lawful exercise of Academic Freedom.
- 1.3 The University recognises that where a member of staff or student disagrees with a point of view they may engage in peaceful protest, notwithstanding that such protest may be offensive to those who are putting forward ideas for debate. The University encourages a tolerant environment for the exchange of ideas and the cultivation of knowledge so that all participants may express their views lawfully and, where necessary, demonstrate rational disagreement.
- 1.4 The University has a legal duty to uphold lawful free speech and to intervene to discourage and challenge unlawful speech including that which discriminates on the basis of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 or is otherwise in breach of our Acceptable Behaviour at Work Policy and/or Acceptable Behaviour Policy Statement.
- 1.5 **Appendix 1** comprises a flow chart explaining each step of this Procedure.

## 2. Aims and Scope

- 2.1 This Procedure aims to:

(a) ensure that free and frank intellectual exchanges may take place at the University, in a tolerant and respectful manner even where some may find the ideas offensive.

(b) provide a clear and transparent framework to deal with grievances or complaints raised by staff or students under the **Student Complaints Procedure** or the **Staff Grievance Procedure** in relation to matters of unacceptable behaviour that arise in the context of Freedom of Speech and/or Academic Freedom; and achieve an appropriate and timely resolution to individual grievances and complaints.

- 2.2 This Procedure cannot be used:

(a) if you are a member of staff and your complaint relates to matters that are already being considered pursuant to another University policy or procedure;

**(b)** to bring a grievance or complaint based only on disagreement with the views of a member of the University or their academic research;

**(c)** after employment has ended or you have ceased to be eligible to raise a complaint under the Student Complaints Procedure.

### **3. Safeguards and Confidentiality**

#### **(a) Confidentiality**

3.1 An appropriate level of confidentiality is fundamental to the operation of an effective complaints process and must balance transparency and the requirements of natural justice against a legitimate expectation of personal privacy. In order to ensure the integrity of the process, all parties involved in the operation of this Procedure including those who are the subject of the complaint, those bringing the complaint, any witnesses and those operating the Procedure must ensure that they maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.

3.2 In imposing an expectation of confidentiality, the University recognises that it may be necessary and therefore appropriate for those involved in this Procedure to share certain confidential information with third parties, as set out below.

3.3 The University may disclose information:

**(a)** to those who need to know in order to discharge their responsibilities at work;

**(b)** where it considers that disclosure is necessary in the interests of health and safety at work or the welfare of other staff, students or the public;

**(c)** where disclosure is required by law;

**(d)** to witnesses and/or attendees at the meetings within the Procedure to carry out this Procedure and any other procedure (including under the Student Disciplinary Regulations or Staff Conduct procedure) relating to the complaint;

**(e)** to its professional advisers for the purposes of obtaining advice;

**(f)** to relevant sector bodies such as the OIA(HE) or the University's regulator, the Office for Students.

3.4 Students and Staff who make a complaint or who are complained about under this procedure may disclose information:

**(a)** to professional advisers, including Trade Union Representative and Bristol SU Academic Advice Service for the purpose of obtaining advice;



(b) to family members (on the basis that those family members maintain confidentiality) and the University's support services for the purpose of obtaining guidance and support;

(c) to relevant sector bodies such as the OIA(HE) or the University's regulator, the Office for Students.

## **(b) Safeguards**

- 3.5 The University aims to promote a culture in which individuals feel confident to raise their concerns. Consequently, anyone raising a grievance or complaint is expected to identify themselves. No action against a particular member of Staff or Student will be taken about any matter that has been reported anonymously unless it is possible to verify the matter reported.
- 3.6 The investigation process under this Procedure may require that the source(s) of the information and the complainant(s) provide a statement as part of the evidence or to assist in further investigations. It is normally expected that such information is given without being anonymised. Accordingly, unless there are exceptional circumstances a person raising a grievance or complaint should expect to be identified in the investigation process and any associated process.
- 3.7 Even if the identity of the complainant(s) and/ or other sources of information has not been revealed in the investigation it may not be possible for a disciplinary hearing to take place or a sanction to be imposed without such identification taking place.

## **4. Early Resolution**

- 4.1 This Procedure encourages informal resolution of all grievances and complaints and recognises the potential for resolving informally any issue relating to Free Speech or Academic Freedom. Staff and students are encouraged to seek Early or Informal Resolution of their concerns as set out in the **Staff Grievance Procedure** and the **Student Complaint Procedure**.

## **5. Formal Procedure**

### **(a) Raising your complaint**

- 5.1 Where a grievance or complaint raised is not capable of informal resolution, or informal resolution has not been successful staff or students should raise their grievance or complaint formally under either the Staff Grievance Procedure or the Student Complaints Procedure using the appropriate form (collectively referred to in this Procedure as the **Complaint Form**), see below:

<b>Complainant</b>	<b>Process and Form for raising Complaint</b>
Staff Complaint about a member of staff	<a href="#">Staff Grievance Procedure</a> submit <a href="#">Request for Resolution Form</a> to your Line Manager
Staff Report about a student	<a href="#">Student Disciplinary Procedure</a> submit Report of <a href="#">Unacceptable Behaviour Form for Staff</a> to <a href="mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk">srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk</a>
Student Report about a student	<a href="#">Student Disciplinary Procedure</a> submit Report of <a href="#">Unacceptable Behaviour for Student</a> to <a href="mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk">srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk</a>

Student Complaint about staff	<u>Student Complaints Procedure</u> submit <u>Unacceptable Behaviour Form for Student</u> to <a href="mailto:student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk">student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk</a>
Joint Staff and Student Complaint about staff	<u>Staff Grievance Procedure</u> submit Request for <u>Resolution Form</u> to member of staff's Line Manager
Joint Staff and Student report about student	<u>Student Disciplinary Procedure</u> submit Report of <u>Student Unacceptable Behaviour form</u> to <a href="mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk">srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk</a>

5.2 **Students:** On receipt of your Complaint Form, if the Student Resolution Service considers that your complaint should follow this Procedure they will refer your complaint to the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager (SCMM) who will contact you within 7 days to acknowledge receipt and to confirm that your complaint has been referred to an Assessor.

5.3 **Staff:** On receipt of your Complaint Form, if the Appropriate Manager considers that your grievance should be considered under this Procedure they will contact you within the time periods set out in the Staff Grievance Procedure to acknowledge receipt and to confirm that your complaint has been referred to an Assessor.

#### (a) The Role of the Assessor

5.4 The role of the Assessor is to:

(a) consider whether informal resolution is appropriate and, if so, to put forward such resolution;

(b) if no informal resolution is possible, to carry out the procedural steps identified as theirs within the Procedure set out below. This may include, where they consider it appropriate, referral to the Academic Freedom Committee and a Panel concurrently;

(c) decide, following a report from a Panel (see Section 7 below), whether formal action will be taken under either the Staff Conduct Procedure or the Student Disciplinary Procedure and provide information to the complainant(s) as set out in Appendix 2;

(d) consider whether the concern raised amounts to a matter that the University is required to report to any regulator and/or funder and, if appropriate, report the matter to the regulator and/or funder at the appropriate stage(s) of the process in accordance with the relevant reporting requirements;

(e) to keep the complainant(s) and the individual(s) against whom the complaint is made informed of the progress of the complaint under this Procedure.

#### (b) Procedure

5.5 On receipt of the Complaint Form the Assessor will:

(a) arrange to meet with the complainant(s) to explore the complaint further, to seek to understand the nature of the complaint and any supporting evidence

and to explain the next steps in the Procedure;

**(b)** arrange to meet with the individual(s) against whom the grievance or complaint is raised to seek to understand any response to it and any supporting evidence, and to explain the next steps in the Procedure;

**(c)** if the Assessor considers that there is at this stage an opportunity to resolve the matter, they are able to raise this and make a proposal for resolution, this might include, for example a referral to mediation;

**(d)** if the Assessor proposes a resolution at this stage of the Procedure this will be either:

(i) a **Local Stage decision**; or

(ii) an **Outcome**.

Thereafter, any further steps in relation to the grievance or complaint are as set out in the Staff Grievance Procedure or the Student Complaint Procedure and the Complainant(s) may, if they are dissatisfied with the outcome, refer the matter for review/appeal under the applicable procedure.

**(e)** If no resolution is possible at this stage the Assessor will refer the matter to the **Academic Freedom Committee** to consider whether any issues raised are properly regarded as within the legitimate bounds of Academic Freedom.

**(f)** On receipt of the determination by the **Academic Freedom Committee**, the Assessor may either:

(i) inform the complainant(s) of the determination and issue an Outcome or a Local Stage decision and that any further steps in relation to the complaint are as set out in the relevant procedure; or

(ii) refer the matter to a Panel for investigation and inform the parties to the grievance or complaint that this has been done.

## **6. The Panel Investigation**

### **(a) The Role of the Panel**

6.1 The Role of the Panel is:

**(a)** to investigate any matter referred to them by an Assessor; and

**(b)** decide whether:

(i) there is a case to answer;

(ii) there is no case to answer; or

(iii) the matter should be considered under an alternative procedure.

### **(b) The Composition and Remit of the Panel**

6.2 The Panel will normally consist of three members: someone unconnected with

the concern raised who is a member of the school or faculty of the person(s) complained about, a member of the University from outside the faculty and a Senior member of academic or professional service staff (as appropriate) who shall chair the Panel.

- 6.3 Members of the Panel will have had no previous direct involvement with the matter complained about. Where the complaint relates to a research interest of the individual(s) complained about, where possible, at least one member should have some knowledge of the relevant field of research.
- 6.4 The individual(s) against whom the allegation is made shall be informed of the decision to appoint a Panel and shall be given the opportunity to comment on the proposed membership of the Panel.
- 6.5 The Panel shall require the production of such records and other information as are necessary to enable the investigation to proceed.
- 6.6 The Panel may interview the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint has been raised together with anyone else who may have relevant information.
- 6.7 On completion of its investigation, the Panel will produce a report setting out its findings and shall give the report to the Assessor.

## **7. Action by the Assessor following the Panel's report**

- 7.1 On receipt of the report from the Panel, the Assessor will issue either an Outcome or a Local Stage decision setting out what, if any, action should be taken in respect of the individual(s) about whom the complaint was made. This may include:

**(a)** in a case involving a grievance or complaint against a member of **Staff** deciding that:

- (i) No action should be taken.
- (ii) The concerns may be addressed through early action under Ordinance 10.4.
- (iii) The matter should be dealt with under a different procedure.
- (iv) The matter should proceed to formal action under Ordinance 10.4.

**(b)** in a case involving a complaint against a **Student** deciding that:

- (i) no action should be taken;
- (ii) the matter should be referred to the Decision-maker for them to consider whether, under the Student Disciplinary Regulations, the matter should be dealt with summarily or referred to a **disciplinary committee** under those Regulations.

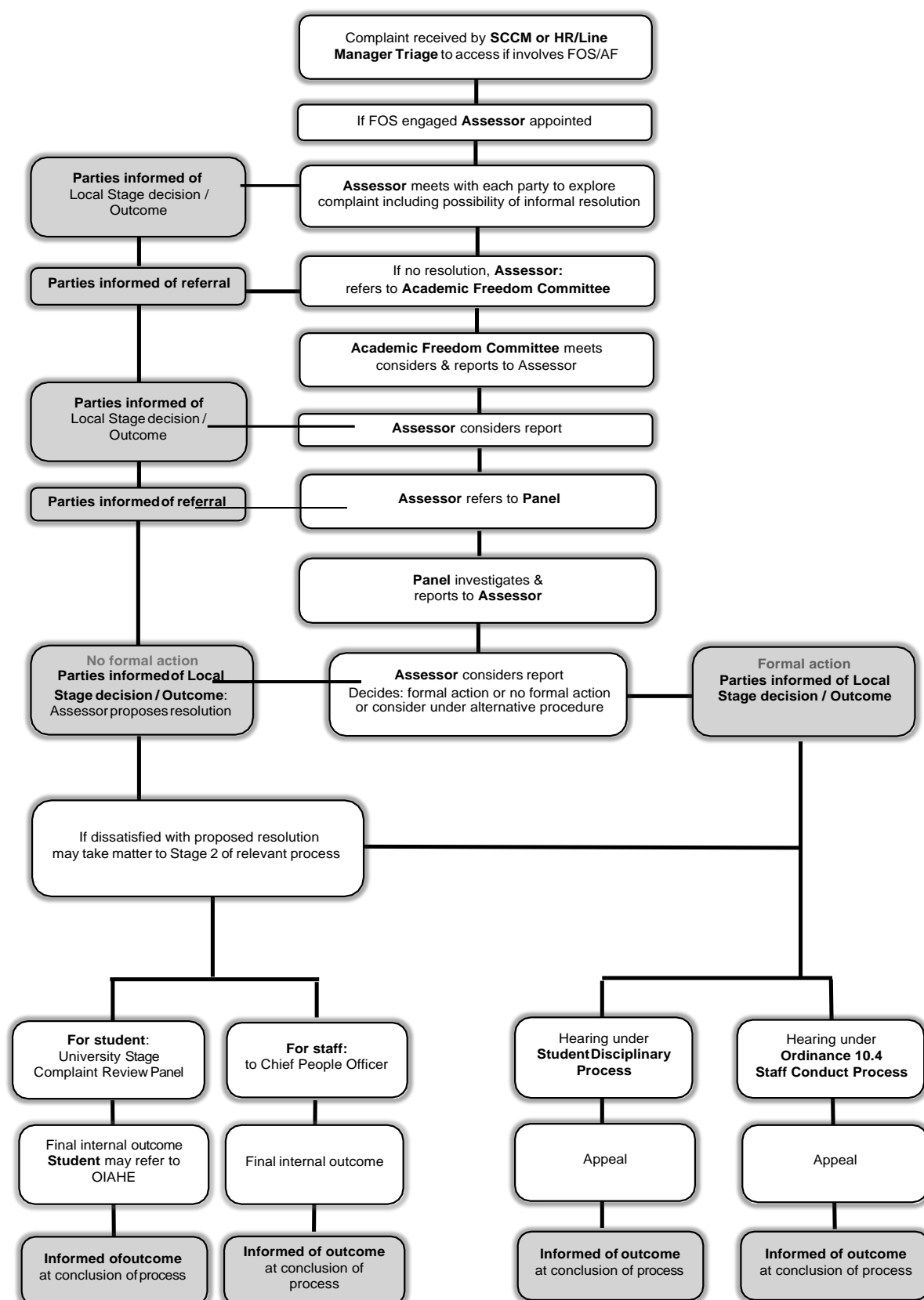
## **8. Information given by the Assessor to the complainant(s) following their decision under paragraph 7**

- 8.1 **Appendix 2** sets out:

- 8.1.1 the information that may be given to the complainant(s) and to the individual(s) complained about at this stage of the Procedure;
- 8.1.2 the status of that information; and

- 8.1.3 next steps for the complainant(s).
- 8.2 If a complainant is dissatisfied they may take their complaint further by making an appeal under the Staff Grievance Procedure or seeking a review of the decision under the Student Complaint Procedure, as appropriate.
- 9. Information given by the Assessor to complainant(s) after conclusion of Staff or Student disciplinary procedures ( including any appeal)**
  - 9.1 **Appendix 3** sets out:
    - 9.1.1 the action and possible outcomes under the Staff and Student disciplinary procedures; and
    - 9.1.2 the information that may be given to the complainant(s) at this stage of the Procedure.
  - 9.2 The information that complainant(s) will receive depends on the nature of the disciplinary action taken.
  - 9.3 In all cases, the complainant(s) can expect to receive:
    - 9.3.1 confirmation of whether the matters complained of amounted to misconduct;
    - 9.3.2 a summary of any good practice improvements identified by the University.
  - 9.4 Where informal measures are identified or Formal Action is taken, the complainant(s) can also expect to receive:
    - 9.4.1 a summary of any identified actions to support and/or protect those affected by the issues raised and / or prevent recurrence; and
    - 9.4.2 where relevant confirmation that Formal Action has been taken.
  - 9.5 It should be noted that Formal Action taken under either the Staff or Student Disciplinary procedures is subject to a right of appeal.

## Appendix 1: Freedom of Speech Complaint Flow Chart



## APPENDIX 2

### Information Given to Complainant after Assessor's Decision under Section 8 of the Procedure

#### (1) Staff Complaint about a member of Staff (including a joint complaint by staff and students)

Decision made	Information to be given by the Assessor	Next steps and information given under other procedures
<b>No action</b> should be taken.	<p>Finding that there was no case to answer, the matters complained of did not amount to misconduct - Complaint dismissed. No action taken.</p> <p>Assessor will write to <b>both parties</b> informing them of this, highlighting the support available to them and any identified good practice improvements</p>	<p>This is an <b>Outcome</b> under section 5 of the <b>Staff Grievance Procedure</b>.</p> <p>The <b>Complainant(s)</b> may <b>appeal</b> the outcome under Section 6 of the <b>Staff Grievance Procedure</b>.</p>
The concerns may be addressed through <b>Early Action</b> under <b>Ordinance 10.4</b> .	<p>Finding that there was no case to answer, the matters complained of did not amount to misconduct - Complaint dismissed. No formal action taken.</p> <p><b>Assessor</b> will write to <b>both parties</b> informing them of this, highlighting the support available to them and any identified good practice improvements.</p>	<p>This is an <b>Outcome</b> under section 5 of the <b>Staff Grievance Procedure</b>.</p> <p>The <b>Complainant(s)</b> may <b>appeal</b> the <b>Outcome</b> under Section 6 of the <b>Staff Grievance Procedure</b>.</p>
The matter should be <b>dealt with under a different procedure</b> .	<p>Finding that the matter was not a conduct issue and should be considered under a different procedure. Confirmation of which procedure has been triggered, if appropriate.</p> <p><b>Assessor</b> will write to <b>both parties</b> informing them of this, highlighting the support available to them and any identified good practice improvements.</p>	<p>This is an <b>Outcome</b> under section 5 of the <b>Staff Grievance Procedure</b>.</p> <p>The <b>Complainant(s)</b> may <b>appeal</b> the <b>Outcome</b> under <b>Section 6 of the Staff Grievance Procedure</b>.</p>

<p>The matter should proceed to <b>formal action</b> under <b>Ordinance 10.4</b>.</p>	<p>Finding that there was a case to answer, the matters complained of may amount to misconduct.</p> <p><b>Assessor</b> will write to <b>both parties</b> informing them of this.</p> <p>In the case of the <b>Complainant(s)</b>, explaining any role they may have in the process under Ordinance 10.4 including whether they may be required to give evidence, highlighting the support available to them any identified good practice improvements.</p>	<p>This is an <b>Outcome</b> under section 5 of the <b>Staff Grievance Procedure</b>.</p> <p>The <b>Complainant(s)</b> may appeal the <b>Outcome</b> under Section 6 of the <b>Staff Grievance Procedure</b>.</p>
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## (2) Student Complaint about a member of Staff

Decision made	Information to be given by the Assessor	Next steps and information given under other procedures
<p><b>No action</b> should be taken.</p>	<p>Finding that there was no case to answer, the matters complained of did not amount to misconduct - Complaint dismissed. No action taken.</p> <p><b>Assessor</b> will write to <b>both parties</b> informing them of this, highlighting the support available to them and any identified good practice improvements.</p>	<p>This is a <b>Local Stage</b> decision under the <b>Student Complaint Procedure</b>.</p> <p>The Complainant(s) may refer the matter to the <b>University Stage</b> of the <b>Student Complaints Procedure</b>.</p> <p>Thereafter the matter will be considered under the <b>Student Complaints Procedure</b>.</p>
<p>The concerns may be addressed through <b>Early Action</b> under <b>Ordinance 10.4</b>.</p>	<p>Finding that there was no case to answer, the matters complained of did not amount to misconduct - Complaint dismissed. No formal action taken.</p> <p><b>Assessor</b> will write to <b>both parties</b> informing them of this, highlighting the support available to them and any identified good practice improvements.</p>	<p>This is a <b>Local Stage</b> decision under the <b>Student Complaint Procedure</b>.</p> <p>The Complainant(s) may refer the matter to the <b>University Stage</b> of the <b>Student Complaints Procedure</b>.</p> <p>Thereafter the matter will be considered under the <b>Student Complaints Procedure</b>.</p>
<p>The matter should be dealt with under a <b>different procedure</b>.</p>	<p>Finding that the matter was not a conduct matter and should be considered under a different procedure. Confirmation of which procedure has been triggered, if appropriate.</p> <p>Assessor will write to <b>both parties</b> informing them of this, highlighting the support available to them and any identified good practice improvements.</p>	<p>The Complainant(s) may refer the matter to the <b>University Stage</b> of the <b>Student Complaints Procedure</b>.</p> <p>Thereafter the matter will be considered under the <b>Student Complaints Procedure</b>.</p>
<p>The matter should proceed to formal action under <b>Ordinance 10.4</b>.</p>	<p>Finding that there was a case to answer, the matters complained of may amount to misconduct.</p> <p><b>Assessor</b> will write to both parties informing them of this.</p> <p>In the case of the <b>Complainant(s)</b>, explaining any role they may have in the process under Ordinance 10.4 including whether they may be</p>	<p>This is a <b>Local Stage</b> decision under the <b>Student Complaint Procedure</b>.</p> <p>The Complainant(s) may refer the matter to the <b>University Stage</b> of the <b>Student Complaints Procedure</b>.</p> <p>Thereafter the student complaint will be considered under the</p>

	required to give evidence, highlighting the support available to them any identified good practice improvements.	<b>Student Complaints Procedure</b> and separately any issues of staff conduct will be considered under <b>Ordinance 10.4.</b>
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**(3) Staff or Student Complaint** about a **Student** (including a joint complaint by staff and students)

Decision made	Information to be given by the Assessor	Next steps and information given under other procedures
<p><b>No action</b> should be taken.</p>	<p>Finding that there was no case to answer, the matters complained of did not amount to misconduct - Complaint dismissed. No action taken.</p> <p><b>Assessor</b> will write to <b>both parties</b> informing them of this, highlighting the support available to them and any identified good practice improvements.</p>	<p>This is a <b>Local Stage</b> decision under the <b>Student Complaint Procedure</b>.</p> <p>The Complainant(s) may refer the matter to the <b>University Stage</b> of the <b>Student Complaints Procedure</b>.</p> <p>Thereafter the matter will be considered under the <b>Student Complaints Procedure</b>.</p>
<p>Referral made to be considered under the <b>Student Disciplinary Regulations</b>.</p>	<p>Finding that there was a case to answer, the matters complained of may amount to misconduct.</p> <p><b>Assessor</b> will write to <b>both parties</b> informing them of this.</p> <p>In the case of the <b>Complainant(s)</b>, explaining any role they may have in the process under Ordinance 10.4 including whether they may be required to give evidence, highlighting the support available to them any identified good practice improvements.</p>	<p>This is a <b>Local Stage</b> decision under the <b>Student Complaint Procedure</b>.</p> <p>The Complainant(s) may refer the matter to the <b>University Stage</b> of the <b>Student Complaints Procedure</b>.</p> <p>Thereafter the matter will be considered under the <b>Student Complaints Procedure</b>.</p> <p>Following the referral, the matter will be dealt with under the <b>Student Disciplinary Regulations</b>.</p>

### APPENDIX 3

#### Information Given to Complainant after referral for Formal Action under Staff and Student Disciplinary procedures Section.9

##### (1) Staff Disciplinary

Action	Possible outcomes	Information to be given to complainant
No Action	None	<p>Finding that the matters complained of did not amount to misconduct - Complaint dismissed. No action taken.</p> <p>Any identified good practice improvements.</p>
Recommendation for Early Action	Informal measures identified	<p>Finding that the matters complained of did not amount to misconduct.</p> <p>Any identified good practice improvements.</p> <p>Any identified actions to support / protect those affected and/or prevent recurrence.</p> <p>No formal action taken/informal measures put in place.</p>
Formal Action	First Written Warning Final Written Warning Dismissal	<p>Matter dealt with in accordance with Staff Conduct Procedure.</p> <p>Confirmation of whether the action complained of amounted to misconduct.</p> <p>Any identified good practice improvements.</p> <p>Any identified actions to support / protect those affected and/or prevent recurrence.</p> <p>Formal action taken.</p> <p>Subject to Appeal.</p>

## (2) Student Disciplinary

Action	Potential Outcome	Information to be given to complainant
No Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No Sanction</li></ul>	Complaint dismissed. No action taken.  Any identified good practice improvements.
Formal Action	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Absolute discharge</li><li>• Written reprimand</li><li>• Caution</li><li>• Letter of apology</li><li>• Attend a course</li><li>• Perform unpaid services</li><li>• Fixed term Exclusion</li><li>• Suspension</li><li>• Expulsion</li></ul>	Matter dealt with in accordance with the Student Disciplinary Regulations  Confirmation of whether the action complained of amounted to misconduct.  Any identified good practice improvements.  Any identified actions to support / protect those affected and/or prevent recurrence.  Appropriate sanction imposed.  Action subject to appeal.

**N.B. Please note that this policy will be reviewed during the 2024-2025 academic year.**

# **Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedure**

The purpose of these Regulations is to provide a constructive framework for dealing with allegations of misconduct made against students and to ensure that disciplinary action, where necessary, is applied fairly and consistently.

## **1. Authority for the Regulations**

- 1.1. These Regulations are made under Ordinance 6.2.1.2 of the University of Bristol, by which Senate has the power to provide for the discipline of the students of the University and has delegated power to the Executive Director for Education and Students to draw up and publish local rules and regulations for misconduct in University residences and in the community. These are contained in Annex 2.
- 1.2. Unless the context indicates otherwise, references within these Regulations to the Disciplinary Decision-Maker refers to a member of University staff trained in making disciplinary decisions.

## **2. Application and Scope**

- 2.1. This procedure applies to all registered students.
- 2.2. Any student studying or registered at the University of Bristol may be subject to disciplinary measures if they are found to be guilty of misconduct as defined in Annex 1.
- 2.3. This procedure should be read in conjunction with the Sexual Misconduct Policy, which provides related guidance and definitions.
- 2.4. Misconduct relating to cheating, plagiarism and any other academic misconduct will be dealt with under the Assessment Regulations.
- 2.5. Misconduct relating to freedom of speech will be dealt with under the Complaints relating to Free Speech and Academic Freedom Procedure.
- 2.6. Disciplinary action under this procedure can only be taken once against a student (the "Responding Student") for the same allegations of misconduct save that students on professional programmes may also be subject to Fitness to Practise procedures.
- 2.7. If it appears that the Responding Student is experiencing health issues, any disciplinary proceedings may be adjourned whilst a referral is made to the Support to Study Policy, under which medical evidence can be obtained.
- 2.8. The Disciplinary Decision-Maker or the Disciplinary Committee (under section 12 onwards) may, if appropriate, adjourn, suspend or terminate any disciplinary proceedings.
- 2.9. Any reference to a 'day' within these Regulations refers to a calendar day that the University is generally open and so includes weekends but does not include UK public holidays or university closure days, unless otherwise stated.
- 2.10. References in these Regulations to the holders of any post shall be construed to refer either to the post-holder or to their respective nominee.

### **3. Safeguards and Confidentiality**

#### **Confidentiality**

- 3.1.** An appropriate level of confidentiality is fundamental to the operation of an effective disciplinary process and must balance transparency and the requirements of natural justice against a legitimate expectation of personal privacy. To ensure the integrity of the process all parties involved in the operation of these Regulations including the Responding Student and any student, member of staff or third party, where the allegation does not fall within Annex 2, raising a formal report ("Reporting Party"), any witnesses and those operating the Regulations must ensure that they maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality during operation of the procedure and afterwards.
- 3.2.** In imposing an expectation of confidentiality, the University recognises that it may be necessary and therefore appropriate for those involved in these Regulations to share certain confidential information with third parties, as set out below.
- 3.3.** The University may disclose information:
- a) to those who need to know in order to discharge their responsibilities at work;
  - b) where it considers that disclosure is necessary in the interests of health and safety at work or the welfare of other staff, students or the public interest;
  - c) where disclosure is required by law;
  - d) to witnesses and/or attendees at the meetings within these Regulations and any other procedure relating to the complaint;
  - e) to its professional advisers for the purposes of obtaining advice;
  - f) to relevant external bodies such as the police, Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA(HE)) or the University's regulator, the Office for Students (OfS).
- 3.4** Students and staff (who make a disclosure and/or formal report which is being considered under these Regulations) and the Responding Student may disclose information:
- a) to professional advisers including Trade Union Representatives and Bristol SU Academic Advice Service for the purpose of obtaining advice;
  - b) to family members (on the basis that those family members maintain confidentiality), academic or support services for the purpose of obtaining guidance and support and when submitting extenuating circumstances;
  - c) to relevant external bodies such as the police, OIA(HE) or the OfS.

#### **Safeguards**

- 3.5** The University aims to promote a culture in which students and staff feel confident to raise their concerns. Consequently, anyone raising a formal report is expected to identify themselves. No action will be taken against a student about any matter that has been reported anonymously unless it is possible to verify the matter reported.
- 3.6** The investigation process under these Regulations will require that the Reporting Party provides a statement and/or attends an investigatory interview. The Reporting Party may also be required to attend any disciplinary committee hearing as a witness. It is normally expected that such information is given without being anonymised. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, a Reporting Party should expect to be identified in the investigation process.

### **4. Involvement of the Police and Criminal Courts**

- 4.1 This section applies where the alleged misconduct also constitutes an offence under the criminal law.
- 4.2 If allegations of misconduct have been reported to the police, any University investigation will normally be adjourned pending the outcome of the police investigation.
- 4.3 The University can only investigate whether there has been a breach of these Regulations, within the definition of misconduct as set out in Annex 1. Any University investigation is not a substitute for a police investigation or criminal proceedings. The University cannot make a determination of criminal guilt.
- 4.4 If appropriate, risk assessment procedures may take place under section 8 onwards.
- 4.5 Students who are subject to a police investigation or prosecution are required to inform the University of any investigation; if they are charged with a criminal offence; when police or court involvement has come to an end; and the outcome of the investigation or prosecution. Failure to do so may be treated as misconduct and may be dealt with under these Regulations.
- 4.6 The University may report any criminal offence to the police following an assessment of risk.
- 4.7 The fact that the police decide not to proceed with a case or that criminal proceedings have returned a 'not guilty' verdict does not preclude the University from taking action under these Regulations.
- 4.8 If a student has been convicted of a criminal offence or accepts a police caution in relation to behaviour that falls within the scope of the definition of misconduct in Annex 1, the University will accept this as conclusive evidence that the behaviour took place.
- 4.9 Where a finding of misconduct has been made under these Regulations, and a student has also been sentenced by a criminal court on the same facts, the penalty imposed by the criminal court will be taken into account in deciding the penalty under these Regulations.

## 5. Disciplinary Procedure

### Making a disclosure

- 5.1. Allegations of misconduct may be disclosed by any member of staff or student.
- 5.2. A **disclosure** of allegations of misconduct can be made in person or via other means such as telephone or digital communication such as Teams or email. Students may also disclose online via the University's Report and Support tool. No formal action against a particular student will be taken about any matter disclosed. For formal action to be taken a formal report would need to be submitted.
- 5.3. Students can make an anonymous disclosure of misconduct via the University's Report and Support online reporting tool. However, no formal action under these Regulations against a particular student will be taken about any matter that has been reported anonymously unless it is possible to verify the matter reported. Anonymous information may be used to identify trends and shape our prevention and support provision.

### Disclosures relating to sexual misconduct

- 5.4. Students can contact the Student Resolution Service (SRS) by email [srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk) for advice regarding making a disclosure relating to sexual misconduct and how to access support. Information and support is also available at [Sexual misconduct | Current students | University of Bristol](#).

## 6. Making a Formal Report about misconduct

- 6.1 Information about how to submit a formal report can be found [here](#). A Reporting Party must make



a **formal report** before any action will be taken under these Regulations. However, if there is a concern about immediate risk to the University Community or if the University has a safeguarding obligation to consider the risk, the University's risk assessment procedures may be utilised before a formal report is submitted by the Reporting Party (see section 8 for more details of the University's Risk Assessment procedures).

- 6.2** Staff and Student(s) who wish to make a formal report about misconduct relating to student(s) behaviour should use the Unacceptable Behaviour form and send to SRS-casework@bristol.ac.uk.

### **Sexual Misconduct**

- 6.3** Formal reports relating to sexual misconduct should be made using the sexual misconduct form and sent to SRS-casework@bristol.ac.uk

## **7. Informal Resolution**

- 7.1** The University has a Mediation Service which can be used for informal resolution where appropriate and both parties agree to take part. Informal resolution is not appropriate for sexual misconduct cases.

## **8. Risk Assessment Procedures**

- 8.1.** If, the person receiving the disclosure believes that there is a risk of harm to the Reporting Party or anyone in the University community including the Responding Student, they will refer the disclosure for a risk assessment and consideration of Precautionary Action.
- 8.2.** Precautionary Action (such as Orders of suspension, including Non-Contact Orders) is not a sanction or penalty. It is to be used only where following the risk assessment process it is considered necessary to protect a member or members of the University community; the property of the University; or the property of a member or members of the University community.
- 8.3. Initial Risk Assessment Group (IRAG).** The members of IRAG are the Assistant Director Student Resolution Service as chair, the Assistant Director Complex Student Casework and Safeguarding, the Director of Student Support and Wellbeing, Assistant Director Student Wellbeing or Assistant Director Residential Life, with advice from Legal Services. Other members of staff may be invited to provide advice or information to the Panel. Quorum for the Group will be three members.
- 8.4.** IRAG will decide whether any Precautionary Action such as Non-Contact Order(s) and/or required move to alternate University residences and restricted access to previous University residences is appropriate to protect the parties involved and/or whether a referral should be made to the Risk Assessment Panel (RAP) for consideration of matters such as suspension or further restriction of access to University premises.
- 8.5. Risk Assessment Panel (RAP)** The members of the RAP are the Executive Director of Education and Students as chair, Director of Student Experience, Director of Student Support and Wellbeing, the Assistant Director of Student Resolution Service and the Chief People Officer if the disclosure is made by a member of University staff, with advice from Legal Services. Other members of staff may be invited to provide advice or information to the Panel. Quorum for the Group will be three members.

- 8.6.** RAP will make decisions relating to Precautionary Action such as suspension or restriction of access to University premises or reporting to the police or safeguarding agencies.
- 8.7.** If IRAG or RAP decides to take precautionary action, a Student Liaison Officer (SLO) will be assigned to the Responding Student and will deliver any correspondence and guide the student through the procedures.

## **9. Suspension and Non-Contact Orders**

- 9.1.** A Non-Contact Order (NCO) is an order requiring a student to have no contact with a specified person. The NCO may allow a student to continue with their studies but prohibit them from contacting the specified person.
- 9.2.** If allegations are made against a student or they are the subject of a police investigation, they may be suspended from the University pending the conclusion of the disciplinary proceedings or any criminal process. A student who is suspended from the University pending investigation, hearing or trial may have restricted rights to enter University premises and to take part in University activities and may also be subject to a NCO.
- 9.3.** Students who are suspended under these Regulations will still be able to contact the Academic Advice Team in the Students' Union for independent advice and may receive support from Student Wellbeing.
- 9.4.** A decision to suspend a student pending investigation, hearing or trial or to issue a NCO may be subject to review at the request of the student after four weeks. A review can be requested by emailing their SLO. Such a review will not involve a hearing, but the student, either personally or through their adviser, friend or representative, will be entitled to make written representations.
- 9.5.** The review will be conducted by either IRAG or RAP depending on which group made the decision and the outcome of the review will be communicated to the student. In addition to the initial review, IRAG or RAP shall review the suspension on receipt of evidence of altered circumstances which might affect the suspension or order.

## **10. Student Liaison Officer (SLO)**

- 10.1.** A SLO will be assigned to the Responding Student and the Reporting Party if they are a registered student. The SLO will be the main point of contact throughout the procedure.

## **11. The Investigation**

- 11.1.** Any action taken under these procedures will be concluded as quickly as possible and normally within 90 days from the start of the investigation. This time frame would normally exclude any time taken by a criminal investigation or prosecution.
- 11.2.** When a formal report is referred to the SRS for action, an Investigating Officer (IO) will be appointed to investigate the report. The IO will keep the SLOs updated as to progress.
- 11.3.** The IO has the power to carry out the investigation as they deem appropriate, including interviewing the Reporting Party and Responding Student, any other witnesses and collecting any available evidence. Consideration will be given to the appropriate timing and method of communication, in particular in relation to examination dates.

- 11.4.** On receipt of the formal report from the Reporting Party or other evidence of misconduct, the IO shall inform the Responding Student of the allegations.
- 11.5.** The IO shall give the Responding Student the opportunity to respond to the allegations. This response may be in writing and/or the IO may meet with the Responding Student.
- 11.6.** When the IO is satisfied that sufficient evidence has been obtained, the IO shall prepare a report containing all of the available evidence and summarising the facts and the potential misconduct under Annex 1 and giving their view as to whether or not there is a case to answer.
- 11.7.** The IO will deliver this report to the Disciplinary Decision-Maker for consideration.

## **12. Summary stage - Consideration by the Disciplinary Decision-Maker**

**12.1.** The Disciplinary Decision-Maker will review the Investigation Report prepared by the IO and may:

- a) Request that further investigation be carried out;
- b) Decide that no further action should be taken, for instance due to insufficient evidence, in which case both parties will receive a letter informing them of this and highlighting the support available to them;
- c) Decide that the matter should be dealt with informally by issuing an informal warning letter to the Responding Student. An informal warning letter will not be disclosed outside of the disciplinary process and therefore will not be recorded on the Responding Student's University record or referred to in references;
- d) Decide that the matter should be dealt with formally either:
  - summarily by the Disciplinary Decision-Maker; or
  - by referring the matter to a Disciplinary Committee.

**12.2.** The Disciplinary Decision-Maker may be advised by a representative from the Student Resolution Service or Legal Services.

## **13. Summary Jurisdiction**

**13.1.** The Disciplinary Decision-Maker can resolve the matter without referral to a Disciplinary Committee. This will normally be when the Responding Student has admitted guilt or when the matter is straight forward.

**13.2.** After considering the Investigation Report, the Disciplinary Decision-Maker can make a summary decision as to guilt and sanction. The Disciplinary Decision-Maker can find the Responding Student guilty of misconduct if, on the balance of probabilities, they are satisfied of the student's guilt. If a finding of guilt is made, they may impose any of the penalties set out in Annex 3 of these Regulations, other than expulsion from the University.

**13.3.** The Responding Student will receive an outcome letter detailing the decision and penalty imposed and has the right to appeal the outcome. See section 16 below.

**13.4.** The Reporting Party will be informed of the outcome of any disciplinary action taken, including whether there was found to be a case to answer and whether the matter was dealt with summarily or referred to a Disciplinary Committee. The Reporting Party will also be informed if the Responding Student was found to be guilty or not guilty. The Reporting Party will normally be informed of penalties imposed on the Responding Student where the penalty has a direct impact on the Reporting Party, such as a Non-Contact Order or letter of apology. The disclosure of further penalty information will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If the

Reporting Party is a registered student they may submit a student complaint if they are dissatisfied with the way that the formal report was dealt with.

#### **14. Disciplinary Committee**

- 14.1.** If the Disciplinary Decision-Maker decides to refer the matter to a Disciplinary Committee, the SRS will be asked to convene a committee and arrange a hearing as soon as possible.
- 14.2.** The Committee will be made up of three Disciplinary Decision-Makers who have had no prior involvement with the case and are not in the same faculty as either student. The Responding Student may request that a representative from the Students' Union sit on the Committee. The Committee should not include members of the Board of Trustees, as an appeal from a decision of the Disciplinary Committee is heard by a Committee of the Board of Trustees under Section 16 of these Regulations.
- 14.3.** One of the members will be appointed as Chair of the Committee. This cannot be the Students' Union representative. The order of the Committee hearing, evidence to be considered and witnesses to be called will be at the discretion of the Committee. The Committee may ask questions of anyone present.
- 14.4.** A representative from Legal Services will act as Clerk to the Committee. The role of the clerk is to assist the Committee, take a note of the proceedings and advise the Committee. A representative from the Student Resolution Service or Legal Services will present the case on behalf of the University.
- 14.5.** The Responding Student will be invited to attend the hearing. The hearing may take place via digital conferencing and not in person. The Reporting Party may be invited to attend the hearing as a witness and asked to give evidence; they are not a party to the proceedings. The Reporting Party will not attend all of the hearing and may give evidence via video link if appropriate. If two or more Responding Students are involved in related misconduct, the Committee may at its discretion deal with their cases together.
- 14.6.** The Reporting Party and Responding Student can bring someone for support or to represent them to the hearing. Both parties are normally expected to answer any questions put to them, unless they have a good reason for not doing so. The Academic Advice Team in the Students' Union offers advice and representation to students involved in University procedures such as this.
- 14.7.** The Committee will rely only on evidence presented at the hearing, either orally or in the hearing bundle. The Responding Student will receive a copy of the hearing bundle, but the Reporting Party will not. The role of the Committee is to decide whether the student is guilty of the alleged misconduct on the balance of probabilities based on the evidence before the Committee.
- 14.8.** The Committee may impose time limits on oral addresses and submissions. The Committee shall have power to adjourn a hearing to another date, as it thinks fit.
- 14.9.** The Committee may find a student guilty of misconduct if, on the evidence before it, it is satisfied on the balance of probabilities of the student's guilt. This means that the Committee must be satisfied that, on the evidence available, the student's guilt is more likely than not. Once a finding of guilt has been established, the Committee can impose any of the penalties listed at Annex 3, including expulsion.

**14.10.** If the members of the Committee cannot agree, the decision of the Committee will be that of the majority of its members. If there is a split decision, the Chair will have the casting vote.

**14.11.** All proceedings under this section and documents relating to the proceedings are confidential.

**14.12.** The Responding Student will receive an outcome letter detailing the decision and penalty imposed usually within 21 days of the hearing. The Responding Student has a right of appeal, as set out in section 16.

**14.13.** The Reporting Party will receive a letter stating that the matter was dealt with by a Committee. The Reporting Party will also be informed if the Responding Student was found to be guilty or not guilty. The Reporting Party will normally be informed of penalties imposed on the Responding Student where the penalty has a direct impact on the Reporting Party, such as a Non-Contact Order or letter of apology. The disclosure of further penalty information will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If the Reporting Party is a registered student they may submit a student complaint if they are dissatisfied with the way that the formal report was dealt with.

## **15. Penalties**

**15.1.** The penalties are set out in Annex 3. The Responding Student or their representative shall be entitled to make representations in mitigation before the penalty is decided.

**15.2.** When determining penalties, consideration will be given to the seriousness and circumstances of the misconduct, the Responding Student's means and any other mitigating circumstances raised by the Responding Student or their representative.

**15.3.** If found guilty of misconduct, details of the misconduct and the penalty imposed will be sent to the student's school and faculty. The record will be kept on the student's files for at least one year after graduation and may be referred to for the purpose of references.

**15.4.** The Student Resolution Service will keep a record of student misconduct and penalties imposed and will report to Senate annually.

## **16. Appeals**

**16.1.** A Responding Student may appeal against a finding of guilt or against a penalty imposed following a finding of guilt imposed under section 13 and 14 of these Regulations. The appeal must be made to the University Secretary within 21 days of the conclusion of the proceedings by email ([university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk)). The student must set out in writing the grounds on which the appeal is based. The student is encouraged to seek assistance from Academic Advice Team in the Students' Union when preparing the letter of appeal.

**16.2.** The grounds of appeal are:

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

- 16.3.** The University Secretary can decide not to accept an appeal that does not have valid grounds for appeal. The University Secretary can also refer an appeal back to the Decision-Maker if new information is received in the appeal or if the appeal could be easily resolved without the need for a full Committee, for example if the Responding Student submits mitigation regarding the penalty imposed.
- 16.4.** If the appeal has valid grounds and cannot be resolved, it will be heard by a Committee constituted under the provisions set out in the Student Complaints Procedure.
- 16.5.** There is no entitlement to a rehearing of the case. The student may present the appeal in person or in writing, and may be represented by an adviser, friend or other representative.
- 16.6.** The Committee considering the appeal may:
- a) reject the appeal and confirm the original penalty;
  - b) uphold the appeal and revoke the original decision and penalty;
  - c) partially uphold the appeal and confirm the finding of guilt but amend the penalty to impose a lesser or greater penalty.

**17. Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)**

If the student is still dissatisfied, they may take the case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education, which provides an independent scheme for the review of student complaints. The OIA will consider cases only when the University's own internal complaints procedure has been exhausted. It will not intervene on matters which turn purely on academic judgment. Further information about this scheme is available at [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)

*Approved by Senate 2024*

## **Annex 1 Types of Misconduct**

- a. Any conduct which could constitute a criminal offence;
- b. Any conduct which constitutes sexual misconduct;
- c. Disruption of, or improper interference with, the academic, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the University;
- d. Obstruction of, or improper interference with, the functions, duties or activities of any student or member of staff of the University, or any visitor to the University;
- e. Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening, intimidating or offensive behaviour or language, whether expressed verbally or in writing, including online behaviour in electronic form;
- f. Bullying, harassment or unacceptable behaviour of any student or member of staff of the University, or any 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;
- g. Fraud, deceit, deception or dishonesty in relation to the University or its staff, students or visitors;
- h. Cheating or plagiarism in academic course work or in examinations;
- i. Theft, misappropriation or misuse of University property, or the property of the University's staff, students or visitors, including computer misuse;
- j. Misuse or unauthorised use of University premises;
- k. Damage to University property, or the property of the University's staff, students or visitors, caused intentionally or recklessly;
- l. Any act or failure to act that is likely to cause injury or impair health and safety on University premises, at University organised events or on any other site associated with the University, including arrangements facilitating emergency evacuation from university premises and residences;
- m. Failure to respect the rights of others to freedom of belief and freedom of speech;
- n. Breach of the provisions of any University code, rule or regulation, including any student code of conduct;
- o. Failure to disclose personal details to a member of staff of the University in circumstances in which it is reasonable to require that such information be given;
- p. Failure to comply with a reasonable instruction relating to discipline, issued by the Disciplinary Decision-Maker, IRAG or RAP

### **A.1.2 Definition of Sexual Misconduct**

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, abusive or degrading remarks of a sexual nature.

## **Annex 2 Local Rules and Regulations for Misconduct in University Residences and the Community**

The University expects students to behave in a way that is respectful and courteous of their neighbours and other members of their community and not to engage in anti-social behaviour.

### **A2.1 Types of Misconduct under the Local Rules and Regulations**

The University may investigate concerns raised by any Reporting Party or members of the local community relating to allegations of:

- Excessive noise or gatherings that cause a disturbance to members of the local community;
- Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening, intimidating or offensive behaviour or language addressed to members of the community whether expressed orally or in writing, including online behaviour in electronic form;
- Bullying, harassment or unacceptable behaviour affecting any member of the local community;
- Inconsiderate disposal of waste that causes a disturbance to members of the local community;
- Breaches of the Tenancy Agreement for those students in University residences including residences owned by third parties and leased to the University.

### **A2.2 Disciplinary Procedure**

#### **Misconduct in accommodation in the community**

The Community Liaison Officer is authorised to investigate allegations of misconduct and will produce an Investigation Report.

A Disciplinary Decision-Maker will make decisions regarding guilt and penalty.

#### **Misconduct relating to students residing in University residences, whether committed in residences or in the community**

The Senior Residential Life Managers are authorised to investigate allegations of misconduct and will produce an Investigation Report.

A Senior Residential Life Manager, not involved with the investigation, will make decisions regarding guilt and penalty.

If, the person authorised to investigate the allegation(s) believes that there is a risk of harm to the University community including the Responding Student, they will refer the allegations, in accordance with Section 8, for a risk assessment and consideration of Precautionary Action.

On receipt of a formal report regarding misconduct in University residences or the community the person authorised to investigate shall inform the Responding Student of the allegation(s). They have the power to carry out the investigation as they deem appropriate, including interviewing the individual making the formal report and the Responding Student, any other witnesses and collecting any available evidence. Consideration will be given to the appropriate timing and method of communication, in particular in relation to examination dates. They shall give the Responding Student the opportunity to respond to the allegations.

When the person authorised to investigate is satisfied that sufficient evidence has been obtained they will produce an Investigation report. The person authorised to make a disciplinary decision can:

1. Request that further investigation is carried out; or
2. Decide that no further action should be taken, for instance due to insufficient evidence, in which case the Responding Student will receive a letter informing them of this and highlighting the support available to them; or
3. Decide that the Responding Student is guilty of misconduct if, on the balance of probabilities



they are satisfied of the student's guilt. If a finding of guilt is made, they may impose any of the penalties outlined below;

4. Make a referral to the SRS to be considered under the Regulations. The Assistant Director Student Resolution Service will determine if the matter is sufficient for referral to the formal proceedings.

### **A2.3 Penalties**

- a. A written reprimand;
- b. A requirement to write a letter of apology to a specified person or persons;
- c. A requirement to attend a specified course or programme and to pay the reasonable cost as determined at the relevant time by the University;
- d. A caution, which means that no further penalty 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;
- e. A fine not exceeding £250. The only exception is in relation to behaviour which is likely to cause injury or impair safety on University premises where a fine of up to £400 can be imposed;
- f. The requirement to pay a reasonable sum by way of compensation for identified and quantified loss;
- g. The requirement to give and comply with a written undertaking as to future behaviour;
- h. Exclusion, either permanently or for a specified period, from the use of a specified University service or facility (including specified residential facilities) to which the misconduct relates;
- i. The requirement to perform unpaid services for the University or local community for a maximum of 20 hours.

Any of the above penalties may be suspended for a fixed period of time. If the Responding Student is found guilty of subsequent misconduct within that period the suspended penalty will immediately take effect.

When determining penalties, consideration will be given to the seriousness and circumstances of the misconduct, the Responding Student's means and any other mitigating circumstances raised by the Responding Student or their representative.

Where the breach or misconduct is also a breach of the terms of residence of University accommodation, the student may be referred to the Executive Director for Education and Students and the Director of Student Support and Wellbeing, who may take steps to evict the student.

### **A2.4 Appeals**

A Responding Student may appeal against a finding of guilt or against a penalty imposed following a finding of guilt. The student may raise their appeal formally by completing a Local Rules and Regulations Appeal Form and submitting it to the SRS within 21 days of the conclusion of the proceedings by email to [appeals-behaviour@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:appeals-behaviour@bristol.ac.uk). The student must set out in writing the grounds on which the appeal is based. The student is encouraged to seek assistance from Academic Advice Team in the Students' Union when preparing the letter of appeal.

The grounds of appeal are:

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

There is no entitlement to a rehearing of the case. There is no entitlement to a hearing, the review of the decision will be a paper exercise only.

The person considering the appeal may:

- a) reject the appeal and confirm the original penalty;
- b) uphold the appeal and revoke the original decision and penalty;
- c) partially uphold the appeal and confirm the finding of guilt but amend the penalty to impose a lesser or greater penalty.

A2.5 The Community Liaison Officer and Senior Residential Life Managers will report annually at the end of each academic year to the SRS with details of all misconduct dealt with and penalties imposed under this section.

## Annex 3

### Penalties for breaches of the Student Disciplinary Regulations

#### A4.1 Types of penalty

A student found guilty of misconduct may be given one or more of the following penalties:

- a. **A formal written warning;**
- b. **Absolute discharge**, which means that although the student may be technically guilty of the misconduct alleged, no blame should be attached to their actions;
- c. **Caution**, which means that no further penalty 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;
- d. **Conditional discharge**, which means that no immediate punishment is imposed, subject to the student fulfilling certain stipulated conditions including future good behaviour over the following twelve months or some other specified period. If the conditions are not met, a punishment may be imposed following a further hearing;
- e. **Fine**, up to a maximum of £800. This maximum figure will be subject to periodic review by Senate;
- f. **Required to write a letter of apology to a specified person or persons;**
- g. **Required to attend a specified course or programme** and to pay the reasonable cost as determined at the relevant time by the University;
- h. **Required to pay a reasonable sum by way of compensation** for identified and quantified loss;
- i. **Required to perform unpaid services for the University community** to a maximum of 40 hours;
- j. **Required to have no contact, or restricted contact, with a specified person or persons;**
- k. **Required to move to another room or another residence within University residences;**
- l. **Suspended from enjoying specified privileges for a fixed period of time;**
- m. **Excluded from the University for a fixed period of time**, up to a maximum of twelve months. A student who is excluded from the University has restricted rights to enter University premises, and to participate in University activities. The terms of the exclusion will be notified to the student in writing. An order of exclusion does not affect the student's status as a member of the University;
- n. **Suspended from the University for a fixed period of time**, up to a maximum of twelve months. A student who is suspended ceases to be a member of the University for the duration of the suspension and is prohibited from entering University premises, and from participating in University activities. Suspension may be subject to qualification, such as permission to take an examination. The terms of the suspension will be notified to the student in writing;
- o. **Expelled from the University**, which means that the student ceases to be a member of the University, and loses all rights and privileges of membership;
- p. Any other reasonable penalty deemed to be appropriate by the Disciplinary Decision-Maker or Disciplinary Committee.

#### A4.2 Suspended Penalty

Any of the above penalties may be suspended for a fixed period of time. If the student is found guilty of subsequent misconduct within that period the suspended penalty will immediately take effect.

*Approved by Senate 2024*

# Sexual Misconduct Policy

## 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The University of Bristol is committed to providing a positive working and learning environment that enriches lives and where everyone is treated with respect and dignity.
- 1.2. The University does not tolerate instances of sexual misconduct and encourages students and staff to access [advice and support](#) and/or [disclose and report](#) so they can make an informed decision on what is right for them. Where instances are disclosed and reported the University is committed to taking action proportionate to the circumstances of the case. There may be instances where action is not possible, in which case the University will offer advice and support.
- 1.3. This Policy sets out the University's expectations of behaviour by our staff and students and provides guidance for responding to disclosures and reports of sexual misconduct as defined in [Appendix 1](#).

## 2. Scope

- 2.1. This Policy applies to all students and staff of the University.
- 2.2. For the purposes of this Policy a student is any individual registered on a programme of study at the University, including summer school and short courses. Students may also be studying away from the University premises for part, or the whole, of their programme.
- 2.3. For the purposes of this Policy a member of staff is defined as any individual either employed or engaged by the University on a paid or unpaid basis to carry out work for the University under any type of employment contract. This includes:
  - Students undertaking paid or unpaid work.
  - People designated as workers for the University including those engaged through the Temporary Staffing Service (TSS).
  - Agency workers and Honorary appointments.
- 2.4. People working on a voluntary basis at the University and those working as contractors are also bound by the terms of this Policy as is any person engaged with, or representing, the University.
- 2.5. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the related regulations, policies and procedures set out in [Section 10](#).

## 3. Commitments

- 3.1. The University upholds the following commitments to establish a culture of support and respect:
  - 3.1.1. We are committed to providing an environment in which all members of our community feel safe and are respected.
  - 3.1.2. Sexual misconduct is not tolerated.

- 3.1.3. We are committed to providing a supportive environment where students and staff feel confident and empowered to disclose, will be listened to and understand the options available to them.
- 3.1.4. Students and staff will be supported to report sexual misconduct. This includes through external organisations such as the Police.
- 3.1.5. We will respect the right of the individual disclosing an instance of sexual misconduct to choose how to take forward a disclosure. In certain circumstances, such as when we have a legal duty to fulfil, we may disclose information to manage risk.
- 3.1.6. All reports will be carefully and thoughtfully addressed by staff members. For staff specifically involved in the subsequent process they will ensure that it is transparent and clearly communicated to all involved, adopt a trauma-informed and victim led approach and provide support to all students or staff involved in the process.
- 3.1.7. Everyone involved in an investigation will be treated fairly.
- 3.1.8. We will raise awareness of appropriate support and organisations to aid the recovery of students and staff that have been affected by sexual misconduct.
- 3.1.9. We will work together with the University of the West of England Bristol, University of Bath and Bath Spa University where cases cross institutions.
- 3.1.10. We will provide our staff and students with the tools to speak up and address inappropriate behaviour where it is safe to do so by providing training, accessible online resources and clear reporting channels.
- 3.1.11. We will actively work locally with external organisations to address misconduct.
- 3.1.12. We will work preventatively to help students and staff understand consent and will take an educative approach to tackling sexual misconduct.

#### **4. Expectations of all staff and students**

- 4.1. The University is a diverse and welcoming community. We will treat everyone with dignity and respect and share in the collective responsibility for creating and sustaining an environment that upholds dignity for all.
- 4.2. When responding to a disclosure staff and students will be thoughtful and careful, they will listen, take seriously, be patient, open-minded and respect decisions, encourage but not pressure staff and students to seek advice and support.
- 4.3. We expect staff and students to foster a culture of accountability, mutual respect, and inclusivity and to Speak Out as appropriate.
- 4.4. The University believes that the professional boundaries associated with a relationship of trust and confidence that exists between a student and a member of staff is a central and essential part of a student's educational development and pastoral care. For that reason, and given the inherent imbalance of power between staff and students, the University discourages intimate relationships between its staff and its students.

#### **5. Advice and Support**

- 5.1. The University is committed to providing support to students and staff affected by sexual misconduct and all students or staff involved in the formal process. Sources of support are listed at 5.3 and 5.4.

- 5.2. Where a student or staff member has experienced sexual misconduct within the last 7 days, we strongly encourage them to seek support without delay as there is a timeframe within which evidence can be gathered. Local [sexual assault referral centres](#) offer 24/7 support. Even when the experience of sexual misconduct is less recent you can still access the range of support the University provides.
- 5.3. Advice and support available to **students**:
- [Sexual Violence Liaison Officers](#)
  - [Report and Support](#)
  - [Student Resolution Service](#)
  - [Consent Collective](#)
  - [Bristol SU Academic Advice](#)
  - [External support services](#)
- 5.4. Advice and support available to **staff members**:
- Union representatives (for union members)
  - [HR Business Partners](#)
  - Line managers
  - [Speak Up Stand Out advocates](#)
  - [Staff Counselling service](#) including the Employee Assistance Programme
  - Research Staff representatives (for Research staff only)
  - [Consent Collective](#)

## 6. Disclosure and Reporting

- 6.1. A [disclosure](#) occurs when a student or staff member communicates with someone in the University community about their experience of sexual misconduct. A disclosure can be made in person or via other means such as telephone or digital communication such as Teams or email. Students may also disclose online via the University's Report and Support tool. No formal action against a particular student or member of staff will be taken about any matter disclosed; for formal action to be taken a formal report would need to be submitted.
- 6.2. Students can make an anonymous disclosure via the University's Report and Support tool. When disclosing anonymously the University will not be able to take any direct action or provide any further advice and support. The University will use the information to better understand the issues within our community, to identify trends and shape our prevention and support provision.
- 6.3. [Reporting channels for students](#)
- Students wishing to report a student can [formally report](#) to the University.
  - Students wishing to report a staff member can [report](#) to the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager.
- 6.4. [Reporting channels for staff members](#)
- Staff wishing to report another staff member should report to their [line manager](#) or [HR Business Partner](#) who can advise on how to proceed.
  - Staff wishing to [report](#) a student should contact the Student Resolution Service by emailing [srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:srs-casework@bristol.ac.uk)

- 6.5. Reports about the behaviour of a staff member will normally be progressed through the University's Conduct Procedure (Ordinance 10).
- 6.6. Reports about the behaviour of a student will normally be progressed through the Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedure.

## **7. How to respond to a disclosure**

- 7.1. There is advice and guidance available to students and staff who receive a disclosure of sexual misconduct from a student.
- 7.2. Where a staff member receives a disclosure from another staff member they should contact their HR Business Partners for advice and guidance.

## **8. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

- 8.1. Maintaining confidentiality is paramount to upholding the integrity of the process and safeguarding the validity of the investigation process. Preserving confidentiality leads to a more robust and reliable investigation process allowing for a fair and unbiased examination of the evidence.
- 8.2. The University recognises that at times those who have experienced sexual misconduct and those under investigation may need to share information.
- 8.3. The details around confidentiality and information sharing are set out in the Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedure and Ordinance 10 Employment.
- 8.4. Student data is held in accordance with the Education and Student Success Confidentiality Statement.
- 8.5. Staff data is held in accordance with the staff fair processing notice.

## **9. Responsibilities**

- 9.1. The Vice-Chancellor and President, Executive Director for Education and Students and Chief People Officer are the strategic leads who hold institutional responsibility for our approach to addressing sexual misconduct.
- 9.2. Education and Student Success Directorate, Human Resources and Legal Services are responsible for the application of this and related regulations, policies and procedures.

## **10. Related Regulations, Policies and Procedures**

- Acceptable Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable Behaviour at Work Policy Statement and Guidance
- Conduct Procedures
- Conflict of Interest: Outside of Work Policy
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy
- Sexual Misconduct and Relationships Guidance
- Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedure

## Appendix 1: Definitions

Complicity	any act that knowingly helps, promotes or encourages any form of sexual misconduct by another person.
Cyberstalking	repeated and deliberate use of the internet and other electronic communication tools to engage in persistent, unwanted communication intending to frighten, intimidate or harass someone, or to spy on someone.
Honour-based abuse	an incident involving violence, threats of violence or harm, intimidation, coercion, or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse) which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and/or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community's code of behaviour.
Group sexual misconduct	planning or attending inappropriately themed events aimed at degrading individuals subjected to sexual misconduct or initiations that involve non-consensual (often coerced) sexual acts.
Image-based sexual abuse	recording or sharing sexual or intimate photos or videos, without the consent of the person pictured. Also known as revenge pornography.
Non-consensual sexual act	engaging or attempting to engage in a sexual act with another person without their consent.
Non-consensual sexual contact	sexually touching another person without consent.
Relationship abuse	any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those who are, or have been, intimate partners; this may include psychological, physical, sexual, financial and/or emotional abuse.
Retaliation	any adverse actions against another person, including, but not limited to, harassment, threats, intimidation or coercion, made in response to someone disclosing or reporting any form of sexual misconduct.
Sextortion	threatening to publish sexual information, photos or videos about someone. Photos or recordings are often made without the person realising or consenting.
Sexual assault	any sexual touching that a person does not consent to. It involves all unwanted sexual contact including kissing, groping, sex without consent and enforced sexual acts.
Sexual harassment	unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which violates a person's dignity; makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated or creates a hostile or offensive environment; this could be one incident or a pattern of behaviours.



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, abusive or degrading remarks of a sexual nature.
Sexual violence	any act of a sexual nature that a person did not consent to.
Stalking	persistent, unwanted communication or behaviour intending to frighten, intimidate or harass someone such as repeatedly following them.
Upskirting	filming, or photographing under a person's clothes without their consent to capture images of their body or underwear.

## Appendix 2: Terminology

Consent	<p>An individual agrees by choice, only if they have the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Consent cannot be assumed and can be withdrawn at any time before or during a sexual act.</p> <p>Freedom is being able to make a choice without being forced, threatened, intimidated or coerced into the decision. An individual is incapacitated when asleep or unconscious, under the influence of drugs or alcohol, have a mental health condition that could affect their decision making, is under the age of consent.</p>
Disclosure	<p>When a student or staff member communicates with someone in the University community about their experience of sexual misconduct. A disclosure can be made in person or via other means such as telephone or digital communication such as Teams or email. Students may also disclose online via the University's Report and Support tool. No formal action against a particular student or staff member will be taken about any matter disclosed. For formal action to be taken a formal report would need to be submitted.</p> <p>Students can make an anonymous disclosure via the University's Report and Support tool. When reporting anonymously the University will not be able to take any direct action or provide any further advice and support. The University will use the information to better understand the issues within our community, to identify trends and shape our prevention and support provision.</p>
Report	<p>Telling a staff member of the University and/or Police about an incident of sexual misconduct for the purposes of initiating the investigation process by the University and/or Police.</p>
Reporting party	<p>Individual reporting to the University that they have been subjected to any form of sexual misconduct.</p>
Responding party	<p>Student or staff member who has been reported to have committed any form of sexual misconduct.</p>

## **Student Fees Regulations**

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1. Payment of fees: due date
2. Payment by instalments: Tuition fees
3. Payment by instalments: Accommodation fees
4. Payment by a third party
5. Late payment of tuition or accommodation fees
6. Difficulty with payment
7. Payment of interest or administrative charges
8. Reinstatement on payment of full tuition fees
9. Early withdrawal or suspension of studies
10. Other important information
11. Appeal process

For the purposes of these Regulations, "tuition fees" includes tuition fees, bench fees and writing up fees.

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### **1 Payment of fees: due date**

Tuition fees become due on 24<sup>th</sup> October of each year or 30 days from the date on an invoice.

Accommodation fees become due when you arrive to take up your place in University accommodation.

### **2 Payment by instalments: Tuition Fees**

If you are paying your tuition fees direct to the University, you may pay the full amount in a single payment or you may make two instalment payments. The amounts and due dates of instalment payments are published in advance on the University's website.

The preferred method of payment is a payment plan created through the Financial Statement in your MyBristol portal. You can pay by credit or debit card or by direct debit (where we are authorised to take payments from a bank account). Cheques, cash and bankers drafts are not accepted. Organisations and third party sponsors can continue to pay by bank transfer.

Modular fees raised when students attend modular-based postgraduate programmes are due 30 days from the date on the invoice.

### **3 Payment by instalments: Accommodation Fees**

You may choose to pay accommodation fees in full or on a termly basis. Payment may be made online (the preferred method), by direct debit or credit/debit card.

## **4 Payment by a third party**

If your fees are to be paid by the Student Loans Company you are not required to provide any information to the University. If your fees are to be paid by a sponsor such as an Embassy, please ensure that all information is available to enable the appropriate invoices to be raised and for your sponsor to make payment on your behalf. It is your personal responsibility to ensure that your fees are paid. If your sponsor fails to pay, the debt may be transferred to you and could prevent graduation or the award of your degree certificate.

Please note that parents and guardians are also treated as third parties, in relation to fees.

## **5 Late payment of tuition or accommodation fees**

If you become aware that your payment will be late, you must contact Credit Control to explain the position. If you are in genuine difficulty with payment, they will work to agree a plan of payment with you, within University regulation, that you can afford.

If you fail to submit a payment plan or if your payment plan method fails, you will be contacted within two weeks of the expected payment date and asked to make immediate payment by another method. If this payment method also fails, you will normally be charged an administration fee.

If you fail to provide the University with a satisfactory response in the circumstances described above you will be sent a formal letter requesting that you contact the University Credit Control Team ('the Credit Control Team Leader'). Your Faculty Office and academic school(s) will also be notified.

If you fail to respond, or if after contacting the Credit Control Team Leader you are unable to provide an acceptable payment plan, the University reserves the right to terminate your studies in the case of unpaid tuition fees or to require you to leave your accommodation in the case of unpaid accommodation fees. The University will then put any debt outstanding in the hands of a debt collector. Any additional costs incurred will be added to your account.

Students (including those whose fees are paid by third parties) who continue to be in debt to the University for tuition fees at the end of the academic year will not be permitted to register for the following year of their programme until either the debt has been cleared or specific arrangements have been agreed with the Credit Control Team Leader for the settlement of the debt. Students with outstanding tuition or bench fees will not be eligible for graduation or award of degree certificate.

Members of the Student Funding Office can provide advice on additional funding that may be available to assist you.

## **6 Difficulty with payment**

If you are experiencing difficulties in paying tuition or accommodation fees you should seek help at the earliest possible opportunity. Initially you should approach staff in the Student Funding Office. They will be able to provide general advice as well as information about any additional funding that may be available. You may also wish to speak to a personal tutor, hall warden or the Students' Union for support and advice. It is important to keep Credit Control Team informed of developments (see

above). The University will be sympathetic and assist where it can. However, in order to maintain the quality of teaching for everyone else, the University must act to recover debts.

## **7 Payment of interest or administrative charges**

You will become liable to pay interest at 2.5% above UK clearing bank base rate per annum on the amount outstanding where payments are outstanding against your payment plan. Interest will run from the due date to the date when the fees are paid.

The Finance Office will review the student related debt ledger throughout the year and apply interest on a consistent basis annually.

An administration charge will normally be raised where your chosen method of payment is declined more than once. This will apply to each payment date.

## **8 Reinstatement on payment of full tuition fees**

If you have been required to leave the University for non-payment of tuition fees, registration on your programme of study may be reinstated on payment in full of outstanding tuition fees before the end of the academic year in question. However, if you are consequently behind with your studies, you may have to repeat parts of the programme, thereby incurring further fees.

## **9 Early withdrawal or suspension of study**

If you leave your programme of study early or suspend your studies for a significant period, claims for refunds of tuition fees may be made subject to the University's Tuition Fee Refund Policy.

Please see this policy for more details on the basis for any refund, including the time-limit for such a claim to be revised. This policy will be published on the University's website, at <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/support/finances/refund.pdf>

As of September 2020, the following rules will apply:

### **Refunds for undergraduate (UG) students**

UG programme fees to be charged as follows:

- ☐ No fees charged if withdrawal date is within the first two (teaching) weeks of the start of the course.
- ☐ 25% of fees charged if withdrawal date is after the first two weeks and before the start of the second term.
- ☐ 50% of fees charged if withdrawal date is after the start of the second term and before the start of the third term.
- ☐ 100% of fees charged if withdrawal date is after the start of the third term.

### **Refunds for postgraduate (PG) students**

- PG programme (not including modular or PGCE) fees are charged on a monthly basis, with a whole month's fees charged where withdrawal date is part-way through the month.
- PG programme (modular route only) fees to be charged at 100% once the module has commenced.
- PGCE programme fees to be charged on a weekly basis and to be charged for a whole week's fees where withdrawal date is part-way through the week.
- Pre-sessional language programme fees to be charged on a weekly basis and to be charged for a whole week's fees where withdrawal date is part-way through the week.

This includes all categories of students and sponsors including all undergraduates in receipt of a tuition fee loan. There is further information on tuition fees at [www.bristol.ac.uk/fees-funding/tuition-fees](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/fees-funding/tuition-fees).

If you leave your University accommodation early, the sum for which you are liable is set out in the Student Residence Conditions.

## 10 Other important information

- a. Students with debts relating to tuition or accommodation fees, to library, car parking or disciplinary fines, or any other outstanding debts to the University, will be required to attend an interview with the Credit Control Team Leader to discuss these debts and make specific arrangements for their settlement.
- b. Students with tuition fee debts outstanding at the close of business seven days after the last day of the University summer term will not be permitted to graduate in the summer ceremony.
- c. Students with tuition fee debts outstanding at the close of business seven days after the last day of the University autumn term will not be permitted to graduate in the winter ceremony.
- d. A degree certificate will not be provided to any student who has tuition fees outstanding.

## 11 Appeal process

If you are unhappy about any matter relating to fee levels or payments you should in the first instance contact the Income Office, at the below contact details.

If the matter remains unresolved, you may bring a complaint under the University's [Student Complaints Procedure](#).

(see <http://www.bris.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/complaints.html>).

### Contacts

Student Funding Office	<a href="mailto:student-funding@bristol.ac.uk">student-funding@bristol.ac.uk</a>
Income Office	<a href="mailto:student-fees@bristol.ac.uk">student-fees@bristol.ac.uk</a>
Credit Control	<a href="mailto:finance-creditcontrol@bristol.ac.uk">finance-creditcontrol@bristol.ac.uk</a>

*Principles approved by Council 10 May 2000. Last updated August 2020.*



## University Assessment Regulations

Note: the content of these regulations have been integrated into the [Taught Code](#) and [PGR Code](#), and this document retired from 2025/26 (see section 2: 'rewrite of the Taught Code')

### For Taught Programmes

These assessment regulations should be read alongside the [Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes](#).

An understanding of academic integrity is critical when undertaking academic work and engaging with assessments. All schools should provide their students with training in academic integrity. Students are expected to engage with this training, as stated in the student agreement. It is important that schools also provide appropriate training to students who are joining part way through a programme or studying with the University for a short period (e.g. incoming study abroad students).

#### 1. Nominees

1.1 Unless the context indicates otherwise, under these regulations a university officer or the chair of a Board of Examiners may act through their properly appointed nominee.

#### 2. Conduct of assessments

These regulations apply to all students undertaking any format of assessment of the University of Bristol, irrespective of the location of the student and whether the unit and/or its assessment(s) is/are campus-based or remote.

Any reference to 'examination' in this section is inclusive of in-class or 'term-time' examinations.

##### 2.1 Engagement

2.1.1 Failure to engage with an assessment without reasonable cause may result in no marks being awarded for that assessment. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of the details of their assessment timetable and to ensure they can engage at the appropriate time and by the appropriate deadline. Students who are unable to engage with an assessment should alert their school in a timely manner. Schools should advise students who are unable to engage with an assessment whether existing policies, such as extension requests, self-certification of absence from assessment or exceptional circumstances, are suitable for them.

##### 2.2 Campus-based (in person) examinations

2.2.1 Entering the examination room: Students may not normally enter the examination room to sit an examination after it has been in progress for more than thirty minutes. Students who arrive late but within thirty minutes of the start of the examination will be allowed the remaining time, but no additional time, to carry out the assessment. Students who arrive more than thirty minutes late will not be permitted to sit the examination at that time. Exceptionally, candidates who arrive late may be permitted to sit the examination where the reason for the late arrival is directly due to a university or city-wide major disruption that has affected several candidates, as determined by the Executive Director for Education and Student Success or nominee. In such cases, candidates may be given the full allotted time to sit the paper where practicable,



otherwise they should complete what they can in the time available. An exam incident report will be submitted to the Board of Examiners to ensure the circumstance is considered. Students who are unable to start a campus-based, in person examination due to illness should use the self-certification process.

2.2.2 Leaving the examination room: No student may leave the examination room within thirty minutes of its start, save in exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of the invigilator. To avoid disturbing others, students may not leave the examination room during the last fifteen minutes of scheduled time, save in exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of the invigilator.

2.2.3 Supervised absence: No student may leave and return to the examination room during an examination unless supervised by an invigilator while absent.

2.2.4 Communication during a campus examination: Unless an invigilator has given permission otherwise, during the examination a student will only communicate with an invigilator. Students may not behave in any way which is distracting to other students. A student who ignores a request from an invigilator not to behave disruptively may be required to leave the examination room. The student's examination scripts will be submitted to the Board of Examiners as they were at the time when the candidate was required to leave. The invigilator will annotate the scripts with the time at which the candidate left and submit a report to the chair of the Board of Examiners.

2.2.5 Permitted items and texts. A student may take to their desk only those items and texts that are permitted for the examination they are sitting. Guidance on permitted items in any exam is the responsibility of the school or department that owns the unit.

2.2.6 Examination Scripts: It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all scripts are appropriately marked with an identifying name and number. No student may remove an examination script, or any other examination materials, from the examination room without permission.

A school may invite a candidate to transcribe or dictate an illegible script. Any transcription or dictation must be verbatim, and the student should be asked to sign the transcript to confirm that it is a true copy of the original script. The transcription or dictation will be treated as part of the formal examination process. Schools may also invite the student to undertake an oral examination.

Where a student provides an answer to more questions than is required by the examination paper, the marker should mark all the answers and use the marks from the highest scoring answers to calculate the assessment mark.

2.2.7 Arrangements may exceptionally be approved for students to complete what would normally be a campus-based examination at a different venue away from the university's usual site. The process required for this is described in the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

## 2.3 Online Examinations

2.3.1 Starting online examinations: Online examinations will have a set start time and/or duration, which will be clearly communicated to students. Schools may provide a later starting time for students in a different time zone or, exceptionally, where specific, individual circumstances necessitate it. Students will be told how they must access the examination, this may be via the electronic download of questions accessed via the university's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), a specific website or portal, or via a specialised proctoring system. Students will be given full instructions on how to use the specified system. Students who do not comply with the instructions may have their

answers disregarded.

2.3.2 Completing the online examination: The examination paper, or online delivery system, will indicate the time available for completion. Clear instructions on how to finish and submit answers will be provided. It is the student's responsibility to submit their answers in the correct way within the time limit. Students who do not comply with the instructions may have their answers disregarded.

2.3.3 Problems during the online examination: If a student is unwell and unable to start an online examination, they should complete a self-certification form prior to the formal start time. If they start the examination but, due to issues that affect only them, are unable to complete the examination, they should inform their school and submit an exceptional circumstances form. Students will be provided with instructions on what they should do if the specified computer programme or software being used to deliver or proctor the assessment fails during the examination or submission process.

2.3.4 Communication during an online examination: Students should not communicate with others for the duration of an online examination. Candidates **must** work independently for online examinations. Sharing answers and working with others to complete the assessment is not permitted. Such behaviour will be viewed as collusion and dealt with as outlined in Section 5.

2.3.5 Permitted texts during an online examination: Students will be informed of what resources, if any, they are allowed to access during an online examination. Online examinations may be proctored (i.e. remotely invigilated) to support quality assurance and academic integrity of the examination. Students will be given full instructions and the opportunity to practice using the system when such proctoring is planned.

2.3.6 Examination answers: It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all answers are formatted appropriately and marked with identifying information, as requested in the instructions, prior to submission.

## 2.4 Timed assessments

2.4.1 Starting the timed assessment: Timed assessments have a stated day and time from which students can access the paper, which will often be via the unit's Virtual Learning Environment.

2.4.2 Completing the timed assessment: Timed assessments have a stated day and time by which answers should be submitted, as outlined in the instructions. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure their work is completed and submitted within the time allowed.

2.4.3 Problems during a timed assessment: If a student is unable to start a timed assessment or they start the assessment, but due to issues that affect only them, are unable to complete it, they should inform their school and submit an exceptional circumstances form. Students should be provided with instructions on what they should do if the specified computer programme or software being used to deliver the assessment fails during the assessment or submission process.

2.4.4 Communication during a timed assessment: Unless clearly stated as collaborative or groupwork, students **must** work independently for timed assessments. Sharing answers and/or working with others to complete the assessment is not allowed and such activity will result in the student being investigated for collusion, see Section 5. Schools must make clear to students where the timed assessment should be completed collaboratively and provide expectations for how students should work.

2.4.5 Permitted texts during a timed assessment: Students will be informed what

resources are allowed to be accessed during a timed assessment.

2.4.6 Answers: It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all answers are formatted appropriately and identifying information included, as requested in the assessment instructions.

## 2.5 Coursework Assessments

This section covers a wide variety of assessment formats. The school or department that owns the unit is responsible for providing clear instructions for coursework assessments.

2.5.1 Starting the assessment: Coursework can be set at any time during the running of a unit.

2.5.2 Completing the assessment: Coursework will have a stated date and time by which they should be completed and submitted and schools must provide submission instructions. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all answers are formatted appropriately and marked with identifying information, as requested in the instructions, prior to submission. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure their work is completed and submitted within the time allowed.

2.5.3 Problems during coursework assessment: If a student is unable to complete their coursework assessment, they should consider requesting an extension and/or submit exceptional circumstances. University policy is that unauthorised late submissions are penalised by the loss of marks (see the [section](#) on penalties in the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes).

2.5.4 Communication during coursework assessment: Unless clearly stated as collaborative or groupwork, candidates **must** work independently on coursework assessments. Sharing answers and/or working with others to complete the assessment is not allowed. Schools must make clear to candidates where the coursework should be completed collaboratively and provide expectations for how candidates should work in such situations.

2.5.5 Answers: It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that their submission is formatted appropriately and marked with the required identifying information.

## 3. Plagiarism

### 3.1 Definition of plagiarism

3.1.1 The unacknowledged inclusion in a student's work of material derived from the published or unpublished work of another source constitutes plagiarism, whether it is intentional or unintentional. "Work" includes internet sources as well as printed material. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct but differences in academic practice and poor study skills can result in plagiarism occurring with minimal dishonesty. For this reason, cases of plagiarism are dealt with separately to other cases of academic misconduct. The only exception is where a student(s) directly plagiarises the work of another/others from within their same cohort. Such cases will be considered collusion, a serious form of cheating and all individuals involved will be dealt with via the process outlined in Section 5.

3.1.2 Examples of plagiarism (this list is not intended to be exhaustive) include:

- a. Quoting another's work "word for word" without placing the phrase(s), sentence(s) or paragraph(s) in quotation marks and providing a reference for the source.
- b. Taking a sentence or sentences from another source and re-using them after changing a small number of words. References to the original source may be

given correctly.

- c. Using statistics, tables, figures, formulae, data, diagrams, questionnaires, images, musical notation, computer code, etc, created by others without acknowledging and referencing the original source.
- d. Summarising or paraphrasing the work or ideas of another without acknowledging and referencing the original source. "Paraphrasing" means re-stating another author's ideas, meaning or information in a student's own words. This includes all teaching material provided by staff. The need for full, accurate referencing may vary depending upon the assessment format and schools must make clear what the expectations are in this regard.
- e. Copying the work of a student from a previous cohort or another university, with or without that student's agreement. This includes any exemplar student assignments which may be provided.
- f. Collaborating with another student, even where the initial collaboration is legitimate, e.g. group or joint project work, and then presenting the resulting work as one's own. If students are unclear about the extent of collaboration that is permitted in groupwork they should consult the relevant unit director/leader or equivalent.
- g. Copying work, of any kind, from study notes that were generated by a study group of individuals and are used by said group for revision and reference. Ownership of such material is shared and hence should be summarised by paraphrasing and referenced.
- h. Re-use of academic work that has previously been used for credit at this, or another institution.

3.1.3 Schools should use appropriate software to aid their ability to detect potential cases of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, and ensure students are aware of these methods. However, such software can only be an aid to detection and any suspected cases must undergo academic review before any action or penalty is applied.

### 3.2 Poor academic practice

3.2.1 Where minor irregularities (see guidance) are detected within a piece of work and academic review suggests that it is a case of poor academic practice rather than a deliberate attempt to deceive, appropriate other people's work or gain an unearned advantage, and where the student has not disregarded explicit instructions, the case should be referred to the unit or programme director.

3.2.2 If the unit or programme director agrees and feels that the poor academic practice may be addressed appropriately within the marking scheme (this does not mean the application of a set penalty), then the process outlined below in 3.2.3 should be followed.

3.2.3 In such cases explicit feedback should be given to the student, with further instruction, as necessary, on proper academic practice. This feedback should be provided in whatever form is felt to be most appropriate and noted on the student's record for future internal reference. Referral to study skills support is likely to be helpful for the student.

3.2.4 If the unit or programme director suspects that the irregularity may amount to more than poor academic practice they should consult with the designated member(s) of staff in the school who should record the incident and refer the matter to the appropriate Faculty Education Director so that procedure described in 3.3 can be followed.

### 3.3 Procedure for cases of plagiarism

3.3.1 All cases of plagiarism will be dealt with as detailed in these regulations, irrespective of the type of assessment in which it occurs. Cases where the similarity is to another student from the same cohort will be considered as cheating (i.e. collusion) and the process detailed in Section 5 should be followed.

3.3.2 The relevant Faculty Education Director, or nominated representative, has discretion whether to proceed with an active alleged plagiarism and/or cheating investigation where the student intends to suspend studies or withdraw from the University. The procedure will normally be concluded before the suspension or withdrawal occurs unless there is good reason otherwise.

3.3.3 All allegations of plagiarism raised by any route shall be considered initially by the relevant Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative(s) for this purpose, responsible for the home school of the student (i.e. the school where the student is registered). All allegations should be supported by a clear indication of the elements of the student's work which are believed to have been plagiarised, by annotated copies of the sources which the student is alleged to have used, and a brief statement outlining the concern by the original marker or the unit director.

3.3.4 If multiple cases from one student are being considered as a single allegation, due to the time at which they have been discovered, and these cases cover units from more than one school or faculty then the relevant Faculty Education Directors should determine which school or faculty should handle the investigation.

3.3.5 The relevant Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, must make an initial determination of how the allegation of plagiarism will be dealt with within twenty-one days of the concern being raised with them (see section 10 for defining 'days').

3.3.6 Due to the potential for plagiarism to occur because of different academic practices, and/or poor understanding of our expectations, some cases can be dealt with through additional training and/or feedback to help students reach the required understanding of expected ways of working. This applies if it:

- Is a first offence by a first-year undergraduate student, in which case the student will be required to attend at an Academic Integrity Awareness Course, see 3.3.7 and section 9.
- is a first offence by a taught postgraduate student, where the student has not had the opportunity to submit and receive feedback on a piece of work, which may be formative, in the same, or similar format, and have not received previous support and guidance following poor academic practice, and occurs in work set during a student's first teaching block of registration at the university (including the Teaching Block 1 assessment period) on any programme,
- and does not involve suspected copying from another student from the same cohort.

In cases involving taught postgraduate students, the Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, will direct the unit director, or another appropriate academic, to discuss ways of working and expectations of academic integrity with the student. This process should be supportive and may involve directing the student to study skills support and resources and include additional staff from within the school, faculty or university. Advice and feedback on the academic content of the assessment should not

be provided as part of this additional support so the student does not gain an unfair advantage over their peers. The student will be asked to redo the plagiarised section(s) of the assessment or complete an equivalent piece of work. Normally the student will be expected to have completed the new or revised piece of work no later than two weeks after receiving the additional support. The timetable for the new submission will take into account the timescale for completion of the original assessment and any other assessment tasks the student may have. It may be appropriate to delay the resubmission until the reassessment period. The work will be marked with a full range of marks available and considered as a first submission. The case should be held on the student's internal record for reference in case further concerns over plagiarism are raised.

3.3.7 Suspected plagiarism by first year undergraduates (including those on Foundation programmes) will be dealt with by the Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, requiring the student to attend an Academic Integrity Awareness Course. Further details of these courses are covered in section 9. The only exceptions to this are where:

- It is a second or subsequent offence
- The case, even if a first offence, is considered too serious to be dealt with via additional training, for example where the volume of plagiarism is very high and the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress.

For these exceptions the Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representation will continue as outlined in 3.3.8.

3.3.8 For **all other** suspected cases of plagiarism, the Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, will either:

- a. Convene a School Academic Misconduct Panel (SAMP) as per section 7.2.
- b. Convene a Faculty Academic Misconduct Panel (FAMP), as per section 7.3, if the case is considered more serious.
- c. Exceptionally and only due to the presence of mitigating factors, refer the case back to the school to provide more guidance and support, as per 3.3.6.
- d. Ask for more information, or summarily dismiss the case, if they judge that the allegation is not supported by sufficient evidence.
- e. Ask the school to treat the case as poor academic practice.

3.3.9 When determining which option to use in 3.3.8 the following factors should be considered:

- The educational history of the student and how this may have informed their understanding of academic integrity. Cases may be viewed as more serious where they involved students who have completed multiple terms at this university or another similar institution.
- Where the student has already been given additional support and guidance due to previous offences under 3.3.6 of these regulations.
- The nature, extent and significance of the plagiarism in the piece of work.
- Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification.

#### **4. Re-use of academic work for credit**

4.1 Academic credit should only be given for work once. Submitting, in whole or in part,

work which has previously been submitted for assessment at the University of Bristol or elsewhere, without fully referencing the earlier work is a form of academic misconduct and hence not allowed. This includes unacknowledged reuse of the student's own submitted work. This may be referred to as 'self-plagiarism'.

4.2 Where students wish to refer to work for which they have previously received credit, they should either i) reproduce it directly as a quote or ii) rewrite, in a new form of words, the ideas contained in the original work. In both cases the original work should be referenced. This includes the student's own previous work that has been awarded credit. It is important that schools explain to students that the re-use of their own work in this way will not gain the same mark as work which has a higher element of originality.

4.3 Where the re-use of academic work without appropriate referencing is detected, it is often due to poor understanding of why it is unacceptable. Providing it is a first offence of this nature, the school should consider the most appropriate manner by which the student can be awarded the required credit. In some cases (i.e. where the unit is assessed by multiple pieces of work and this issue has had a minor impact) the school may decide no further assessment is needed and only offer support to the student as detailed below. Alternatively, the student may be required to complete the assessment, for example by rewriting the affected sections, re-doing an equivalent piece of work, or completing a resit assessment. In all cases where this is a first attempt of re-use of academic work, any reassessment should be treated as a first attempt and for a full range of marks. In all cases support should be given by relevant academics within the school to help the student understand the issues associated with this practice and why it is unacceptable. If it is a subsequent offence, the matter should be dealt with as plagiarism and the process detailed in 3.3.8 followed.

4.4 In some cases, students submit work for formative feedback which informs subsequent summative assessment. In this situation the formative assessment is not for credit and does not need to be referenced in the final summative assessment.

## **5. Cheating and other failures to comply with assessment regulations**

### **5.1 Definition of cheating**

5.1.1 A student engaging in any of the following will be considered to be cheating under these regulations:

- a. Accessing and/or making use of unauthorised items or texts during an examination (campus-based or online). For campus-based exams this may occur either at their desk or during an authorised absence from the examination room.
- b. Planning, participating in or benefitting from collusion during any assessment (campus-based or remote).
- c. Copying from another student(s) who has studied the unit at the same time.
- d. Dishonestly receiving help from another person(s), company or organisation during the examination or assessment.
- e. Dishonestly giving help to another student during the examination or assessment.
- f. Acting dishonestly in any way, whether before, during or after the assessment, to obtain an unfair advantage.
- g. Acting dishonestly in any way, whether before, during or after the assessment, to assist another candidate to obtain an unfair advantage.

- h. Buying or commissioning a piece of work and presenting it as a student's own work (often called contract cheating).
- i. Unauthorised use of artificial intelligence to complete a piece of work in a manner that circumvents the design of an assessment or the intended learning outcomes the student should demonstrate through that assessment

5.1.2 A student who shares their work with others will be treated with equal seriousness to the student who copies the work. This applies even if it is not clear that the work was shared with knowledge that academic misconduct was planned.

5.1.3 Whilst plagiarism is a form of cheating for the purposes of these regulations it will be considered separately, as set out in Section 3.

## 5.2 Procedure for cases of cheating

5.2.1 Should a candidate be suspected of cheating during a campus-based examination, the invigilator will confiscate any unauthorised material, indicate on the student's script that it has been confiscated due to suspected cheating, and remove the script. The student will then be given further examination books and permitted to complete the examination. The invigilator will submit an incident report to the University Examinations Officer who will notify the chair of the School Board of Examiners from the student's home school. Suspected cheating during an online exam, timed assessment or coursework will be investigated after the student has submitted their work.

5.2.2 Further investigative work, including interviews with students, may be necessary to help a school or faculty determine if cheating may have occurred. This may take the form of determining the level of understanding a student has on their submitted answer. The outcome of such interviews will be passed onto any subsequent academic misconduct panel to help inform their decision making. Contract cheating, whether due to AI or another third party can be difficult to investigate and a procedure providing further detail is available to help guide staff through the different steps they may need to take depending upon the specific circumstances.

5.2.3 Suspected cheating by first-year undergraduates (including those on Foundation programmes) will usually be dealt with by the Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, requiring the student to attend an Academic Integrity Awareness Course. Further details of these courses are covered in section 8. The only exceptions to this are where:

- It is a second or subsequent offence of academic misconduct
- The case, even if a first offence, is considered too serious to be dealt with via additional training, for example planned cheating in an in-person exam and the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress.

For these exceptions the Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative will continue as outlined in 5.2.4.

5.2.4 All cases of suspected cheating, as defined in 5.1.1 (for plagiarism please see section 3), apart from those of first-year undergraduate students (see 5.2.3), irrespective of the type of assessment in which it occurs, should be referred to the relevant Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, who will either:

- a. Request further investigations to be carried out as provided in 5.2.2.
- b. Convene a School Academic Misconduct Panel (SAMP), as per Section 7.2.
- c. Convene a Faculty Academic Misconduct Panel (FAMP), as per Section 7.3.



- d. Convene a University Academic Misconduct Panel (UAMP), as per Section 7.4, if the case is considered more serious.
- e. Summarily dismiss the case, if they judge that the allegation is not supported by sufficient evidence.

5.2.5 When determining which option to use in 5.2.4 the following factors should be considered:

- Whether there have been previous academic misconduct offences.
- The nature, extent, and significance of the academic misconduct.
- Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification.

## **6. Ethical breaches in a student's research**

### **6.1 Definition**

6.1.1 Any of the following will be considered to be a breach of ethics by a student on a taught programme regarding any substantial piece of research (i.e. a dissertation or equivalent):

- Not gaining ethical approval before undertaking research, where it is required
- Making a significant deviation from the approved research without being granted ethical approval for the deviation where that is required
- Any other form of research misconduct as defined in the Regulations on Research Misconduct

### **6.2 Procedure for cases of ethical breaches in a student's research**

6.2.1 A student suspected of an ethical breach in their research will be reported by the relevant School to the Research Ethics and Integrity Manager.

6.2.2 For any potential ethical breaches in student research that are reported prior to submission of the research, the case will be considered under the Ethics of Research policy and procedure.

6.2.3 For any potential ethical breaches in student research that are reported after submission of the research, the Research Ethics Team, with the relevant Faculty or School Research Ethics Officer, will undertake an initial review of the case to assess the seriousness of the suspected breach and determine whether it:

- Constitutes a form of research misconduct as defined in the Regulations on Research Misconduct, in which case it will be considered under the research misconduct process, or if not;
- Is sufficiently significant to be considered as academic misconduct as defined in 6.1.1, in which case it will be considered under these Assessment Regulations, or if not;
- Can be managed by mitigating action.

6.2.4 Where the breach is deemed to constitute academic misconduct, the case will be referred to the relevant Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, who will either:

- a. Convene a School Academic Misconduct Panel (SAMP) as per Section 7.2, with the addition of the relevant School Research Ethics Officer.

- b. Convene a Faculty Academic Misconduct Panel (FAMP) as per Section 7.3 with the addition of the relevant Faculty Research Ethics Officer.
- c. Convene a University Academic Misconduct Panel (UAMP) as per Section 7.4 with the addition of the relevant Faculty Research Ethics Officer, if the case is considered more serious.
- d. Ask for more information
- e. Summarily dismiss the case, following consultation with the relevant research ethics officer, if they judge that the allegation is not supported by sufficient evidence or that the breach is sufficiently minor to be considered poor academic practice (see 3.2). A case may also be referred and considered under the Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedure for suspected student misconduct.

6.2.5 When determining which option to use in 6.2.4 the following factors should be considered:

- Whether there have been any previous academic misconduct offences relevant to the case.
- The nature, extent, and significance of the academic misconduct.
- Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification.

## **7. Academic misconduct panels**

### **7.1 General processes for academic misconduct panels**

7.1.1 Academic misconduct panels may be held at school, faculty or university level, depending upon the seriousness of the case. At school and faculty level the panels will be convened by the student's home school or faculty. Plagiarism or an ethical breach in research will normally be considered by a school panel when it occurs for the first time, including if the student has previously been given additional support for poor academic practice or attended an AIAC. All subsequent cases of plagiarism would normally be dealt with at faculty level, unless specific circumstances suggest a school panel would be more proportionate.

7.1.2 Students will be asked to engage with an investigation into a case in relation to academic misconduct via attendance at a panel. They can request the option of answering written questions instead of, or as well as, attendance at the panel. Panels will normally be held during term time but may also be held outside of this time to allow timely conclusion of a concern. Students may be asked to attend a panel in person or via video calling.

7.1.3 The student may elect not to attend an interview and to submit a statement to the panel instead. Where the student does not attend an interview, unless prevented by unforeseeable circumstances, the panel will proceed to reach its conclusions without the student's attendance.

7.1.4 A note of the interview with the student(s) will be taken, which will be circulated after the interview to all parties. A member of staff may attend the panel in order to carry out this role.

7.1.5 An appropriate academic knowledgeable on the work and concern in question, must be offered the opportunity to provide input to the panel and may be required to attend the academic misconduct panel (but only as a witness and not as a panel member) in order to explain the allegation and provide specialist knowledge. The

composition of the panel is outlined below under the relevant panel.

7.1.6 The student may be accompanied by another person at the panel interview. This person may address the panel and confer with the student during the meeting, however, they will not be permitted to answer any questions on behalf of the student, unless in exceptional circumstances where they are appropriately trained, and the student is unable to do so themselves. The Bristol SU Academic Advice Service can provide advice and support to students during this process.

7.1.7 The purpose of the panel interview shall be to determine whether or not there has been academic misconduct and to allow the student to make representations and to present any mitigating factors.

7.1.8 Once the interview is complete, the academic misconduct panel may decide to defer a decision until further investigation has taken place. In such cases the panel should decide whether they need to meet with the student again to discuss any new material that has been considered as part of the decision-making process. Otherwise, the panel shall determine if misconduct has occurred. The applicable standard of proof will be the balance of probabilities. A student will be found guilty of academic misconduct if, on the evidence available, it is more likely than not that the offence was committed.

7.1.9 The penalty for an offence should be decided on the individual circumstances of the case.

7.1.10 The panel should ensure penalties reflect the seriousness with which the university views academic integrity.

7.1.11 Where there is a case to answer and the student is registered on a professional programme for which there is a Fitness to Practise (FtP) procedure, the concerns in relation to academic misconduct may also need to be considered under the FtP procedure. It may be appropriate to include a FtP Case Investigator as a member of the academic misconduct panel to allow the two processes to be completed within a single meeting with the student.

## 7.2 School Academic Misconduct Panels (SAMP)

7.2.1 School academic misconduct panels should be convened to investigate less serious cases of plagiarism only. Serious cases of plagiarism should be considered by a faculty or university level panel (see guidance for examples).

7.2.2 The Head of School is responsible for nominating a member or members of staff to discharge the responsibilities outlined in relation to SAMPs, including organising the panels, bringing penalties to the School Board of Examiners, and liaising with the Faculty Education Directors.

7.2.3 If the Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, decides to convene a SAMP, the designated member(s) of staff in the school (see 7.2.2) will notify the student in writing of the pieces of work affected and invite them to an interview.

7.2.4 The SAMP will consist of two academic members of staff nominated by the designated member of the student's home school. If the school have a designated officer who deals with academic misconduct then this individual can be one of these two academic members on the panel. The panel should not include the student's personal tutor, their research project/dissertation supervisor or the person who identified the suspected misconduct.

7.2.5 Where a panel requires advice on procedures and regulations, it should consult the Faculty Head of Student Administration.

7.2.6 When considering a penalty, the academic misconduct panel should take into account the seriousness of the offence. Factors that should be considered are below.

*Factors to be considered by Academic Misconduct Panels when considering a penalty*

1. The educational history of the student and how this may have informed their understanding of academic integrity.
2. Whether this is a first or subsequent offence.
3. The amount of credit attached to the assessment.
4. The significance of academic misconduct in the piece of work.
5. The extent to which the academic misconduct undermines the learning objectives of the work.
6. Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification.
7. The degree and effects of the dishonesty.

*Table 1: Outcomes that can be recommended by Academic Misconduct Panels*

#	Outcome for assessment with a mark	Outcome for Pass/Fail assessments
1	To dismiss the case entirely.	
2	To refer it back to the unit director to be dealt with as poor academic practice.	
3	To impose no penalty beyond recording the case on the student's record for future reference.	
4	<p>To apply one of the following penalties to the original piece of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) to award the work submitted a lower mark than would otherwise have been awarded in the form of mark penalty or a capped mark; if the work is the only summative assessment for the unit and this penalty reduces the mark to below the pass mark the panel should consider whether credit should be awarded.</li><li>b) if the assessment is the only assessment contributing to the unit mark, award credit but a mark of zero.</li><li>c) if the assessment contributes part of the unit mark, award a mark of zero but allow credit for the unit to be awarded if the zero results in a fail mark for the complete unit.</li></ul>	To require the submission of an equivalent piece of work, to replace the originally submitted piece of work i.e. that corresponds to the same "attempt", with Pass/Fail outcomes possible.
5	<p>To require the submission of an equivalent piece of work, to replace the originally submitted piece of work i.e. that corresponds to the same "attempt", which is awarded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) the mark it would normally be awarded.</li><li>b) a lower mark than would otherwise be awarded in the form of a mark penalty or a capped mark; if the penalty reduces the mark to below the pass mark the panel should consider whether credit should be awarded.</li><li>c) a mark of zero but providing the intellectual mark of the resubmitted work would be sufficient for the unit pass mark to be achieved, allow credit for the unit to be awarded.</li></ul>	
6	To award no marks (zero), for the unit of which the examination or piece of assessed work was part. The AMP should determine whether an equivalent piece of work should be submitted when recommending this penalty and whether or not to award the credit.	
7	To award the student a lower classification of degree than they would otherwise achieve based on their mark profile. The UAMP should determine whether an equivalent piece of work should be submitted when recommending this penalty.	
8	To require the student to withdraw from the university, which means that the student ceases to be a member of the university, and loses all rights and privileges of membership, including whether an exit award should be made. This recommendation can only be made to the Dean of the student's home faculty.	

*Recommendations 1-5 are available to all AMPs. Recommendation 6 is available to FAMPs and UAMPs only and recommendations 7 and 8 to UAMPs only.*

7.2.7 The SAMP will determine whether academic misconduct has occurred and make one of the recommendations (1-5) in Table 1 to the relevant Faculty Education Director or to the Board of Examiners. Only recommendations 1,2 and 4 are available to the Panel with regard to incoming study abroad students or other visiting students who take units for credit but are not on a University of Bristol programme of study.

7.2.8 The SAMP should also consider whether referral of the student to skills support would be beneficial together with the most appropriate route for this to occur.

7.2.9 The SAMP may decide to refer the matter back to the relevant Faculty Education Director with a recommendation that the allegations be referred to a Faculty Academic Misconduct Panel (FAMP) if it considers that the offence merits a penalty which the SAMP does not have the power to impose. Alternatively, in exceptional cases, it can consider that the matter is of such seriousness that it be considered by a University Academic Misconduct Panel (UAMP).

7.2.10 The school must write to the student informing them of the SAMP's decision and any recommendations within two weeks of the date of the panel.

### 7.3 Faculty Academic Misconduct Panels (FAMP)

7.3.1 If the relevant Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, decides to convene a FAMP, the Faculty Head of Student Administration or nominee will notify the student in writing of the pieces of work/assessment(s) affected and the holding of an interview.

7.3.2 The FAMP will consist of two academic members of staff without previous direct involvement with the student as a personal tutor or research project/dissertation supervisor or the individual who investigated the suspected misconduct, including:

- a. a member of the student's home school;
- b. a faculty member who belongs to a school other than the student's.

7.3.3 The Faculty Head of Student Administration or nominee will be in attendance to advise the panel on procedures and regulations.

7.3.4 When considering a penalty, the FAMP should take into account the seriousness of the offence. Factors that should be considered are provided in 7.2.6.

7.3.5 The FAMP will determine whether academic misconduct has occurred and make one of the recommendations (1-6) in Table 1 to the Board of Examiners. Only recommendations 1, 2, 4 and 6 are available to the Panel with regard to incoming study abroad students or other visiting students who take units for credit but are not on a University of Bristol programme of study.

7.3.6 Where the panel considers that the penalties set out in section 7.3.5 may not be appropriate to the seriousness of the offence, then the panel may refer the case for consideration by a University Academic Misconduct Panel (UAMP) under section 7.4 below.

7.3.7 The faculty must write to the student informing them of the panel's decision and any recommendations within two weeks of the date of the panel.

### 7.4 University Academic Misconduct Panels (UAMP)

7.4.1 The relevant Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, is responsible for deciding if the case is serious enough for consideration by a UAMP and

they will contact an Associate Pro Vice Chancellor, who will convene the panel, with support from the relevant Faculty Head of Student Administration, or their nominee.

7.4.2 The relevant Faculty Head of Student Administration, or their nominee, will notify the student in writing of the assessment or piece(s) of work which are alleged to be affected and invite them to an interview.

7.4.3 The UAMP will comprise of at least three academic staff experienced in dealing with academic misconduct cases, including an Associate Pro Vice Chancellor, who will act as chair. The panel should have had no previous direct involvement with the student as a personal tutor or research project/dissertation supervisor, and should include:

- a. a member of the student's home school;
- b. a member of a faculty other than the student's.

7.4.4 A member of the University Secretary's Office will be in attendance to advise the panel on procedures and regulations.

7.4.5 When considering a penalty, the UAMP should consider the seriousness of the offence. Factors that should be considered are provided in 7.2.6.

7.4.6 The UAMP will determine whether academic misconduct has occurred and make one of the recommendations in Table 1 to the relevant Faculty Education Director, Board of Examiners or the Dean as appropriate.

7.4.7 The student will be informed of the decision and any recommendations in writing within two weeks of the date of the panel.

## **8. Consideration of recommendations from academic misconduct panels**

8.1 When an academic misconduct panel makes an academic recommendation, it should be considered by the relevant school and/or Faculty Boards of Examiners and/or Dean (for UAMPs only). Due to the timing of assessment periods and Board of Examiner meetings it may be that dealing with cases of academic misconduct result in a student's progression or final award being delayed.

8.2 The ultimate decision on an academic penalty applied is taken by the Faculty Board of Examiners, or the Dean with regards one UAMP outcome. However, as the academic misconduct panel made an informed decision based on available evidence, the normal expectation is that the recommendation would be accepted in full. Exceptions to this are where material available suggests the recommendation is disproportionate, or where new or exceptional mitigating circumstances pertaining to the assessment(s) considered by the academic misconduct panel are present.

8.3 Where an UAMP decides the case is of such seriousness that the withdrawal of the student from the programme is recommended to the Dean, the Faculty Board of Examiners will be informed of the outcome and consider whether any exit award can be made using credits awarded that had no academic integrity concerns. Depending upon the decision of the Dean the Board may need to consider whether any exit award can be made using credits awarded that had no academic integrity concerns.

8.4 The Boards of Examiners will explicitly consider the impact of the penalty on the student's credit points and, where applicable, degree classification and whether this impact, in the context of the student's overall performance, is proportionate to the offence.

8.5 Where a student is not permitted to resubmit the piece of work and the final mark for the assessment or the unit is less than that required to be awarded credit for a unit, then the student should be treated in the same way as if they had obtained the same mark

through academic failure.

8.6 The student will have the usual right of appeal against a decision of the Board of Examiners and, in the case of expulsion, the decision of the Dean to accept the recommendation of the UAMP.

8.7 The decision of the Board of Examiners in relation to academic misconduct panels, with supporting rationale, will be recorded in its minutes.

## **9. Academic Integrity Awareness Course (AIAC)**

9.1 The Head of School is responsible for nominating a member or members of staff to discharge the responsibilities outlined in relation to AIACs, including participating in delivery, inviting students to attend, indicating additional work a student needs to complete and liaising with relevant individuals from other Schools and the Faculty as necessary to deliver this.

9.2 The AIAC is only available to first year undergraduate students (including those on Foundation programmes) and may involve students from different schools who have been referred for different misconduct reasons. Full attendance and engagement is required for successful completion.

9.3 The focus of the course is understanding the importance of academic integrity, why misconduct may occur and how to avoid future mistakes. Part of the learning for this is the student completing additional work in relation to the assessment in question. This work will be considered the same attempt and can be awarded a full range of marks.

9.4 A student can only attend the AIAC once. Any subsequent cases of academic misconduct will be managed via consideration at an academic misconduct panel and associated penalty outcomes.

9.5 If the Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, decides to require a first-year undergraduate student to attend an AIAC, the designated member(s) of staff in the School (see 9.2) will notify the student in writing of the pieces of work affected, invite them to enrol on an AIAC and inform them of the additional work necessary in order for credit for the unit to be awarded.

9.6 If a student does not attend the AIAC, or attends but refuses to engage or is disruptive, the work in question will be awarded a mark of zero. Standard regulations will apply on how this impacts on the unit mark and whether reassessment is available.

9.7 Any first-year undergraduate student referred to an AIAC can appeal this decision. The student may raise their appeal formally by completing the [AIAC Appeal Form](#) and submitting it to the Student Resolution Service (SRS) within 21 days of being informed they are required to attend an AIAC by email to [student-appeals@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:student-appeals@bristol.ac.uk). The student must set out in writing the grounds on which the appeal is based. The student may seek assistance from the Academic Advice Team in the Students' Union when preparing their appeal. The grounds for appeal are:

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

The appeal will be heard by a Faculty Education Director, or equivalently experienced academic who has not been involved in the case. They may:

- a. Reject the appeal and confirm attendance at the AIAC is required, or,
- b. Uphold the appeal and revoke the original decision for attendance at an AIAC.



## **For Research Programmes**

### **10. Procedure for cases of plagiarism or cheating in a thesis submitted for a research degree**

10.1 The Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes describes how cases of plagiarism or cheating will be dealt with for research students.

### **11. Exceptional Circumstances**

11.1 Procedure for consideration of exceptional circumstances in taught programmes

Boards of examiners shall establish a committee (which will meet before the Board of Examiners meets) to consider any relevant matters, for example personal matters such as illness or bereavement, that may have affected a student's performance in assessment.

11.2 Evidence

If a student wishes a board of examiners to take any such matters into account, they must complete and submit the relevant form before the published date prior to the meeting of the board at which the student's performance in assessment is to be considered. A written record must be kept of such matters. Any such matters which could have been raised before the meeting of the board, but, without good reason, were not raised, will not be considered in the event of an appeal.

The committee may require a student to submit such other evidence as it deems necessary to substantiate any matter raised by the student.

11.3 Exceptional circumstances in research degree programmes

The treatment of exceptional circumstances in research degree programmes is set out in the Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes.

### **12. Appeals**

The definition of a 'day' in this section refers to a calendar day in which the University is generally open and so includes weekends but does not include public holidays in England or University closure days as marked on the University's website, unless otherwise stated.

12.1 Right to appeal

A student registered on a taught (undergraduate or postgraduate) programme may make an academic appeal against an appealable decision made by one of the following (referred to in this Regulation as a 'board of examiners'):

- a. A faculty board of examiners (including a faculty progress committee or equivalent).
- b. A school board of examiners in relation to a penalty imposed for cheating or plagiarism.
- c. A Dean in relation to a penalty imposed for cheating or plagiarism.

A postgraduate research student may make an academic appeal against an appealable decision made by any of the following (also referred to in this Regulation as a "board of examiners"):

- a. The University Research Degrees Examination Board.
- b. The Dean of the relevant faculty, on the recommendation of a registration review panel.

- c. An upgrade or progression panel.

An academic appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progress, assessment and awards.

An appealable decision is a decision in respect of:

- a. An examination or other form of assessment
- b. A student's progress, including a decision in respect of a suspension or a requirement to withdraw from the University
- c. In the case of a research postgraduate student, a decision by a Dean relating to termination or change of registration
- d. A penalty imposed for a cheating or plagiarism offence dealt with under these Regulations.

No student shall be treated less favourably as a result of bringing an academic appeal under this procedure.

## 12.2 Permissible grounds of appeal

Appeals may only be made on the basis of one or more of the following permissible grounds:

1. There has been a material irregularity in the decision making process sufficient to require that the decision can be reconsidered.

For example:

- a. the assessment and subsequent decision-making process were not conducted in accordance with the relevant regulations;
- b. an adverse decision has been taken because of an administrative error;
- c. the student has not been given the opportunity to draw relevant matters to the attention of the taught board of examiners, or for a PGR student they were not given the opportunity for relevant matters to be drawn to the attention of their examiners before the oral examination;
- d. appropriate account was not taken of illness or other exceptional circumstances known to the taught board of examiners or for a PGR student known to the examiners;
- e. for an extension request from a PGR student required to correct errors or omissions of substance or to resubmit, the student has not been given the opportunity to draw relevant matters to the attention of the Research Degrees Examination Board, or appropriate account was not taken of illness or other exceptional circumstance when the request was considered.

2. A student's performance in assessment has been affected by illness or other factors which the student was unable, for good reason, to divulge before the deadline prior to the meeting of the taught board of examiners (see section 10 of these Regulations). For a PGR student, they were unable to divulge information for good reason to their examiners before the oral examination or, for an extension request to correct errors of substance or to resubmit, to the Research Degrees Examination Board.

3. A penalty for cheating or plagiarism, imposed under the examination regulations by the school or faculty, or by the Research Degrees Examination Board for PGR examinations, is wrong or disproportionate. For the avoidance of doubt, there is no right of appeal under these Regulations in respect of a penalty or penalties imposed under the

Student Disciplinary Regulations and implemented by the board of examiners on the direction of the Disciplinary Decision-Maker or a Disciplinary Committee.

### 12.3 Grounds of appeal that are not permissible

1. Disagreement with the academic judgment of the board of examiners will not constitute a ground for appeal.
2. Appeals against an Examination Board decision that requires reassessment of a 'must-pass' unit may only be brought under ground 1 in 12.2 if evidence of a material irregularity can be demonstrated.
3. No appeal will be considered if it raises for the first time issues concerning the supervision or teaching of a student. Such matters will only be considered if they have been raised by the student promptly, at the time they first arose and pursued under the Student Complaints Procedure.

### 12.4 The Appeal Process

The appeal process has two stages:

i The Local Stage

ii The University Stage

Those hearing the appeal at either stage will not attempt to re-examine the student, nor to appraise professional academic judgments, but will consider whether the decision made was fair and reasonable in all the circumstances of the case, and whether all relevant factors were taken into account.

Appeals should be resolved at the earliest possible stage and with minimum formality. The University Stage of the process may only be invoked if the student has pursued the appeal through the Local Stage and remains dissatisfied with the outcome.

### 12.5 The Appeal Form

In order to start the appeal process, the student must complete the Appeal Form and submit it to the Student Resolution Service within 21 days of the notification of the appealable decision to the student after the meeting of the board of examiners. An extension of this time limit will be allowed, by the University Secretary, only in exceptional circumstances.

The Appeal Form must set out:

- a. the reason(s) for the student's dissatisfaction with the appealable decision;
- b. the student's grounds for appeal; and
- c. the outcome sought by the student.

All the evidence on which the student seeks to rely **must** be submitted with the Appeal Form unless there are good reasons why this is not possible.

The student is encouraged to seek assistance from the Bristol SU Academic Advice Service [bristolsu-advice@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:bristolsu-advice@bristol.ac.uk) when preparing the Appeal Form.

### 12.6 The Local Stage

On receipt of the completed Appeal Form and any accompanying evidence, the Faculty Undergraduate or Graduate Education Director (as appropriate) will review the appeal on behalf of the Dean of the Faculty (who may also act in person if they consider it appropriate) with a view to considering whether the appeal can be resolved at the Local Stage.

In the case of an appeal by either a taught student regarding a decision of the Dean following a UAMP recommendation or a postgraduate research student, the Student Resolution Service will forward the Appeal Form and any accompanying evidence to the Faculty Head of Student Administration and to Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) or nominee who will review the appeal at the Local Stage.

The Faculty Head of Student Administration (or in the case of an appeal against a decision of the Research Degrees Examinations Board another appropriate person) will provide administrative support.

Appeals must be considered under all applicable permissible grounds, whether or not specified by the student in the Appeal Form.

If the person reviewing the appeal considers that the appeal can be resolved at the Local Stage, they may take such action to resolve the appeal as is fair and reasonable in all the circumstances of the case, including but not limited to any or all of the following:

- a. refer the student's exceptional circumstances to be reconsidered by a committee under section 10 of these Regulations, if the person reviewing the appeal considers that insufficient weight was given to the student's circumstances by the committee;
- b. allow the student to submit late evidence of exceptional circumstances, if the person reviewing the appeal considers that the student had good reason for their failure to submit the evidence at the appropriate time;
- c. refer the appealable decision for reconsideration by the board of examiners, with or without a recommendation as to the outcome of such reconsideration;
- d. where the person reviewing the appeal considers it appropriate, vary the appealable decision without referring it to the board of examiners and report the variation to the board of examiners.

If the person reviewing the appeal does not consider that the appeal can be resolved at the Local Stage the student may request that the appeal be progressed to the University Stage under section 12.7.

The Local Stage will normally be dealt with and the student informed, in writing, of the outcome of the review and the reasons for the decisions made, within 35 days of the completed Appeal Form and all supporting evidence being submitted to the Faculty Head of Student Administration (or, in the case of an Appeal Form which has been submitted out of time, within 35 days from the date of notification, to the Student Resolution Service, of the University Secretary's decision to allow an extension of time for submission of the appeal).

#### 12.7 Progression to the University Stage

If the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the Local Stage or has not received the Local Stage decision by the prescribed time limit set out in section 12.6 above, they may request that the appeal is progressed to the University Stage. A student will not be permitted to progress to the University Stage if one or more of their requested outcomes has been granted at the Local Stage.

The student should make the request to the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager within 14 days of the Local Stage decision or, if earlier if specified, by completing the Appeal Progression Form and sending it to [appeal-progression@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:appeal-progression@bristol.ac.uk).

Upon receipt of the request to progress to the University Stage, the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager will obtain all the evidence considered at the Local Stage. If the

Student Complaints and Mediation Manager considers that further information from the student, school or faculty is required in order for the appeal to be considered, they may call for such information and this must be provided promptly. The 35-day time limit will run from the day that all required information is received.

The Student Complaints and Mediation Manager will invite the student to respond to the Local Stage decision. If substantive new information is provided by the student after the Local Stage decision has been made, the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager will normally refer this information back to the Local Stage for reconsideration before referring the appeal to the University Stage. Where appropriate, the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager may also intervene to suggest a resolution of the appeal before referring it to the University Stage.

Upon receipt of the Appeal Progression Form and other documentation from the Local Stage, the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager will either refer the student's appeal to:

1. An Appeal Review Officer, or,
2. An Appeal Review Panel.

#### 12.8 The Appeal Review Panel and Appeal Review Officer

The Appeal Review Officer and members of the Appeal Review Panel shall normally be members of academic staff who have had no prior involvement with the appealable decision or the Local Stage and are not from the same faculty as the student. An Appeal Review Panel will normally consist of three panel members.

The Appeal Review Officer will normally be a Faculty Education Director or University Education Director.

The consideration of the student's appeal by an Appeal Review Panel or an Appeal Review Officer will not involve a hearing. The Appeal Review Panel or Appeal Review Officer may call for additional information from the student, school or faculty, which must be provided promptly. The Appeal Review Panel or Appeal Review Officer will consider the Appeal Form and other evidence and may:

- a. refer the matter back to the faculty (or in the case of postgraduate research students, to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students)) for reconsideration with, or without, a recommendation for resolution. If, following reconsideration at the Local Stage the original decision is not altered, the student may request within 10 days of notification of the new decision that the matter be further reviewed.  
  
If the original decision is altered, but the outcome is not acceptable to the student, the student may request that the new decision is referred for further review, unless the new decision results in an outcome requested by the student in the Appeal Form, in which case there shall be no further right of appeal;
- b. dismiss the appeal, giving reasons, and issue a Completion of Procedures letter; or
- c. recommend that a committee be appointed by the Board of Trustees to hear the appeal.

The University Stage decision letter will normally be issued within 21 days of the date of the Appeal Review Panel or Appeal Review Officer decision being made. The student will be informed if it is not possible to respond within this time frame.

A decision by the Appeal Review Panel or Appeal Review Officer that the student has provided a good reason for failure to submit exceptional circumstances at the appropriate time shall be binding.

Recommendations by the Appeal Review Panel or Appeal Review Officer should normally be followed, unless based on inaccurate information or a manifest misunderstanding of the facts of the case. If after reconsideration at the Local Stage, a recommendation is not followed, evidence of the reconsideration must be provided and reasons given for the decision not to follow the Appeal Review Panel or Appeal Review Officer recommendation.

#### 12.9 Committee of the Board of Trustees

If the Appeal Review Panel or Appeal Review Officer recommends that a committee be appointed to hear the appeal, the Board of Trustees will appoint a committee which shall normally consist of three members, including at least one academic member of the Board of Trustees or member of Senate, and which may include among its members University staff who are not members of the Board of Trustees. At the request of the student, the Board of Trustees may appoint a student sabbatical officer as an additional member. In the event of the Committee being divided in its view, the chair will have the casting vote. The Committee will normally be chaired by a lay member of the Board of Trustees. Wherever possible the Committee should include at least one member of the same gender as the student.

#### 12.10 Clerk

The University Secretary will appoint a clerk to the Appeal Review Panel or Appeal Review Officer and to the Committee. The role of the clerk is to assist the Panel or Committee by collating the evidence, preparing the documentation, making arrangements for the hearing, taking a note of the proceedings and advising the Appeal Review Panel or Appeal Review Officer or Committee on the relevant regulations and procedures. The clerk may, on behalf of the Panel, Officer or Committee, ask for written witness statements or documents such as medical certificates to be produced. The student, the school and the faculty will be entitled to see all statements and documents seen by the Panel, Officer or Committee.

#### 12.11 Nature of hearing

The Committee will decide its own procedure. The student may present their appeal in person or in writing as they choose. Witnesses may be asked to give evidence.

#### 12.12 Representation

The student may be accompanied at the appeal hearing by an adviser, friend or representative for support or representation. The Students' Union employs student advisers who may be asked to act in this capacity. In the event that the student fails to attend, without good reason, the hearing may be held in the student's absence. If the student has a good reason for not attending, the hearing will be rescheduled.

#### 12.13 Time limits

The University will normally comply with the following time limits:

- a. the Local Stage will be completed within 35 days of receipt of the student's completed Appeal Form and all supporting evidence. Where the Local Stage has involved a meeting with the student, the Local Stage decision will be issued to the student within five working days of the meeting (these five days being included within the 35 day limit set out above);
- b. The Appeal Review Panel or Appeal Review Officer will consider the appeal within 35 days of receipt of the student's complete progression to the University Stage form, all supporting evidence and all documents considered at the Local Stage;

c. The University Stage decision will normally be issued within 21 days of the date that the appeal is considered by the Appeal Review Panel or Appeal Review Officer.

d. The Committee hearing will be arranged as soon as is practicable after the Review Panel's recommendation that a Committee be appointed. The Committee's report will normally be issued within 14 days of the hearing.

If the University is unable to meet these time limits it will inform the student of the reasons for the delay.

If at any time during the appeal procedure, the student fails to pursue the appeal or to respond to enquiries in a timely manner without good reason, the University Secretary may after a delay of more than 28 days on the part of the student, determine that no further action should be taken in respect of the appeal and that the appeal procedure is concluded.

#### 12.14 Nominees

Unless the context indicates otherwise, under these Regulations an Officer of the University or other designated member of staff may act through their properly appointed nominee.

#### 12.15 Report to Senate

The Committee will report to the Board of Trustees, setting out, in summary, the grounds of the appeal, the evidence received, the Committee's findings and any recommendations or instructions to be made by the Board of Trustees to the board of examiners. A copy of the report will be sent to the student and to the Faculty (via the Faculty Head of Student Administration) or to the Chair of the Research Degrees Examination Board, as appropriate. The Student Complaints and Mediation Manager will present an annual report on appeals under these regulations to both Senate and the Board of Trustees and will inform the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) of any general recommendations made by Committees of the Board of Trustees during the year.

#### 12.16 Powers of the Board of Trustees

On receipt of the report of the Committee, the Board of Trustees may refer the matter back to the faculty (or the Research Degrees Examination Board, as appropriate) with a recommendation or instruction to the relevant board to amend its original decision.

#### 12.17 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)

The OIA provides an independent scheme for the review of student complaints. The OIA will only consider cases when the University's internal procedures have been exhausted. It will not intervene in matters which turn purely on academic judgment.

At the end of the appeal process the student will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter which will confirm the outcome of the appeal.

Following receipt of the Completion of Procedures letter the student is entitled to make an application to the OIA ([oiahe.org.uk](http://oiahe.org.uk)).

## 23. Academic misconduct

### On this page

- [Detecting academic misconduct](#)
- [Procedures for investigating academic misconduct](#)
- [Academic integrity awareness course \(AIAC\)](#)
- [Investigation of academic misconduct](#)
- [Outcomes from an investigation of academic misconduct](#)

### Resources to support these regulations or policy

- Information on the procedures for investigating and considering academic misconduct are set out in the [Academic Misconduct Procedure 2025-26 \(PDF, 315kB\)](#)
- Student web pages on: [plagiarism](#), [contract cheating](#), [collusion](#), [ethical breaches in student research](#)

### Detecting academic misconduct

23.1. Academic misconduct can be identified by staff involved in marking or teaching. It can also be reported or disclosed by a third party.

23.2. Software may be used to help identify potential academic misconduct, such as plagiarism. Any suspected cases are reviewed before any action is taken or penalty applied. A dissertation, project or industry placement report may be exempted from a third-party software detection service if there are contractual, security or safety obligations on the University to safeguard sensitive material from third parties. If an exemption is agreed, a relevant member of staff undertakes a manual academic integrity check of the dissertation.

### Procedures for investigating academic misconduct

23.3. If any irregularities are detected, or academic misconduct identified after academic review, the case is referred to the appropriate procedure for investigation and/or consideration. A definition and further information on each are available in the Academic Misconduct Procedure, the links to which are provided below:

- Poor academic practice:** for minor instances of poor referencing, incorrect, or missing attribution for small sections of copied work, or similar infringements by a student where there is no suggestion that there is an intention to deceive.
- Plagiarism:** where a student is considered to have used someone else's work without proper acknowledgment.
- Re-using own work (self-plagiarism):** where a student is considered to have re-used their own previously submitted work without proper acknowledgement.



- d. **Cheating:** where a student is considered to have broken the rules of an assessment or sought to gain an unfair advantage through unauthorised means. Includes collusion, contract cheating and the mis-use of artificial intelligence.
- e. **Ethical breaches:** where a student is considered to have breached ethics in their research.

23.4. Some cases of academic misconduct (under b-d above), depending on the student's year of study, may be addressed through training instead of formal penalties to help students build the required understanding. This includes attending an Academic Integrity Awareness Course.

## Academic integrity awareness course (AIAC)

23.5. Eligible students are invited to attend an AIAC to improve their understanding of academic integrity and what constitutes misconduct. This is separate from any work they may need to complete in order to receive credit for the affected unit/s, such as correcting the original assessment or submitting a new one.

23.6. The AIAC is only available to first year undergraduate students (including those on Foundation programmes) where:

- this is their first offence, and
- the offence is not sufficiently serious that it cannot be addressed by training.

23.7. Full attendance and engagement is required for successful completion of the training. If a student does not attend, or attends but refuses to engage or is disruptive, the relevant assessment is awarded a mark of zero.

23.8. Any student referred to an AIAC can appeal this decision by submitting the AIAC appeal form within 21 days of being informed they are required to attend the course. The permissible grounds for appeal are:

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

23.9. The appeal will be considered by a nominated member of academic staff in the Faculty who has not been involved in the case. They will either:

- a. reject the appeal and confirm attendance at the AIAC is required, or,
- b. uphold the appeal and revoke the original decision for attendance at an AIAC.

## Investigation of academic misconduct

23.10. Where suspected academic misconduct requires investigation under the relevant procedure, an academic misconduct panel is convened to investigate at either school, faculty or university level, depending upon the seriousness of the

case. At school and faculty level, the panel is convened by the student's home school or faculty.

23.11. Students are invited to engage with the panel in the form of an interview. The purpose of the interview is to allow the student to make representations and to present any mitigating factors. The interview can be online or in-person. A student can provide a written submission regardless of whether they attend the interview or not.

23.12. Once the interview process is complete, the academic misconduct panel determines if academic misconduct has occurred or not. The applicable standard of proof is the balance of probabilities (i.e. a student is found guilty of academic misconduct if, on the evidence available, it is more likely than not that the offence was committed).

## **Outcomes from an investigation of academic misconduct**

23.13. The outcomes from an investigation of academic misconduct are to:

1. Dismiss the case
2. Refer it back to the unit director to be dealt with as poor academic practice
3. Impose no penalty beyond recording the case on the student's record for future reference
4. Apply one of the following penalties to the original piece of work:
  - a. to award the work submitted a lower mark than would otherwise have been awarded in the form of mark penalty or a capped mark; if the work is the only summative assessment for the unit and this penalty reduces the mark to below the pass mark the panel should consider whether credit should be awarded.
  - b. if the assessment is the only assessment contributing to the unit mark, award credit but a mark of zero.
  - c. if the assessment contributes part of the unit mark, award a mark of zero but allow credit for the unit to be awarded if the zero results in a fail mark for the complete unit.
5. Require the submission of an equivalent piece of work, to replace the originally submitted piece of work i.e. that corresponds to the same "attempt", which is awarded:
  - a. the mark it would normally be awarded
  - b. a lower mark than would otherwise be awarded in the form of a mark penalty or a capped mark; if the penalty reduces the mark to below the pass mark the panel should consider whether credit should be awarded.
  - c. a mark of zero but, providing the intellectual mark of the resubmitted work would be sufficient for the unit pass mark to be achieved, allow credit for the unit to be awarded.
6. Award no marks (zero), for the unit of which the examination or piece of assessed work was part. Under this penalty, the exam board will, where permitted by regulation, allow the student to take reassessment in order to

demonstrate the learning outcomes for the unit, for the award of credit only. Where the credit points for the unit are later achieved by reassessment, the penalty of a mark of zero for the unit is retained.

7. Award the student a lower classification of degree than they would otherwise achieve based on their mark profile. The UAMP should determine whether an equivalent piece of work should be submitted when recommending this penalty.
8. Require the student to withdraw from the university, which means that the student ceases to be a member of the university, and loses all rights and privileges of membership, including whether an exit award should be made. This recommendation can only be made to the Dean of the student's home faculty.

#### *Notes on outcomes*

- *for assessments on a pass/fail marking scheme, outcomes 4 and 5 are replaced by:* require the submission of an equivalent piece of work, to replace the originally submitted piece of work i.e. that corresponds to the same "attempt", with Pass/Fail outcomes.
- *outcome 6 is available to Faculty Academic Misconduct Panels and University Academic Misconduct Panels only*
- *outcomes 7 and 8 are available to University Academic Misconduct Panels only.*
- *outcomes 3 and 5 are NOT available to a Panel with regard to incoming study abroad students or other visiting students who take units for credit but are not on a University of Bristol programme of study.*

23.14. Outcomes 4-7 are recommended to the relevant exam board or outcome 8 to the Dean of the Faculty for consideration. Outcomes 1-3 do not need further approval.

23.15. The student is informed of the decision within 14 days of the date of the panel.

23.16. The exam board (or Dean of a Faculty for outcome 8) receives and considers the recommendation of the panel when considering a student's academic outcome. The normal expectation is that the recommendation is accepted; however, the exam board will consider:

- whether the impact of applying the recommendation to the student's overall academic outcome is disproportionate to the offence, and/or
- the impact of any new exceptional circumstances not available to the panel that are relevant to the affected assessment(s).

## **Turnitin UK**

The University uses the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) approved Plagiarism Detection Service Turnitin UK ("the Service"), a method of systematically checking student assignments for plagiarism. The Service is operated by iParadigms, in conjunction with Northumbria Learning, the European reseller of the Service, who manage sales and support of the service to UK universities.

### **1 What is the Plagiarism Detection Service?**

The Service searches the world wide web, extensive databases of reference material and content submitted by other students to identify any duplication with your work. The software makes no decisions as to whether a student has plagiarised, it simply highlights sections of text which have been found in other sources. In most cases this text will have been correctly cited. All work will continue to be reviewed by the academic department setting the assignment.

### **2 How are my assignments used by the Service?**

Students (or staff, on behalf of students) can submit assignments to the Service. Your department(s) will have their own arrangements for this. Your work will be stored electronically on a database together with your name, email address, course details and institution. Your work will then be compared for similarity against work submitted by other students at Bristol and from other universities and will be included as source documents in the iParadigms reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of submitted papers.

In the event of the Service detecting a high degree of similarity with content in the database, this will be reported back to the University. Your academic department can then investigate as they see fit in line with the University's Examination Regulations. Any investigation is at the discretion of the University. In this circumstance it is possible that the personal data you have provided may need to be disclosed to academic staff within the other institution(s) from where matching content has been submitted. By signing the University of Bristol's registration form you are giving your consent for your data to be transferred and used in this way.

### **3 Who controls the Service?**

The University is the recognised Data Controller (being the person who controls the extent and use of data) for the data held or processed by or on behalf of the Service. iParadigms are the Data Processor.

In order for the University to make use of the Service it will be necessary for personal data relating to you to be transferred to countries not governed by EU Data Protection legislation. However, it should be noted that iParadigms, the company processing your data on the University's behalf, is bound by terms of contract to abide at all times by the Data Protection principles.

### **4 How long will my data be kept by the Service?**

The Service is a long-term initiative and it is the intention that student assignments will be retained indefinitely.

## **5 What if I want my data to be removed from the Service?**

If you do wish to remove your data from the Service at any time you should contact the University TurnitinUK administrator (via email: [turnitinuk-admin@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:turnitinuk-admin@bristol.ac.uk)), who can make the necessary arrangements with Northumbria Learning. You will receive written confirmation when this has been completed.

## **6 What if I want to find out what personal data the Service holds on me?**

If you wish to find out exactly what personal data the Service holds about you please contact the Information Rights Officer (via email: [data-protection@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:data-protection@bristol.ac.uk)) in the Office of the University Secretary. You will be required to prove your identity before any personal information is disclosed to you – please see the 'subject access request' process referred to below. The process will involve the Information Rights Officer contacting Northumbria Learning and iParadigms on your behalf.

It is possible that the University also holds personal data on you in relation to plagiarism which it has received from the Service or elsewhere. Details of how to obtain access to such data is given below in the 'Further Information' section.

## **7 Who owns the Copyright to the work I have submitted to the Service?**

The copyright in the content submitted to the Service by you (or by staff on your behalf) remains yours at all times. The Service has no interest in acquiring the intellectual property rights for the content submitted by you. By submitting content to the Service, you are granting a licence to the Service for it to use the copyright in the content for the purposes set out in these Regulations. Please refer below to the 'Further Information' section for details of the University's policy Intellectual Property.

Please note that neither the University, the Service nor its data processors will seek to exploit the content submitted to this Service for any further commercial gain outside the remit of this Service.

## **8 Further Information**

Please see the University of Bristol's Intellectual Property Policy for Students, which is set out in the Rules and Regulations for Students booklet and on the web at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/after-you-apply/policies/>

Information about how to making a 'subject access request', the official process for requesting copies of information held about you, is available from the Office of the University Secretary at <http://www.bris.ac.uk/secretary/dataprotection/individ/subjectaccess.html>

Further information on TurnitinUK is available from [https://www.turnitinuk.com/login\\_page.asp](https://www.turnitinuk.com/login_page.asp)

*Introduced September 2003. Revised June 2008.*

# **Regulations on Research Practice**

## **1 Responsibility for research in the University**

The Head of School is responsible for research conducted within or under the auspices of that School and answers to the Dean, the Pro Vice-Chancellor responsible for research, and the Vice-Chancellor.

## **2 Research practice**

These regulations apply to all members of the University involved in research. This will include staff and undergraduate and postgraduate students. It also applies to those who are not members of the University, but who are conducting research on the University's premises, under the University's auspices or using the University's research facilities.

All those conducting research in the University are expected to:

- maintain professional standards
- be familiar with guidance on best research practice, for example in relation to matters of policy, ethics, finance and safety
- comply with the University Research Governance and Integrity Policy
- observe legal and ethical requirements laid down by the University or other properly appointed bodies involved in the research field
- recognise the importance of good leadership and co-operation in research groups
- take special account of the needs of novice researchers
- document results and keep primary data secure
- question findings
- attribute honestly the contributions of others
- take steps to ensure the safety of all those associated with the research
- report any conflict of interest, actual or prospective, to the appropriate person.

## **3 Information about research projects**

Anyone leading a research project within or under the auspices of the University should ensure that the research complies with relevant legislation and that arrangements are in place for the proper conduct of the research, including but not limited to insurance, ethics, data protection and the protection of intellectual property.

In particular, those leading or supervising research which involves human participants (including but not limited to questionnaires, interviews, human samples and clinical research) must complete a research registration checklist before starting the research (see <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/red/research-governance>).

The University Ethics of Research Policy and Procedure governs the ethics of research across the University and applies to all those conducting research under the auspices of the University.

#### **4 Misconduct**

In the event of suspected research fraud or other research misconduct, the matter should be drawn to the University's attention under the Policy on Public Interest Disclosure. The University's Insurance Officer should be notified, in confidence, of any possible future claim, or insurance cover may be lost. The Director of Communications should also be notified, in confidence, in case of media interest.

*Approved by Council 5 July 2002. Last updated July 2010.*

# **Regulations on Research Misconduct**

## 1 General

These regulations apply to all members of the University involved in research. This will include staff and undergraduate and postgraduate students. It also applies to those who are not members of the University, but who are conducting research on the University's premises, under the University's auspices or using the University's research facilities.

For the purpose of these regulations, the Vice-Chancellor and other officers may act through their properly appointed nominees.

## 2 Definition of research misconduct

Research misconduct includes the following, whether deliberate, reckless or negligent:

- failure to obtain appropriate permission to conduct research
- deception in relation to research proposals
- unethical behaviour in the conduct of research, for example in relation to research subjects
- unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially
- deviation from good research practice, where this results in unreasonable risk of harm to humans, other animals or the environment
- fabrication, falsification or corruption of research data
- distortion of research outcomes, by distortion or omission of data that do not fit expected results
- dishonest misinterpretation of results
- publication of data known or believed to be false or misleading
- plagiarism, or dishonest use of unacknowledged sources
- misquotation or misrepresentation of other authors
- inappropriate attribution of authorship
- fraud or other misuse of research funds or research equipment
- attempting, planning or conspiring to be involved in research misconduct
- inciting others to be involved in research misconduct
- collusion in or concealment of research misconduct by others.

Fraud or other misuse of research funds or research equipment may be dealt with under the University's financial regulations.



### 3 Procedure in the case of suspected research misconduct

The University has a responsibility to investigate allegations of research misconduct fully and expeditiously. It also has a responsibility to protect researchers from malicious, mischievous, or frivolous allegations.

All those to whom these regulations apply should report any incident of misconduct, whether witnessed or suspected. Members of staff and students are encouraged to raise concerns about suspected research misconduct in confidence under the University's Policy on Public Interest Disclosure.

In the event that serious allegations are made, they will be referred to the Vice-Chancellor under the appropriate disciplinary regulations. The Vice-Chancellor may take immediate action under the disciplinary regulations, or, if the Vice-Chancellor considers it appropriate to do so, he or she may first appoint a panel to investigate the allegations.

If a panel is appointed, it shall normally consist of three members: someone unconnected with the allegation who is a member of the school or faculty, a member of the University from outside the faculty and a member of the Board of Trustees, who shall chair the panel. Members of the panel must be impartial and unbiased. At least one member should have expert knowledge of the area of research involved. The individual or individuals against whom the allegation is made shall be informed of the decision to appoint a panel and shall be given the opportunity to comment on the proposed membership of the panel.

The panel shall take all reasonable steps to preserve the anonymity of the person or persons accused and the person or persons making the allegation, unless this would compromise the investigation. All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that the investigation is undertaken as expeditiously as possible. The panel may seek legal advice.

The panel shall require the production of such records as are necessary to enable the investigation to proceed and shall secure their safekeeping. The panel may interview the person or persons accused and the person or persons making the allegation, together with anyone else who may have relevant information. Anyone attending for interview may be accompanied by a friend or representative.

The panel shall prepare a report setting out the evidence received, accounts of any interviews conducted and the panel's conclusions. The person or persons accused of research misconduct shall have an opportunity to comment on the report. The report and any comments received from the person or persons accused shall be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor. The panel may also make recommendations to promote best practice in the conduct of research and any such recommendations shall be brought to the attention of Senate and the Board of Trustees.

On receipt of the report, the Vice-Chancellor shall proceed as follows:

- In the event that the panel has found no evidence of misconduct, the complaint shall be dismissed.
- In the event that a complaint is upheld, but the offence found to be insufficiently serious to warrant formal disciplinary proceedings, the matter may be referred to the head of school or other appropriate individual for resolution.
- If the investigation has uncovered prima facie evidence of serious misconduct, then the matter shall be dealt with under the appropriate disciplinary procedures. Action may be taken in respect of members of staff under the Disciplinary Rules for Members of Staff and Disciplinary Procedure for Members of Staff. Action may be taken in respect of students suspected of research misconduct under the Student Disciplinary Regulations or Examination Regulations.

In cases where the outcome implicates someone who is not subject to the University's disciplinary procedures, the Vice-Chancellor shall bring the report to the attention of any appropriate disciplinary or other body.

If the panel finds the allegation to have been malicious or mischievous in nature, the matter may be referred to the Vice-Chancellor to consider whether disciplinary action should be taken against those making the allegation.

Where the research is funded in whole or part by an outside grant, the Vice-Chancellor shall have regard to the guidance issued by the relevant funding body. The Vice-Chancellor shall ensure that any such body is given appropriate and timely information as to the instigation and progress of an investigation and any referral under disciplinary regulations.

In the event of a finding of misconduct, where the person responsible is subject to the regulation of a professional body such as the General Medical Council, the Vice-Chancellor shall consider whether it is appropriate to inform the professional body of any finding.

Where the person responsible has published research, especially research to which the misconduct relates, the Vice-Chancellor shall consider whether it is appropriate to inform journal editors or others of any finding.

*Approved by Council 5 July 2002. Last updated July 2010.*

## **Intellectual Property Policy for Students**

This policy describes the rights of students, the University and others in intellectual property that is created by students during their time at the University.

Students are bound by this policy which is part of the Student Agreement (found [here](#)).

*Students should make sure they check and understand the position on ownership of intellectual property at the outset of any project, placement or other arrangement.*

### **Introduction**

Intellectual property is a term used to describe legal rights that can exist in ideas generated and works created by individuals. These rights can have value and may be exploited for commercial and other purposes. It is likely that during the course of their studies or research programmes students will create work in which intellectual property rights arise and this policy will apply.

The most common intellectual property rights that might arise include copyright, design rights, patents and trademarks. A more detailed explanation of intellectual property rights that might arise may be found [here](#).

### **Students covered by the policy**

This policy applies to all students registered with the University, whether as undergraduates, post-graduates or in some other research capacity. It also applies if a registered student is employed by the University or another organisation.

### **The basic principle**

Students will own the intellectual property they create through coursework or research while registered as students at the University. This means they are free to exploit this intellectual property as they choose, subject to any wider legal constraints that apply. There are, however, some important exceptions to this basic principle which are set out below.

### **Exceptions**

*Students participating in a research project supported by the University or another third party*

An organisation funding (or otherwise contributing to or supporting) the research (the “funder”) might make it a condition of funding that any intellectual property rights generated during the project will belong to the funder, or the funder will have rights to use them or the intellectual property is to be available for open access and/or exploitation. In some such cases the University may require the student to assign (which means to transfer) to the University the rights in the intellectual property that is created. The form of the assignment may be found [here](#). In other cases, the funder might require the student to assign (or grant rights to use) the intellectual property rights created by the student to

the funder before the research starts or at its conclusion. Where this occurs the student will be bound by the terms imposed by the funder.

The University or other funder may also require the student to enter into a confidentiality agreement if the research involves the student having access to confidential information.

#### *Collaboration with academics*

There are courses and research projects where students will be working with and/or are supervised by academic members of staff. The academic member of staff might contribute the ideas or concept behind the work that the student then develops or students may join existing research teams during the course of their studies.

Any intellectual property created or developed by the student through interactions of this nature must be assigned by the student to the University. The University will then treat the student as it does an eligible member of staff, which will entitle the student to a share of any fees that arise through the exploitation of the intellectual property. The share of the fees (also known as 'royalties') is determined by the level of the contribution made by the student. This is known as 'revenue sharing'. The University has adopted a formal 'Revenue Sharing Scheme' and further details of this are available [here](#).

*Note: Prior to joining a research group or starting a project, students will be required to sign the form of assignment, found [here](#).*

#### *Students on placements*

The organisation offering the placement might make it a condition of the offer that any intellectual property rights created by the student during the placement will belong to the organisation and not to the student. The student may be required to assign the rights to the organisation offering the placement or to the University.

#### *Students employed by the University or another organisation*

If a student is employed or sponsored by the University or any other organisation(s) at any time during their course or research programme, the employer(s) or sponsor(s) might own or claim ownership in the intellectual property created by the student during this time. As a matter of general law, employers own the intellectual property rights created by their employees. It is also possible that a sponsor will have a separate agreement with the student or with the University under which the sponsor claims ownership in any intellectual property created by the student.

The University may require the student to assign the intellectual property rights to the University. The University may exercise this right to protect the interests of the employer or sponsor.

The University may also require the student to enter into a confidentiality agreement if the course or research involves the student having access to confidential information.

## **University use of student-owned intellectual property, research publications and scholarly works**

Please see section 5 of the Student Agreement regarding the use the University can make of student-owned intellectual property. This permission helps further the University's charitable objects and reflects many funders' requirements for open access and exploitation.

We recognise that students may produce scholarly works. Where a student produces a scholarly work, in order for the University and its researchers to disseminate its research and scholarship as widely as possible and comply with funder requirements, each student will comply with clauses 4 to 9 inclusive of the Research Publications and Scholarly Works Policy as if the student were a "Member of Staff". These clauses set out the steps that need to be taken in respect of scholarly works.

The law gives rights (known as 'moral rights') entitling authors of works in certain situations to be identified as such. The University will respect these rights and will acknowledge students as being the author where the University publishes the student owned work. In other cases where the law does not require this, the student will be acknowledged, where reasonably practicable, in any publication of the University containing the student's work.

## **Respecting the intellectual rights of others**

Students must respect the intellectual property rights of others. This means students must not knowingly claim rights in work created by others, whether academics, students or third parties, or copy such work without the owner's permission. These obligations are described in more detail in the Rules and Regulations for Students.

## **Other relevant University policies**

The University has adopted other policies where there might be some overlap with this policy on intellectual property. These include:

- The Policy on Live Streaming and Recording Educational Activities
- Information Security Policies

## **Disputes and appeals**

If a student wishes to complain about any aspect of their treatment under this policy this must be done through the Students Complaints Procedure, details of which are here.

**Approved by the Board of Trustees**

**7 July 2023**

Summary			
This policy describes the rights of students, the University and others, in intellectual property that is created by students during their time at the University.			
Scope			
Applies to all students and applicants.			
Document Control			
Owning Team	University Secretary's Office		
Division	University Secretary's Office		
Lead contact	Keith Feeney		
Type	Institutional Plan	Status	Approved
Asset Number		Version	V 1.2
Approved by/on	University Education Committee via ASIOG	Date current version approved	7 July 2023
Date current version published		Date first published	August 2018
Next review date	AY 25/26	Revision frequency	3 year
Superseded documents	N/A		
Related documents	Student Agreement <u>Rules and Regulations for Students</u>		
Keywords	Intellectual Property, Legal Rights		

# Policy on Live Streaming and Recording Educational Activities



Summary			
This Policy has been written to support, enable and promote the recording of educational activities			
Scope			
Applies to all students (undergraduate, taught and research postgraduate) from 2024/25			
Document Control			
Owning Team	Digital Education Office		
Division	Education and Student Experience		
Lead contact	Sarah Davies, Director of Education Innovation		
Type	Policy Document	Status	Approved
Asset Number	N/A	Version	V 3.0
Approved by	UEC, via Applicant and Student Information Oversight Group	Date current version approved	25/5/22 (UEC)
Date current version published	16.08.22	Date first published	September 2020
Next review date	May 2025	Revision frequency	1 year
Related documents	<a href="#"><u>University Policy for Student Digital Equity</u></a>		
Keywords	Recording, digital, learning materials		

## Policy on Live Streaming and Recording Educational Activities

### Background

1. This Policy has been written to support, enable and promote the live streaming and recording of educational activities at the University of Bristol.
2. In this Policy, educational activities include but are not limited to lectures, laboratory demonstrations, presentations, seminars, tutorials and assessment activities. These may be recorded by the University in real time with students present, or pre-recorded by staff for asynchronous use by students and other members of the University.
3. Recent developments in digital tools and pedagogic approaches are transforming the potential use of audio and video materials for educational purposes.
4. There are considerable benefits to our students in recording for educational purposes, including:
  - Flexible learning – anytime and anywhere access to learning materials, learning which can occur at the student's own pace;
  - Multi-modal learning – providing learning materials in multiple formats to suit individual learning preferences;
  - Deep learning – including the ability to evaluate and contextualise learning materials over time, or to revisit complex concepts to increase understanding;
  - Digital capabilities – providing opportunities for students and staff to develop digital skills and capabilities;
  - More diverse teaching - for example the use of recorded material for viewing in advance of scheduled teaching sessions to create space for more interaction during the class or lecture;
  - Improved accessibility – particularly for students with special educational needs or whose first language is not English, or who may need to study away from Bristol.
5. Recordings have multiple possible uses, such as short videos for students to watch before seminars, presentations which inform students' option choices, interactive enrichment materials, and recording events and lectures.
6. The recording of educational activities is an important part of the University's strategy to enhance the quality of the student experience, and promote more inclusive and flexible learning and teaching.

### Purpose of this Policy

7. To better support our educational objectives, in many situations we will record the audio, projected or created content and where possible video of teaching. In some circumstances we will stream live educational activities to reach students who cannot be on campus or whose courses are designed as distance learning; these live streams may also be recorded. To that end we want to make certain that the necessary rights and protections are in place to enable this.
8. However, it is important that staff and students understand what recording is not designed to do. The University recognises and acknowledges that:
  - Recordings and live streams are not intended to replace student contact time or reduce student attendance at classes on campus where this is provided,



and attendance is expected. They are provided to support student learning and enrich the student experience;

- Not all teaching materials and styles are suitable for recording (see paragraph 27) and staff should not feel required to change their preferred teaching style simply to ensure that it can be recorded.

### Rights and responsibilities

9. The recording of educational activities requires clarity about the rights and responsibilities of the University, staff and students in respect to copyright and other intellectual property rights.
10. In line with staff contracts of employment, the University of Bristol will hold the copyright in the recording (including rights in the sound recording). This will enable continued use of the recording for the specific educational outcomes outlined in this Policy.
11. Staff own the performance rights in the recording of their teaching activities. By recording their teaching, staff give permission to the University to capture the educational activities and use the rights in any performance solely for educational purposes. Unless there is an agreement to the contrary any recordings will only be used by the University for educational purposes and not for professional capabilities review purposes (see Ordinance 29). Use for non-educational purposes will require explicit permission of the lecturer. The rights granted in this clause are irrevocable.
12. The University of Bristol may use, reproduce, and modify the format and display of the recordings (subject to the use criteria set out in paragraph 11) but not to modify the substance of its content. Staff waive all moral rights which might otherwise constrain this.
13. In summary staff who undertake recording of educational activities assign all rights, title and interest in and to the recording to the University of Bristol save in respect of performance rights where a licence is given.
14. The University of Bristol acknowledges staff have the right to request and be provided with a copy of the recording.
15. The University will acknowledge the lecturer as the author and performer of the recording wherever possible.
16. Staff have responsibility to ensure they comply with copyright legislation relating to their lectures and educational activities. Staff acknowledge their responsibility to ensure that use of third party copyrighted materials in the recordings is not in breach of data protection legislation or of any confidentiality obligations and does not infringe any third party's intellectual property rights.
17. Students give the University permission to use and record any performance by them that may be captured in the recordings for educational purposes as set out in this Policy and waive all moral rights which might otherwise constrain this.
18. Staff who create recordings must comply with the requirements for captioning materials which are available from the Digital Education Office.

### Safe Keeping

19. For data security purposes and to avoid misuse or unauthorised use of University of Bristol materials, teaching must be provided on the University approved and supported platforms. Recordings of materials designed for use in credit-bearing units

for current University of Bristol students must be submitted to University approved platforms, principally Blackboard or RePlay, and must not be posted to publicly available sites, such as YouTube. Details of the University approved and supported platforms are available here:

<https://uob.sharepoint.com/sites/itservices>; and

<https://www.bristol.ac.uk/digital-education/tools/>

20. Recordings submitted to RePlay and Blackboard with their accompanying materials will be stored securely and be password protected. These recordings will only be accessible by relevant students or University staff who have authorised access, such as unit heads and system administrators.
21. Where technically possible, recordings with their accompanying materials made for educational purposes will be made available to students for the duration of their programme of study. Recorded teaching materials may be made available to subsequent cohorts at the discretion of the unit director, though not with the intention of replacing live teaching. The University will withdraw recordings which are no longer in use, and dispose of them, save any retention for archival purposes or historical interest at the School's request.
22. Use of recordings and their accompanying materials made for educational purposes beyond that set out in paragraph 21 will require the explicit permission of the teaching staff featured in the recording.

#### Recording and Not Recording

23. The University has a legal obligation to provide learning in alternative formats for some students (e.g. disabled students may need a recording as part of the 'reasonable adjustment' process). This alternative format may be a recording of teaching. This obligation must be met.
24. If the University has an overriding legal obligation to provide a recording then a recording will be made in accordance with the University's legal obligations and staff may not opt out of recording in accordance with paragraph 26. Where these recordings can be provided using the institutional, automated service they should be, to reduce student anxiety and provide a supportive and inclusive learning environment.
25. If no legal obligation exists to require a recording to be made (paragraphs 23 and 24) the University expects that all scheduled teaching sessions which include any substantial element of teacher input (e.g. mini-lecture, interactive lecture, teacher feedback to the group on an assignment) should be recorded where facilities exist. For online sessions, recording functionality is likely to be available in all sessions. For face to face sessions, it will normally only be available in those teaching spaces equipped with Re/play or a microphone and Mediasite Desktop Recorder.
26. If a member of staff feels that their teaching which otherwise meets the conditions of paragraph 25 would not be suitable for recording, or if a member of staff is entitled to reasonable adjustments to their working arrangements which would require an exemption from some aspects of this policy, they must obtain the prior approval of their Head of School or his/her nominee to opt out of recording. The Head of School or his/her nominee will consider the criteria below (paragraph 27 – criteria for not recording) in reaching a decision. During the Head of School's term of office, the decision for each unit need not be sought afresh in subsequent years, unless the unit is substantially redesigned.

27. Recording may not be appropriate where a substantial proportion of the educational activities:
- a. contain confidential or personal information,
  - b. are commercially or politically sensitive,
  - c. include such a degree of interaction with students that recording is not viable,
  - d. are delivered in a way that makes recording unsuitable, e.g. extensive use of whiteboard or chalk board.
28. If, during a class or lecture, it transpires that part of that individual class or lecture is not suitable for recording these elements may not be recorded (see paragraphs 27, 35 and 36).

#### Streaming and Recording of Students

29. As part of students' studies, students' participation in teaching activities and assessments may be streamed or recorded and these recordings used and made available for educational purposes.

#### Recording Notice

30. Students must normally be made aware at the beginning of each class or lecture when recording of educational activities takes place.

#### Editing

31. To minimise impact on staff workloads and ensure prompt access for students, automated recordings of some timetabled teaching are automatically published. Where recordings are not automatically published staff must ensure that they are made available to students as quickly as possible. Staff can review and edit a recording before it is made available to students. Staff can manually publish recordings and recall recordings for editing once published.

#### Reasonable Adjustments

32. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled students which may include but are not limited to the provision of recordings of teaching with subtitling where this is required. Should a member of staff need a reasonable adjustment in order to facilitate the preparation of a recording, s/he should contact the Digital Education Office.

#### Take down

33. If a member of staff or student becomes aware that defamatory, inaccurate or infringing material is included within a recording or any other reason why it would be expedient for the University to recall a recording, they should contact the Digital Education Office.

#### Data Protection

34. Subject to the right to not record set out in paragraphs 27 and 28 of this Policy, the University will (i) record and make the recordings available in accordance with this

Policy; and (ii) process “personal data” and “special category data” in accordance with the University’s Data Protection Policy and data protection legislation  
<https://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/data-protection/policy/>

35. This Policy is not intended to prevent or inhibit the free discussion of academic content, opinion and reflection which is core to teaching, learning and assessment in higher education. In contributing to recorded teaching and other educational materials, students and staff should consider whether they wish to include special category data, since this data will form a part of the recording which will be made available as detailed in this document. Special category data is certain types of personal data such as: racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or other similar beliefs, trade union membership, physical or mental health or sexual life or orientation.
36. A student or member of staff may ask for a recording to be paused so that material of this nature is not recorded. A student or member of staff who wishes a completed recording to be edited or withdrawn in order to remove material of this nature should contact the Digital Education Office.

#### Visitors

37. Express, documented consent is required for (i) the streaming and recording of persons who are not University of Bristol students, members of staff or honorary members of staff speaking at lectures or events and (ii) making their recording and materials available via Re/Play and a consent form must be completed. This form is available from the Digital Education Office.

#### Students’ Rights to Record

38. Disabled students who are known to Disability Services may record lectures or other formal teaching sessions as a reasonable adjustment for disability related reasons and must follow this policy.
39. It is not expected that students will routinely need to make their own recordings of teaching and learning. Where students do need to make such recordings they cannot do so without the prior consent of the lecturer and the other participants. This is because recording the seminar or tutorial may well also capture special category data of staff and students and/or members of the public.
40. Any recording made by a student must only be used as a personal aid for study purposes. Students may not share, publish or otherwise make the recording available in whole or in part to any other person. Students must delete the recording as soon as they cease to be a student of the University. The University will own the copyright in any recording that a student makes.
41. In relation to where the University supplies or makes recordings of educational activities available to students:
- a. the University will own the copyright and all other intellectual property rights in the recordings; and
  - b. the recordings must only be used by the student as a personal aid for study purposes. The student may not share, publish or otherwise make the recording available in whole or in part to any other person.
42. The University reserves the right to enforce student disciplinary regulations where students do not adhere to the conditions outlined in this policy.

## **Further information**

For any queries relating to Data Protection please contact the Information Governance Manager at [data-protection@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:data-protection@bristol.ac.uk)

For any queries relating to learning and teaching, the use of recording software and materials development please contact the Digital Education Office  
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/digital-education>.

## **Key Reference Documents**

### **Legal**

More information about copyright at the University can be found at  
[www.bristol.ac.uk/library/use/copyright/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/library/use/copyright/)

### **Accessibility**

More information about the University's obligations can be found at  
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/study-support/reasonable-adjustments/> and  
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/web/policies/>

# Regulations for the Use of Library Services and Facilities

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The University of Bristol Library service comprises: the Arts and Social Sciences Library, the Medical Library, the Queen's Building Library, the Wills Memorial Library, the Education Library, the Worsley Chemical Library, the Maria Mercer Physics Library, the Veterinary Science Library and the Research Reserve at Brislington. There are also several library-managed study centres: Beacon House, Brambles, Grace Reeves, Hawthorns Study Centre Hawthorns Study Lounge and Senate House.

1.2 The Library service is available throughout the year. Opening times and locations can be found at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/library/locations-opening/>.

1.3 The University Card acts as the Library Membership Card (as well as the identity card) for all students, members of staff and members of the Board of Trustees. The University Card (or, for registered external users, the University of Bristol Library Card) must be presented on request, whether to gain access to the Library, or to prove identity, or to borrow books in the Library. The University Card must not be given to, or used by, anyone else.

1.4 Throughout these regulations the term 'book' is deemed to include all types of material in physical format (e.g. printed books, printed journals, DVDs, etc.) provided by the libraries of the University.

1.5 'Director of Library Services' is deemed to be any member of library staff authorised to act on behalf of the Director of Library Services.

1.6 All users of the library's electronic resources must comply with both the [copyright law](#) and publishers' licence terms and follow the [Code of conduct for the use of computing facilities](#).

## 2. Admission

2.1 Admission to membership of the Library is subject to individuals being and remaining in good standing and may be refused or suspended by the Director of Library Services subject to paragraph 5 below.

2.1.1 The following categories of persons are entitled to all privileges, subject to registering as a member of the Library: a) members of the Board of Trustees; b) members of staff; c) enrolled students of the University.

2.1.2. The following categories of persons may be granted a limited range of borrowing facilities, at the discretion of the Director of Library Services, subject to registering as a member of the Library: a) former members of the University of Bristol's staff who have at least 10 years of continuous service who have either: (i) reached the State pension age, or (ii) had no further employer; b) graduates of the University of Bristol and associate members of Convocation (on payment of a fee); c) designated representatives of certain institutions which have corporately been granted library privileges (a fee may be charged); d) members of groups for which special arrangements have been agreed (a fee may be charged); e) such other persons as the Director of Library Services may consider eligible (a fee may be charged, but may be waived for members of approved library reciprocal borrowing schemes).

2.1.3 The following categories of persons may be allowed to use the library facilities for reading and reference, subject to satisfactory registration: a) graduates of the University of Bristol and associate

members of Convocation; b) during University of Bristol Summer vacations, other students of universities and institutions of higher education on production of their institution's ID/Library card; c) such other persons or designated representatives of other approved institutions as the Director of Library Services may consider eligible (a fee may be charged, but may be waived for members of approved library reciprocal borrowing schemes); d) such other persons as the Director of Library Services may consider eligible subject to satisfactory registration.

2.2 Readers from outside the University may be subject to restrictions on the times when they may use the library services and facilities.

2.3 Readers wishing to use any library within the University are expected to acquaint themselves with and observe any particular regulations in force in that library.

### 3. Conduct

3.1 Users are required to carry proof of Library membership when in any of the University libraries or study spaces, and to produce this on request by any member of library or security staff.

3.2 Conversation or any behaviour likely to disturb or inconvenience other users must be avoided in the quiet study areas. Speaking into mobile telephones is not permitted except in designated areas. Within the library telephones must be set to silent mode.

3.3 Eating and drinking are not permitted except in designated areas, and elsewhere only water from lidded containers or a library water fountain.

3.4 Books, equipment and furniture must not be damaged or defaced in any way.

3.5 Loss of, or damage to, books must be reported immediately. The user responsible may be required to make good any such loss or damage.

3.6 Any member of staff is empowered to enforce the regulations.

3.7 Subject to paragraph 5 below, the Director of Library Services has power to restrict or suspend the library privileges of any user contravening these regulations.

3.8 Users are required to comply with the provisions of copyright law and with any restrictions imposed by publishers' and suppliers' licences when using library material. The Library and its resources are to be used for the purpose of academic learning and research alone and not for other forms of commercial gain.

3.9 Personal belongings may be brought into the Library at the discretion of the staff and at the user's own risk. The Library cannot be held responsible for loss of, or damage to, personal property.

### 4. Borrowing

4.1 Books may normally be borrowed in accordance with the appropriate procedures laid down in each library; certain classes of books, however, are either confined permanently or available for restricted loan only.

4.2 No book may be borrowed until the appropriate borrowing procedure for that library has been followed.

4.3 Users are responsible for all books borrowed in their name. Their responsibility is not transferable and ends only when the appropriate return procedure has been completed.

4.4 Books must be returned by the date or time due. Users are expected to check their online borrower record and University email frequently and respond to Library notices. Users who fail to return a book by the due date or time will have their library account automatically blocked. Failure to return a book that has been requested may result in the cost of a replacement copy being charged. <http://www.bris.ac.uk/library/use/borrowing/>

4.5 Users leaving the University must return all books on loan and pay all outstanding charges before the end of their course or before they leave. Subscribing users must return all their books before the period of their subscription expires. Users who fail to return their books will be charged for the cost of replacement. In the case of those graduating the books must be returned, or the cost of replacement paid, and all other outstanding charges paid, at least one week before the award of their degree.

#### 5. Powers of the Director of Library Services

The Director of Library Services has discretionary power to restrict, suspend or refuse library membership, to refuse to lend, or to recall any book at any time. Suspension of membership of an enrolled student under these regulations is a temporary measure only and will be referred to the Vice-Chancellor as soon as possible for further consideration under the student disciplinary procedures.

Last updated August 2023



## Acceptable Use Policy (ISP-09)

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1. Introduction
2. Scope
3. Policy
  - 3.1. User Identification and Authentication
  - 3.2. Use of Email Accounts
  - 3.3. Personal Use of Facilities
  - 3.4. Connecting Devices to University Networks
  - 3.5. Use of Services Provided by Third Parties
  - 3.6. Unattended Equipment
  - 3.7. Unacceptable Use
  - 3.8. Penalties for Misuse
4. Further Guidance

### 1. Introduction

This Acceptable Use policy is a sub-policy of the Information Security Policy (ISP-01) and sets out the responsibilities and required behaviour of users of the University's information systems, networks and computers.

### 2. Scope

All members of the University (as defined in the University's Constitution: Ordinance 9, section 7), together with any others who may have been granted permission to use the University provided information and communication technology facilities, are subject to this policy.

### 3. Policy

#### 3.1. User Identification and Authentication

Each member will be assigned a unique identifier (userID) for their individual use. This userID may not be used by anyone other than the individual user to whom it has been issued.

Each member will be assigned an associated account password which must not be divulged to anyone, including IT Services staff, for any reason. This University password must not be used as the password for any other services, including for University accounts providing privileged access (such as administrative accounts for finance or HR systems), or any external services (for example social media sites). Individual members are expected to remember their password and to change it if there is any suspicion that it may have been compromised. Where IT Services suspect or discover that a password has been disclosed (intentionally or otherwise) the account will be treated as compromised.

If University members suspect that the credentials of another member or their own credentials have been compromised, this must be reported to the IT Service Desk.

University members will be asked to set up Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) as a requirement to authenticate to University systems.

In addition to a password, authentication methods may include use of an authentication app on a mobile phone or another device, such as a USB security key, or a one-time code sent to a phone. Similar to passwords, Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) tokens, such as one-time passcodes and number matches must not be divulged to anyone, including IT Services staff, for any reason.

Information given to the University for MFA will be stored securely and only used for authentication purposes. It will be stored by the University or a contracted IT service provider and will not be provided to any third-party without the user's written consent unless the University is required to do so by law.

All administrative or highly privileged accounts must have Multi-Factor Authentication enabled where available.

### **3.2. Use of Email Accounts**

Each member will also be assigned a unique email address for their individual use and some members may also be given authorisation to use one or more generic (role based) email addresses. Members must not use the University email address assigned to anyone else without their explicit permission via the appropriate mailbox delegation process.

Email addresses are University owned assets and any use of these email addresses is subject to University policies.

Members of staff and research postgraduates should not use a personal (non-University provided) email account to conduct University business and should maintain a separate, personal email account for personal email correspondence.

University members must not configure their University email account to automatically forward incoming mail to third-party services with which the University has no formal agreement.

Where University members are permitted to use non-University supported email clients, these must not synchronise University email data with cloud services with which the University has no formal agreement, for example backing up University email with personal iCloud storage.

### **3.3. Personal Use of Facilities**

University information and communication facilities, including University networks, email addresses and computers, are provided for academic and administrative purposes related to work or study at the University. Very occasional personal use is permitted but only so long as:

- it does not interfere with the member of staff's work nor the student's study
- it does not contravene any University policies
- it is not excessive in its use of resources.

University facilities should not be used for the storage of data unrelated to membership of the University. In particular, University facilities should not be used to store copies of personal photographs, music collections or personal emails.

The use of University facilities to mine, harvest or farm cryptocurrency for non-research purposes is specifically prohibited. Any research driven activity must be approved by the appropriate Head of School.

All use of University information and communication facilities, including any personal use, is subject to University policies, including the [Investigation of Computer Use Policy \(ISP-18\)](#).

### **3.4. Connecting Devices to University Networks**

In order to reduce risks of malware infection and propagation, risks of network disruption and to ensure compliance with the JANET Acceptable Use and Security policies, it is not permitted to connect personally owned equipment to any network socket which has not been provided specifically for the purpose. It is permissible to connect personally owned equipment to the University's wireless networks.

Any device connected to a University network must be managed in accordance with Information Security Policy. Devices that do not comply with IT Services' standards for

effective management are liable to physical or logical disconnection from the network without notice.

### **3.5. Use of Services Provided by Third Parties**

Wherever possible, members should only use services provided or endorsed by the University for conducting University business. The University recognises, however, that there are occasions when the services offered by the University are unable to meet the legitimate business requirements of its members. On these occasions, members must liaise with IT Services to identify and onboard third-party solutions.

Further information is available in the [Information Handling policy \(ISP-07\)](#) and the [Outsourcing and Third Party Compliance policy \(ISP-04\)](#).

### **3.6. Unattended Equipment**

Computers and other equipment used to access University data and facilities must be screen-locked before being left unattended to prevent unauthorised access to data.

Particular care should be taken to ensure the physical security of University supplied equipment when in transit. For more guidance on travel and University equipment read the [Mobile and Remote Working Policy \(ISP-14\)](#).

### **3.7. Unacceptable Use**

In addition to the prior examples, the following are also unacceptable uses of University facilities. These restrictions are consistent with the JANET acceptable use policy (by which the University is bound) and the law.

Any illegal activity, for example:

- Any activity proscribed by the Computer Misuse Act 1990.
- Creating, storing or transmitting any material that infringes copyright.
- Creating, accessing, storing or transmitting defamatory material, obscene material, indecent material, extreme pornographic material, and prohibited images of children. In the unlikely event that there is a genuine academic need to access such material, the University must be made aware of this in advance and prior permission to access must be obtained in writing from the Chief Digital and Information Officer.
- Sending unsolicited and unauthorised bulk email (spam).
- Creating, accessing, storing, relaying or transmitting any material with such intent to radicalise themselves or others (having regard to the University's Prevent Duty under s.26 Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism). Researchers who intend to access, store or distribute such material legitimately in the course of their work must seek

written permission in advance from the appropriate Research Ethics Committee, who may liaise with the University Secretary's Office. Once ethical approval has been granted, Information Security and the University Secretary's Office should be notified of this approval. If a member of the University community believes they may have encountered a breach of this provision, they should immediately contact the University Secretary.

- Using software that is only licensed for limited purposes for any other purpose or otherwise breaching software licensing agreements.

Any activity which breaches any University policy (see the [Compliance Policy - ISP-03.](#)), for example:

- Any attempt to undermine the security of the University's facilities.
- Providing access to facilities or information to those who are not entitled to access.
- Any irresponsible or reckless handling of University data (see the [Information Handling Policy - ISP-07.](#)).
- Any use which brings the University into disrepute.
- Any use of University facilities to bully, harass, intimidate or otherwise cause alarm or distress to others.
- Using remote access and remote control computer software that has not been approved by IT Services to remotely connect to or from University devices and networks.
- Using computers as servers unless registered with and authorised by IT Services.
- Failing to comply with a request from an authorised person to desist from any activity which has been deemed detrimental to the operation of the University's facilities.
- Failing to comply with a request from an authorised person for you to change your password.
- Attempting to re-identify individuals from pseudonymised or anonymised data except when conducting a legitimate and approved business function.

Depending on the severity and context, some items above may constitute illegal activity.

Users are have a responsibility to report any breach or suspected breach of the University's Information Security Policies to IT Services. Where this is suspected to involve a breach of personal data this should also be reported to the Information Compliance Team as a data breach: [Data breaches and incidents](#) | [University Secretary's Office](#) | [University of Bristol](#).

### **3.8. Penalties for Misuse**

The University takes all policy breaches seriously. Incidents will be reviewed to determine the severity and appropriate course of action. This may include guidance, further investigation, or potential restrictions on individuals' account and access privileges.

Repeated minor and all major breaches will follow a defined escalation process for a more thorough review and will be handled in accordance with the [Human Resources Policy \(ISP-05\)](#).

Relevant supervisors and leadership will be kept informed throughout the incident process where appropriate to ensure a coordinated response.

In cases where there is a potential legal violation, the matter may be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency via the University's Legal Services and Secretariat with consideration to the jurisdiction where the breach may have occurred.

## 4.0. Further Guidance

- [Investigation of Computer Use Policy ISP-18](#)
- [Information Handling Policy ISP-07](#)
- [Outsourcing and Third Party Compliance Policy ISP-04](#)
- [Compliance Policy ISP-03](#)
- [JANET Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [JANET Security Policy](#)
- [Delegating access to your mailbox, Outlook desktop \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

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Investigation of Computer Use Policy (ISP-18)

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1. Introduction
2. Scope
3. Policy
  - 3.1 Authority
  - 3.2 The University's Powers to Access Communications
  - 3.3 The Powers of Law Enforcement Authorities to Access Communications
  - 3.4 Other Third Parties
  - 3.5 Covert Monitoring
  - 3.6 Procedure
4. Further Guidance

## 1. Introduction

This Investigation of Computer Use Policy is a sub-policy of the Information Security Policy (ISP-01) and outlines the circumstances in which it is permissible for the University to monitor and access the IT accounts, communications and other data of its members.

The University respects the privacy and academic freedom of its staff and students and recognises that investigating the use of IT may be perceived as an invasion of privacy. However, the University may carry out lawful monitoring of its IT systems when there is sufficient justification to do so and when the monitoring has been authorised at an appropriately senior level as defined in 'Authority' section of this policy.

Staff, students and other members should be aware that the University may access records of use of email, telephone and other electronic communications, whether stored or in transit. This is in order to comply with applicable laws regulations, to ensure appropriate operation and use of the University's IT systems and to ensure compliance with other University policies. Routine monitoring to ensure the security and effective operation of University IT systems occurs at all times, though more targeted monitoring and access to records and logs may also occur. All access and monitoring will comply with UK legislation including the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), Investigatory Powers Act 2016, the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000 (LBP), the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) and the UK data protection regime.

## 2. Scope

Members of the University (as defined in University's Constitution: Ordinance 9, section 7) together with any others who may have been granted permission to use the University provided information and communication technology facilities are subject to this policy.

Exceptions to this policy may include communications carried out on, or data housed in, areas of the University network that for contractual or legal compliance reasons are exempted, for example autonomous networks specifically obtained for these purposes and for which an agreement has been obtained with IT Services and Legal Services and Secretariat.

## 3. Policy

### **3.1 Authority**

Decisions to access the IT accounts, communications or other data of members will not be taken by IT Services nor any member of the faculty/division of the individual to be investigated in order to ensure that such requests are free of bias and are not malicious. Decisions to undertake such investigations will therefore be made by the General Counsel and Director of Legal Services, or the Information Compliance Manager, or an appropriate nominee of either position, who will also determine the most appropriate approach.

### **3.2 The University's Powers to Access Communications**

Authorised University staff may access files and communications, including but not limited to email, stored on any IT facilities owned, managed or provided by the University and may examine the content of these files and any relevant traffic data.

The University may monitor use of IT facilities, access files and communications for the following reasons:

- to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of its data (for example the University may take measures to protect systems from, and actively monitor for, viruses and other threats to information security)
- to establish the existence of facts relevant to the business of the institution when it has been appropriately authorised, for the purpose of an investigation carried out under any relevant University policy or Ordinance
- to investigate or detect unauthorised use of its systems
- to investigate or detect unacceptable use of its systems as defined by the Acceptable Use policy (ISP-09).
- to ascertain compliance with regulatory or self-regulatory practices or procedures relevant to the University's business
- to gain access to communications relevant to the business of the University (for example, checking email accounts when staff are absent, on holiday or on sick leave)
- to comply with subject access requests under the Data Protection legislation or information requests under Freedom of Information Act (individuals would under normal circumstances be notified)
- or for any other reason to ascertain compliance with regulatory or self-regulatory practices or procedures relevant to the University's business when appropriately authorised.

### **3.3 The Powers of Law Enforcement Authorities to Access Communications**

A number of other non-University bodies and persons may be allowed access to user communications under certain circumstances. Where the University is compelled to provide access to communications by virtue of a Court Order or other competent authority, the University will disclose information to these noninstitutional bodies/persons when required and in response to legitimate requests as allowed under the Data Protection Act 2018

For example, under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and Investigatory Powers Act 2016 or other relevant legislation, a warrant may be obtained by a number of law enforcement bodies regarding issues of national security, the prevention and detection of serious crime or the safeguarding of the economic well-being of the UK.



### 3.4 Other Third Parties

The University makes use of third parties in delivering some of its IT services. These third parties may intercept communications for the purpose of ensuring the security and effective operation of their service. For example, a third party which provides email services to the University may scan incoming and outgoing email for viruses and spam.

Information on our current email provider for staff, Microsoft, can be found [on Microsoft's website](#).

The University may also make use of third party services to ensure the security of its information and IT assets. For example, this may include monitoring of University network traffic and device activity, vulnerability scanning, or penetration testing being carried out by a third party on behalf of the University.

### 3.5 Covert Monitoring

Covert monitoring of computer use will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances where there is reason to suspect criminal activity or a serious breach of University regulations and notification of the monitoring would be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of that activity. The period and scope of the monitoring will be as narrow as possible to be able to investigate the alleged offence and the monitoring will cease as soon as the investigation is complete.

Only information gathered in relation to the alleged offence will be retained. This information will only be viewed by those for whom access is strictly necessary, for example in relation to potential disciplinary proceedings.

### 3.6 Procedure

Requests for investigation under this policy may be made by any member of the University, although typically the request will come from a head of department, school or division. Occasionally requests are made from outside of the University, for example by the police. The request should be made to University's Legal Services and Secretariat and should include the following information:

1. the name and department of the student or staff member whose computer or computing activity you wish to be investigated;
2. the reasons for the request;
3. where computer misuse is alleged, the evidence on which this is based;
4. the nature of the information sought;
5. how the requested information will be used
6. any other relevant information, for example, that the request relates to ongoing disciplinary or grievance procedure.

In order to monitor the number and type of requests made, the University's Legal Services and Secretariat will keep a record of the requests that have been made and those which were acceded to.

## 4. Further Guidance

- [Acceptable use Policy \(ISP-09\)](#).

- [Compliance Policy\\_\(ISP-03\)](#)
- [University's Guide to Information Legislation](#)

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<b>PDF Policy Link</b>	<a href="#"><u>ISP-18 Investigation of Computer User, PDF</u></a>

## **Car Parking Regulations**

The following rules govern the use by students of University car parking area within the University Precinct.

### **Car parks**

Car parking spaces in the University precinct are reserved for University staff and official visitors during normal working hours, i.e. Monday to Friday, 8 am to 5 pm, throughout the year, and students may not drive into or park motor vehicles in any University car park during these times. (Students with a mobility impairment may apply to Security Services for a special car parking permit.)

Students may park vehicles in these car parks at all other times, i.e. during the evenings and at weekends.

Parking in the private access or exit road or area to or from any University car park is strictly prohibited, for reasons of safety.

Offending vehicles will be subject to a Civil Parking Charge, the cost is £100 but reduced to £60 if paid within 14 days; no prior warning will be given.

### **Motor cycle parks**

There are limited facilities for parking motor cycles in the precinct.

*Last amended July 2009.*

## WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

### CONTENTS

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### APPENDIX

Whistleblowing Flow Chart

## **1. ABOUT THIS POLICY**

- 1.1 The University of Bristol (**we/our/us**) is committed to conducting our business with honesty and integrity, and we expect all staff to maintain high standards. However, all organisations face the risk of things going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such situations occurring and to address them when they do occur.
- 1.2 This policy covers our staff (including employees, officers such as members of the Board of Trustees (**BoT**), consultants, contractors, paid interns, casual workers and agency workers) and students.
- 1.3 The aims of this policy are:
  - (a) To encourage staff and students to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate, and that their confidentiality will be respected.
  - (b) To provide staff and students with guidance as to how to raise those concerns.
  - (c) To reassure staff and students that they should be able to raise genuine concerns without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- 1.4 This policy has been implemented following consultation with our recognised trade unions. This policy is non-contractual and it may be amended by the University at any time.

## **2. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POLICY**

- 2.1 The BoT has overall responsibility for this policy, and for reviewing its effectiveness.
- 2.2 The Whistleblowing Officer (**WBO**) has day to day operational responsibility for this policy.
- 2.3 Our WBO is Lucinda Parr, Chief Operating Officer, Registrar and Secretary. Contact details can be found at the end of this policy. If the WBO is unavailable or absent from the University the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost (DVC) may act as WBO. If for any reason the DVC is also absent either they or the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee may appoint a senior member of the University to act as WBO.
- 2.4 The WBO, in conjunction with the BoT shall review this policy from time to time.
- 2.5 The WBO will report annually to the BoT (via the Audit and Risk Committee) on the operation of the policy and (subject to section 5 below) whether any disclosures have been made.

2.6 All staff and students are responsible for the success of this policy and are encouraged to use this policy to raise any Whistleblowing Concerns. Staff and students are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved. Comments, suggestions and queries should be addressed to the WBO at [University-Secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:University-Secretary@bristol.ac.uk).

2.7 Managers and other staff who may deal with Whistleblowing Concerns or investigations may take advice from the Secretary's Office who may, on behalf of the WBO issue guidance from time to time and may provide training.

### 3. WHAT IS WHISTLEBLOWING?

3.1 For the purposes of this policy a **Whistleblower** is a person who discloses information which in their genuine and reasonable belief is in the public interest and which tends to show one or more of the following:

- (a) criminal activity;
- (b) failure to comply with any legal obligation;
- (c) miscarriage of justice;
- (d) danger to health and safety;
- (e) damage to the environment; and
- (f) the deliberate concealment of any of the above.

referred to as **Whistleblowing Concerns** in this Policy

3.2 Examples of issues which might be Whistleblowing Concerns include :

- (a) bribery (under our Anti-corruption and Bribery Policy);
- (b) financial fraud or mismanagement or impropriety;
- (c) negligence;
- (d) significant breach of a legal or regulatory obligation
- (e) unauthorised disclosure of confidential information;
- (f) unauthorised use of data;
- (g) academic or professional malpractice (including research misconduct);
- (h) breach of any legal obligations imposed by research grants or funders;
- (i) the deliberate concealment of any of the above matters.

3.2 This whistleblowing policy should not be used for complaints relating to your own personal circumstances, such as the way you believe that have been treated at work or, if you are a student, a complaint about any aspect of student life or an academic appeal. In those cases you should use the [Staff Grievance Procedure](#), [Student Complaints Procedure](#) or [Examination Regulations](#) as appropriate. This policy may

not be used to re-open or review a matter already decided in such procedures or to question or reconsider any financial or business decisions.

- 3.3 If you are uncertain whether something is within the scope of this policy you should seek advice from the WBO or from the Secretary's Office. Contact details are at the end of this policy.

#### **4. RAISING A WHISTLEBLOWING CONCERN**

- 4.1 In many cases you will be able to raise any Whistleblowing Concern with your line manager or if you are a student with your Senior Tutor, Supervisor or Head of School (together referred to as **Supervisor**) . You may tell them in person or put the matter in writing if you prefer. We would hope that they would be able to find a way to resolve your concern quickly and effectively. In some cases your line manager or Supervisor may feel that your concern should be referred to the WBO; if so, they will discuss this with you before making the referral.
- 4.2 However, where the matter is more serious, or you feel that your line manager or Supervisor has not addressed your concern, or you prefer not to raise it with them for any reason, you should contact one of the following:
- (a) the WBO
  - (b) the DVC
  - (c) Professor James Thompson (the **Nominated Trade union Representative**) even if you are not a member of a Trade Union

Their contact details are set out at the end of this policy.

- 4.3 As soon as possible after receiving your Whistleblowing Concern you will be invited to an initial meeting with the WBO, the DVC or the Nominated Representative (as appropriate). After any initial meeting the DVC and the Nominated Representative will report to the WBO.
- 4.4 We recognise that you may wish to be accompanied to any meeting under this policy by someone who can support you (such as a trade union representative or Supervisor). If you wish to bring a companion, you should confirm who you would like to accompany you and we will consider whether their attendance is appropriate. We would not normally allow legal representatives to accompany you. Subject to any applicable law, you and your companion are expected to maintain the confidentiality of the Whistleblowing Concern and any subsequent investigation, recommendation or action.
- 4.5 After their initial meeting with you ( or report from the DVC or the Nominated Representative), the WBO will ( subject to any meetings with you that the WBO considers necessary) carry out an initial assessment to determine:

(a) whether the Whistleblowing Concern falls within this policy or whether it should be considered under a different internal policy; and

(b) if this policy applies, the scope of any investigation.

- 4.6 You will be given a written summary of your Whistleblowing Concern and an indication of how we propose to deal with the matter.

## **5. CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY**

- 5.1 We hope that you will feel able to raise Whistleblowing Concerns openly under this policy and we would hope that you do not feel the need to raise your concern on an anonymous basis. However, you may, if you wish, raise your concern in confidence.

- 5.2 We do not encourage you to make disclosures anonymously proper investigation can be more difficult or impossible if we cannot obtain further information from you. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible.

- 5.3 Whistleblowing Concerns which are expressed anonymously will be considered at our discretion according to the:

- the seriousness of the issues raised; and/or
- the likelihood of confirming the allegation from alternative credible sources.

- 5.4 We recognise that you may wish to keep your identity confidential when raising a Whistleblowing Concern.

- 5.5 In the event that we consider it necessary to reveal your identity as part of investigating and dealing with your concerns (whether under this whistleblowing process or another internal process) we will discuss this with you and let you know before we do so. We will endeavour to ensure that you suffer no detriment for raising Whistleblowing Concerns in accordance with this Policy..

- 5.6 If we decide that you have made malicious or vexatious allegations or raised concerns in bad faith or with a view to personal gain and particularly where you persist in making them, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

- 5.7 If you are concerned about possible reprisals if your identity is revealed you should raise this with the WBO or the person with whom you raise your concern.

## **6. INVESTIGATION AND OUTCOME**

- 6.1 As explained above, the form of the investigation will depend on the nature of the matter raised and the WBO will determine initially whether the matter should be investigated and if so:

(a) whether that investigation should take place under an existing internal procedure e.g. if the allegations relate to potential fraud then the investigation will



take place under the Counter Fraud Policy; or

(b) whether it is necessary to set up an investigation separate from existing processes.

- 6.2 The WBO will also consider at this initial stage (and on an ongoing basis) whether any external body needs to be notified (such as the police, the Office for Students or a funder)

#### **(i) Another Internal procedure**

- 6.3 If the WBO considers that a concern should be dealt with under another internal procedure, they will notify you of that decision. That internal procedure will take place in the normal way and in accordance with any relevant Ordinances, Regulations and policies. Your involvement (including applicable confidentiality issues) will depend on the relevant procedure. The outcome of any investigation under an internal procedure will be reported to the WBO so that they may decide whether any further action should be taken to minimise future wrongdoing. Depending on the applicable procedure you may or may not be informed of the outcome of the internal procedure (including any actions taken by us under it).

#### **(ii) Whistleblowing Investigation**

- 6.4 Investigations will not normally be undertaken by the WBO. The WBO will appoint an investigator or team of investigators which might include staff with relevant experience or specialist knowledge of the subject matter. The investigator(s) may make recommendations for change to enable us to minimise the risk of future wrongdoing. However, it is for the WBO to decide what action we should take as a result of any whistleblowing investigation.
- 6.5 The WBO will aim to keep you informed of the progress of the investigation and its likely timescale. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent us giving you specific details of the investigation or any action taken as a result.

### **7. IF YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED**

- 7.1 While we cannot guarantee the outcome you are seeking, we will try to deal with your concern fairly and in an appropriate way. By using this policy, you can help us to achieve this.
- 7.2 If you are not happy with the way in which your concern has been handled, you can raise it with one of the other key contacts in paragraph 4. Alternatively, you may contact the chair of Audit and Risk Committee. Contact details are set out at the end of this policy.

## **8. EXTERNAL DISCLOSURES**

- 8.1 The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.
- 8.2 The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body like the Office for Students. It will rarely be appropriate to alert the media. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. The independent whistleblowing charity, Public Concern at Work, operates a confidential helpline. They also have a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

## **9. PROTECTION AND SUPPORT FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS**

- 9.1 It is understandable that Whistleblowers are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support staff and students who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- 9.2 Whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern. Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment ( such as bullying and harassment) connected with raising a concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the WBO immediately.
- 9.3 We will not tolerate such conduct which is likely to result in disciplinary action being commenced.
- 9.4 In addition, individuals may be personally liable if they subject a person to any kind of detriment because they raised Whistleblowing Concerns.
- 9.5 Certain members of staff may also be protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1988 (**PIDA**). We believe that this policy incorporates the provisions of PIDA, but to the extent that it does not, the provisions of PIDA will apply.
- 9.6 A confidential support and counselling hotline is available to Whistleblowers who raise concerns under this policy. Their contact details are set out at the end of this policy.

## 10. CONTACTS

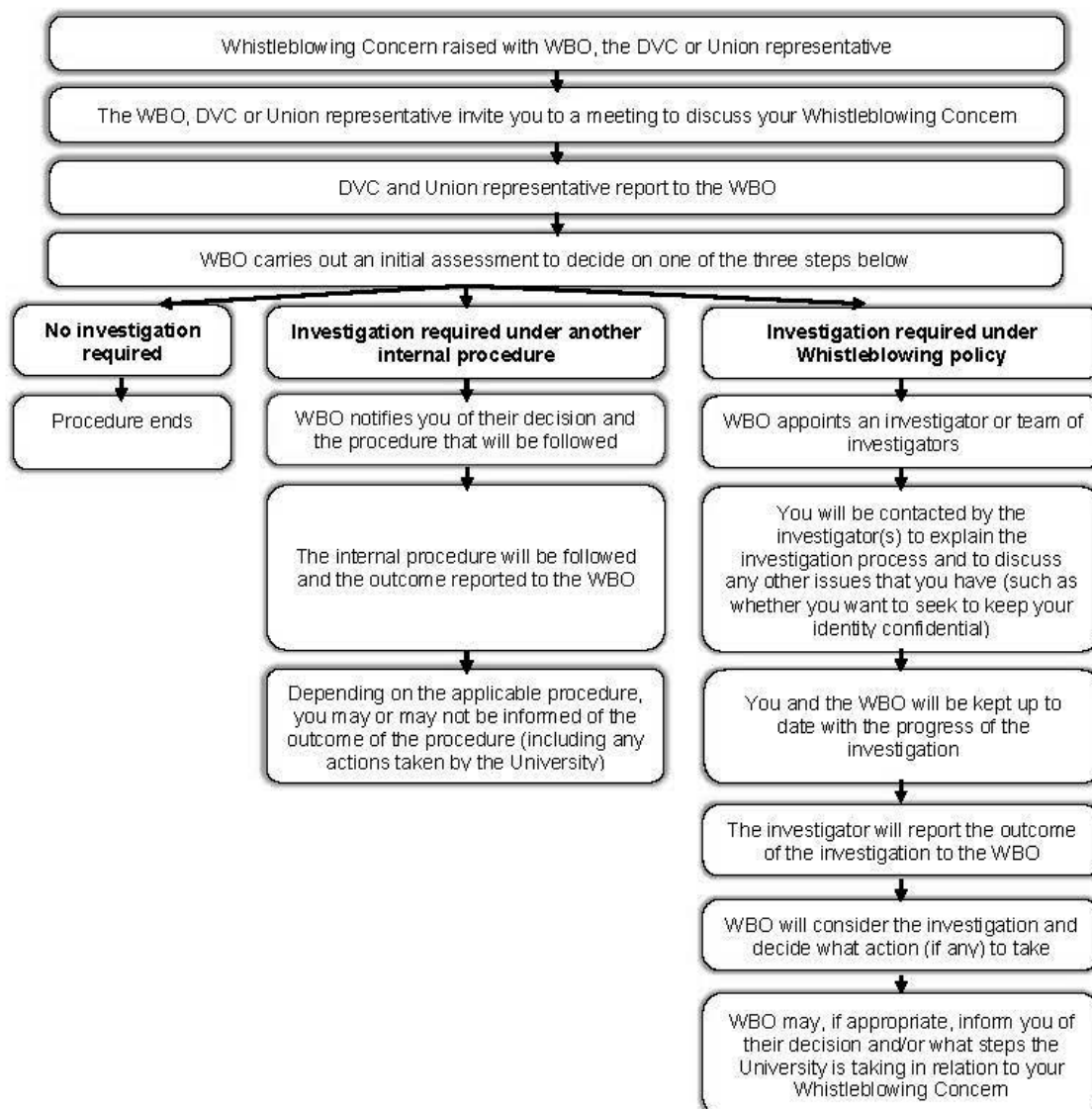
<b>Whistleblowing Officer</b>	<b>Lucinda Parr</b> , Chief Operating Officer, Registrar and University Secretary Email: <a href="mailto:lucinda.parr@bristol.ac.uk">lucinda.parr@bristol.ac.uk</a> Tel: (0117) 42 83178 internal 83178
<b>Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost</b>	<b>Professor Judith Squires</b> , DVC and Provost Email: <a href="mailto:provost@bristol.ac.uk">provost@bristol.ac.uk</a> Tel: (0117) 42 83197 internal 83197
<b>The Nominated Representative</b>	<b>Professor James Thompson</b> , Professor of Modern British History Email: <a href="mailto:James.Thompson@bristol.ac.uk">James.Thompson@bristol.ac.uk</a>
<b>Chair of Audit and Risk Committee</b>	<b>Ololade Adesanya</b> (from 1 January 2023) Email: <a href="mailto:governance@bristol.ac.uk">governance@bristol.ac.uk</a>
<b>Support Services</b>	Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing: <a href="#"><i>Wellbeing   Human Resources   University of Bristol</i></a>  Student Mental Health and Wellbeing <a href="#"><i>Mental health and wellbeing services   Current students   University of Bristol</i></a>
<b>Public Concern at Work (Independent whistleblowing charity)</b>	Helpline: (020) 7404 6609 Email: <a href="mailto:whistle@pcaw.co.uk">whistle@pcaw.co.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.pcaw.co.uk">www.pcaw.co.uk</a>
<b>The Secretary's Office</b>	<a href="mailto:University-Secretary@bristol.ac.uk">University-Secretary@bristol.ac.uk</a>

## **APPENDIX**

## Whistleblowing

### Raising your Whistleblowing Concern:

- You are encouraged to raise your Whistleblowing Concern in the first instance with:  
Staff: your line manager  
Students: Senior Tutor, Supervisor or Head of School
- If you feel unable to raise your Whistleblowing Concern as set out above (or it has not been resolved by those to whom you reported the Whistleblowing Concern), then you may raise your Whistleblowing Concern with the Whistleblowing Officer (WBO) - The Registrar and Secretary ( Mrs Lucinda Parr); the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Professor Judith Squires) or the Nominated union representative nominated to receive concerns (Professor James Thompson)
- The WBO will determine whether the Whistleblowing Concern should be investigated under the Whistleblowing policy or dealt with under another internal process
- Further information is contained in the University's Whistleblowing policy and, in all cases, if you are unsure what to do, you can contact the Secretary's Office [Secretarys-office@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:Secretarys-office@bristol.ac.uk)
- The WBO will also consider whether any external body needs to be notified (such as the police, the Office for Students or a funder) and will keep the Audit and Risk Committee informed as necessary



# External Speaker Code of Practice

## 1 When to use this procedure

This process applies to all bookings of events involving the engagement of an external speaker to give a presentation, talk or lecture under the auspices of either the University of Bristol (the “University”) or Bristol Students Union (“Bristol SU”), whether hosted on or off University or Bristol SU premises or online. The process is not normally expected to apply to the engagement of visiting speakers to contribute to the delivery of approved academic programmes or to take part in research seminars at UoB but does engage visitors to the University such as politicians or other visiting dignitaries.

## 2 Aim and Operating Principles

### (a) Aim

- 2.1 The primary aim of this procedure is to allow events organised by members of staff of the University and Bristol SU, and students to go ahead in line with the University’s firm commitment to Freedom of Speech, its values: [Our values](#) | [About the University](#) | [University of Bristol](#) , with due regard to its public sector equality duty and in line with the EHRC Code’s core ideas, in particular that the University “should always work to widen debate and challenge, never to narrow it”.

### (b) Operating principles

#### 2.2 Training and Guidance:

All those involved in this procedure should:

- (i) consult the recent guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission on Freedom of Expression in Universities (February 2019) (the EHRC Code) and the University’s Free Speech Policy which underpins this Code.
- (ii) If they are a member of University staff take the Training Module relating to Free Speech and Academic Freedom available on Develop.

#### 2.3 Operation

All those involved in the procedure whether as an Event Organiser, an Assessor or the Decision-Maker should note the following operating principles:

- (i) To allow time to carry out the assessment process **ALL** self-assessment forms for
  - **in person events MUST be submitted at least 3 weeks before the date of the proposed event.**
  - **Online only events MUST be submitted at least 2 weeks before the date of the proposed event.**

**If the self-assessment form is submitted outside these timescales a response cannot be guaranteed and the event may not be permitted to go ahead**

- (ii) When choosing where the event is to take place note that:
  - There are a number of ways in which a room may be booked for an event; booking a room does not mean that permission has been given to hold the event; and
  - The proposed venue for the event may change if the assessment process finds that the proposed venue is not suitable for their event e.g. for Health and Safety or security reasons
- (iii) When choosing the date for an event consider avoiding key University dates such as open days or graduations. To make the event as inclusive as practicable also consider whether there is any adverse impact if the event is organised on, for example, key religious holidays or other days of cultural significance, for example days of remembrance.

- (iv) This procedure applies to all events involving an external speaker and must be followed.
- (v) It is expected that the vast majority of events will be given permission to go ahead at the earliest point in the procedure without the necessity of involving the Decision-Maker.
- (vi) External Users can only organise events through a member of University staff who will be the Event Organiser for the purposes of this procedure.
- (vii) Security costs will not be charged for any External Speaker event during the academic year 2024-2025.

### **3 The Event Organiser**

3.1 The Event Organiser is the person responsible for the event.

The Event Organiser may be:

- A student(s), including a member(s) of
  - A Bristol SU affiliated group
  - An Independent/informal student group
  - A JCRs
  - An Academic (school, faculty or programme-based group)
- A staff member
  - UoB
  - Bristol SU

#### **3.2 Event Organiser: Students and Bristol SU members of Staff**

If the Event Organiser is a student or a Bristol SU member of staff they **must** undertake a self- assessment by completing the Self-Assessment Form to determine whether further scrutiny is required. Once the self-assessment form has been submitted it will be reviewed by the Bristol SU Assessor (or their nominee) who will decide whether the event can be approved at this stage or requires referral to the Decision Maker (see paragraph 4 below).

Event Organisers must:

- 3.2.1 Submit the self-assessment form in accordance with the timescales set out in section 2.3(i) above.
- 3.2.2 Comply with any mitigation required by either the Assessor or the Decision Maker and respond to requests from the Assessor or Decision Maker in relation to the event.

#### **3.3 Event Organiser: University Staff (including where there is an External Users)**

If the Event Organiser is a member of University staff they **must**:

- 3.3.1 complete the Event Organiser (Staff or External User) Self-Assessment Form within the timescales set out in section 2.3(i) above.
- 3.3.2 send the completed self-assessment form to [external-speakers@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:external-speakers@bristol.ac.uk) and to the relevant Assessor to ensure that there is a formal written record of this stage of the self-assessment process and the Assessor is aware that an event is being organised.
  - If they decide that the risks identified in the self-assessment are low and the answer to question 19 is “No” the event can go ahead and the venue can be booked. It is anticipated that the vast majority of events organised will fall into this category.
  - If they decide that the risks identified are moderate/high the Event Organiser and the Assessor must review the self-assessment and the Assessor must complete the steps set out in section 4.2 below.
- 3.3.3 Comply with any mitigation required by either the Assessor or the Decision Maker and respond to requests from the Assessor in relation to the event.

**Please note:**

- If the event is to take place outside the UK the Event Organiser must consult with the must consult with the relevant Global Engagement Team (International Education, Partnerships, Civic or Philanthropy) about completing the self-assessment form and before sending it to [external-speakers@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:external-speakers@bristol.ac.uk) and the Assessor
- If any Event Organiser is unsure about the answers to any of the questions in the self-assessment form please refer the matter to an Assessor who can direct them to sources of support/advice to assist them to complete the assessment.

On referral to an Assessor the Event Organiser may *provisionally* book the proposed venue.

## **4 The Assessor**

### **4.1 The Assessors are:**

- 4.1.1 The Bristol SU Director of Student Opportunities and Community (or Deputy) where the Event Organiser is a student or Bristol SU member of staff, (This will happen automatically when a student or Bristol SU staff member submits the online self-assessment form).
- 4.1.2 Heads of School where the Event Organiser is a member of academic staff and the event being organised is linked to the Event Organiser's work within the relevant School or Department.
- 4.1.3 Divisional Heads where the Event Organiser is a member of professional services staff or a member of staff (academic or Professional Services) is organising an event on behalf of or in conjunction with a staff group, a staff and student group, a staff network or other organisation such as a recognised trade union.

### **4.2 The Assessor must:**

- 4.2.1 consider the self-assessments passed to them by Event Organisers and complete their assessment in line with the Assessors Risk Assessment Guidance.
- 4.2.2 not impose any mitigation that requires Event Organisers to pay for the security costs of an event but may consider requiring the Event Organiser to change the proposed date for their event or proposed venue for the event on the basis of advice from the University's Security Services.
- 4.2.3 when this assessment is complete, complete the Assessors Summary Assessment Form and either:
  - 4.2.3.1 If they agree the event can go ahead inform the Event Organiser of any mitigations that are required and ensure that they are put in place; or
  - 4.2.3.2 If they decide that the matter should be referred to the Decision-maker ( for example if the Assessor has assessed any of the risks as high) send the Decision Maker their assessment of the risk including suggested mitigations.
    - where Assessor is a Head of School or Divisional Head send their completed Assessors Summary Assessment and a copy of their confirmation to the Event Organiser (including any mitigations they have put in place) and to [external-speakers@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:external-speakers@bristol.ac.uk) to ensure that there is a formal written record of this stage of the assessment process.
    - where the Assessor is the Bristol SU Director of Student Opportunities and Community (or Deputy) keep a record of all assessments made.
    - Liaise with the Event Organiser to ensure that all mitigations put in place either by the Assessor or the Decision Maker are complied with.
    - refer the matter to the Decision Maker if the Event Organiser does not comply with the any mitigations put in place.



## **5 The Decision Maker**

5.1 **The University Decision Maker** is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost (or nominee) for events in:

- a UoB venue other than Bristol SU venues (see below)
- external venues being organised by a UoB member of staff in the course of their employment

**The Bristol SU Decision Maker** is the Bristol SU Chief Executive (or nominee) for events in:

- Bristol SU venues
- external venues being organised by a Bristol SU affiliated student group or Bristol SU member of staff

### **5.2 The Decision Maker will:**

5.2.1 Consider what mitigation could be arranged in accordance with the EHRC Code in order to make it possible for the event to take place.

5.2.2 Decide whether the event can go ahead. Their decision is final. They may give conditional approval, subject to the Event Organiser putting mitigating measures in place.

5.2.3 Require the Assessor to ensure the Event Organiser's compliance with any approval conditions/mitigations and may inform the Event Organiser that the event cannot go ahead if the conditions/mitigations are not met.

5.2.4 If they are not available in the 48 hours prior to the event or on the day of the event refer the matter to their nominee.

5.2.5 Not charge Event Organisers for the security costs of an event but may consider requiring the Event Organiser to change the proposed date for their event or proposed venue for the event on the basis of advice from the University's Security Services.

## **6 Reporting**

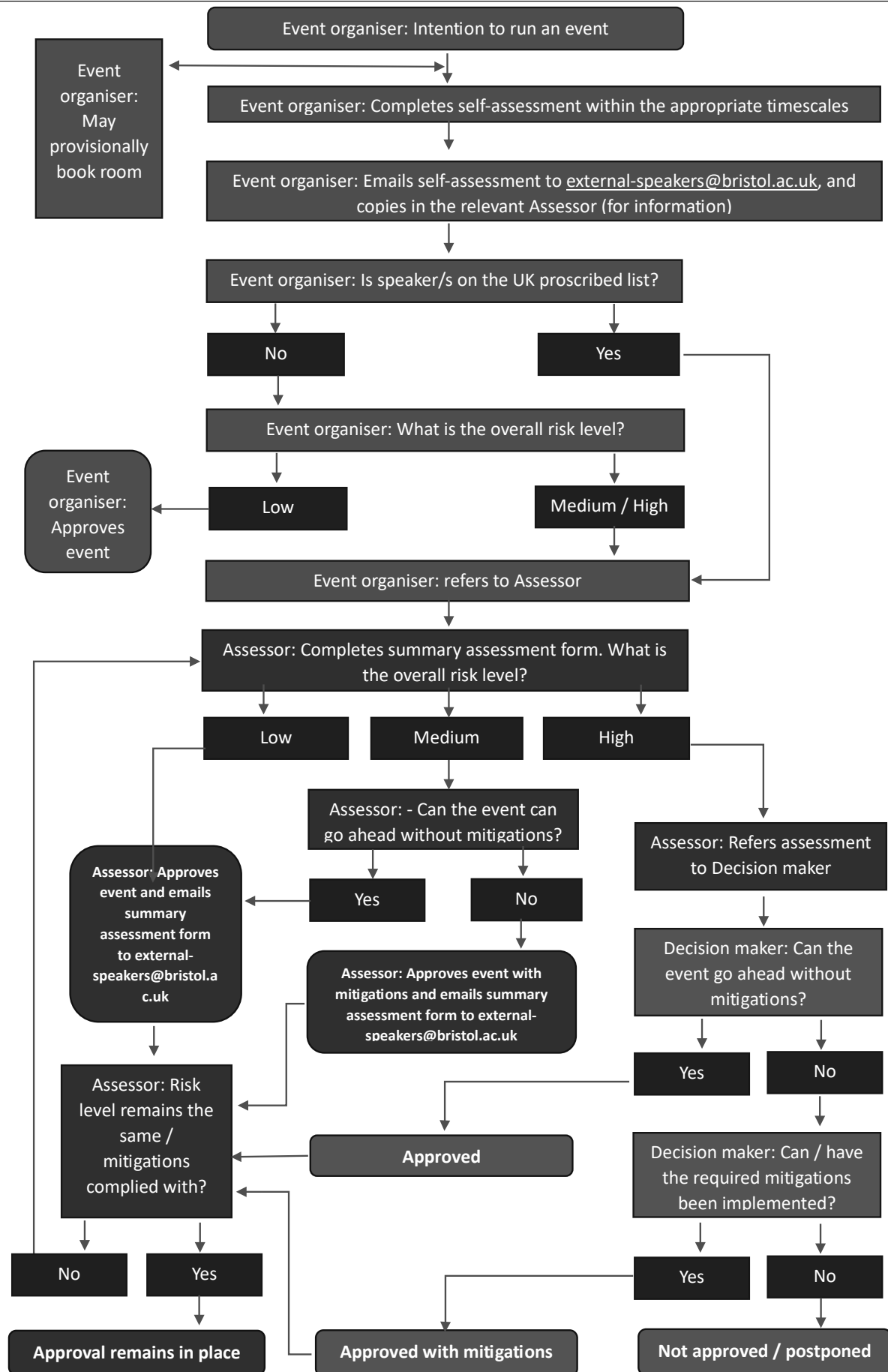
Board of Trustees will receive an annual report on the operation of the External Speaker Code of Practice.

## **7 Conduct of those attending and organising events.**

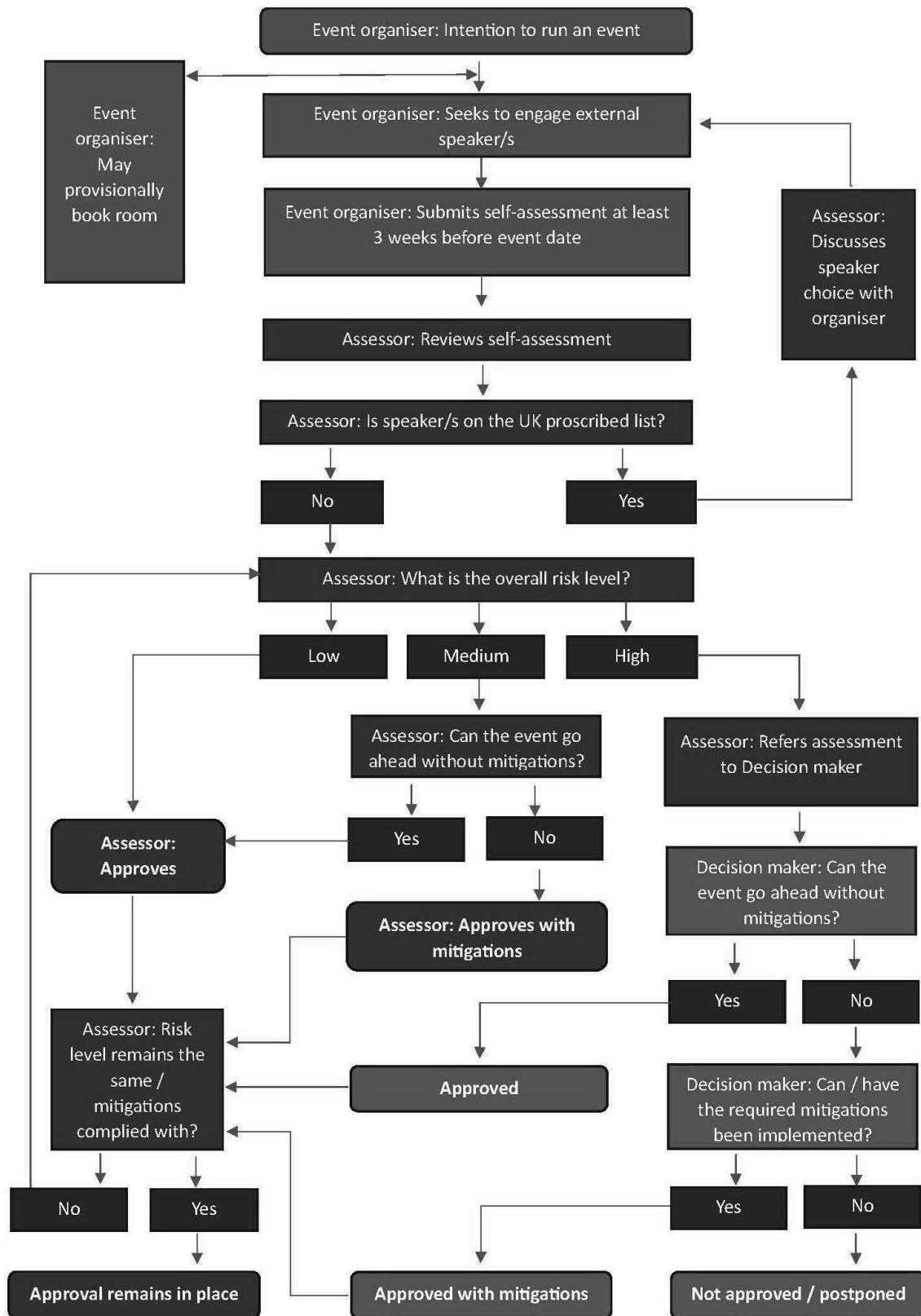
7.1 In relation to any event organised under this Code all members of the University are reminded of their obligations under the University's Acceptable Behaviour Policy, the Student Disciplinary Regulations and Staff Conduct Procedure (Ordinance 10.4 Code of Conduct), including their obligation to respect the rights of others to freedom of speech. Bristol SU members are expected to comply with the Bristol SU Code of Conduct.

7.2 If a member of University staff or a student wishes to make a complaint about a matter related to Free Speech and/or academic freedom they may do so under the Procedure for considering complaints raised by staff and students relating to Free Speech and Academic Freedom.

# Appendix 1: Process where the Event organiser is a University staff member



**Appendix 2: Process where the Event organiser is a student or Bristol SU staff member**



## Event Organiser (Staff or External User) Self-Assessment Form

### Event Information

Please tell us about your plans for the event and confirm whether you are completing this form (i) as a member of staff organising an event; or (ii) on behalf of an External User

#### 1. Your name

#### 2. Your email address

#### 3. Your phone number

*We will only use this to contact you about your event*

#### 4. Name of your Department/School/Faculty or Company

#### 5. Name of your external speaker/s

*If you have multiple external speakers for your event, please list them all*

#### 6. Event Title

#### 7. Proposed Event location

*If you have not arranged a venue yet, please state where you would like your event to take place*

#### 8. Proposed Event date

*If event takes place over multiple dates, please give the first/start date We appreciate you sending in your request as early as possible, unfortunately requests received less than three weeks before an event may not be processed in time.*

#### 9. Estimated number of attendees and whether you are proposing that the Event is open to students/staff and/or members of the public

☐ 1 – 29

☐ 30 – 59

☐ 60 – 99

☐ 100 +

Delete as appropriate: Students/staff/ members of the public

## **10. Proposed Event start and end time**

*Please use 24hr format*

## **Event Organiser's Self-Assessment**

Please select the most applicable option for each of the statements about your speaker/s, providing more information where necessary. To complete your self-assessment please refer to the [Assessors' Risk Assessment Guidance](#)

### **11. Risk of reaching proposed venue capacity limits (e.g. due to heightened media interest)**

☐ Low

☐ Medium.

☐ High

### **12. If you have selected medium or high, please explain why you have selected that option**

*Please include links where appropriate*

### **13. Risk of speaker/s or event attracting public disorder e.g. protest**

☐ Low

☐ Medium

☐ High

### **14. If you have selected medium or high, please explain why you have selected that option**

*Please include links where appropriate*

**15. Risk of speaker causing or inciting to violence, hatred, personal harassment, alarm or distress**

☐ Low

☐ Medium

☐ High

**16. If you have selected medium or high, please explain why you have selected that option**

*Please include links where appropriate*

**17. Risk of speaker/s inciting terrorism**

☐ Low

☐ Medium

☐ High

**18. If you have selected medium or high, please explain why you have selected that option**

*Please include links where appropriate*

**19. Is the speaker/s representing an organisation on the UK government 'proscribed' list?**

*The updated government list can be found here: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2) Note: If answering yes, it may not be lawful for the event to go ahead*

☐ No

☐ Yes

**20. If you have selected yes, please give more information (include links where appropriate)**

## Assessors' Risk Assessment Guidance

### Risk of content that is unlawful or might encourage unlawful acts

Area of Risk	Consultation options	Risk Level	Risk Level Indicators	Common risk mitigations – For this area of risk
The speaker represents or is associated with an organisation proscribed by the UK government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Prevent Coordinator</li> <li>Police</li> </ul>	Low	No known links to such an organisation	n/a
		Medium	Possible links to such an organisation and/or its members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Film event</li> </ul>
		High	Affiliation to or employment by such an organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>There may be no obligation to let the event proceed</i></li> </ul>

Area of Risk	Consultation options	Risk Level	Risk Level Indicators	Common risk mitigations – For this area of risk
The speaker may include speech amounting to a terrorism related offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Prevent Coordinator</li> <li>Police</li> </ul>	Low	No evidence the speaker has or will include speech amounting to a terrorism related offence	n/a
		Medium	Accusation or inconclusive evidence the speaker has or will include speech amounting to a terrorism related offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Film event</li> </ul>
		High	Confirmation from a relevant authority that the speaker has included speech amounting to a terrorism related offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>There may be no obligation to let the event proceed</i></li> </ul>

Area of Risk	Consultation options	Risk Level	Risk Level Indicators	Common risk mitigations – For this area of risk
The speaker may cause or incite violence, hatred, personal harassment, alarm or distress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police</li> </ul>	Low	No evidence the speaker has or will commit unlawful speech	n/a
		Medium	Accusation or inconclusive evidence the speaker has or will commit unlawful speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Film event</li> <li>Promotional materials shared in advance</li> <li>Experienced Chairperson</li> </ul>
		High	Confirmation from a relevant authority that the speaker has or is likely to commit unlawful speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>There may be no obligation to let the event proceed</i></li> </ul>

## Risk of public disorder issues

Area of Risk	Consultation options	Risk Level	Risk Level Indicators	Common risk mitigations – For this area of risk
Due to the talk subject, speaker, the organisations they are associated with, or the organisers of the event - the event may attract heightened media interest which may lead to potential issues around capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police</li> <li>University Security Services</li> </ul>	Low	The speaker/s, the organisation/s they are associated with, or the organisers of the event have little or no profile in national media, online news stories, social media. Similar events have had no capacity issues	n/a
		Medium	The speaker/s, the organisation/s they are associated with, or the organisers of the event have some profile in national media, online news stories, social media. Similar events have been ticketed or required management of capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Event ticketed (and potentially made university student and staff only)</li> </ul>
		High	The speaker/s, the organisation/s they are associated with, or the organisers of the event have significant profile in national media, online news stories, social media. Similar events have had capacity issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Security at event</li> <li>Event ticketed (and potentially made university student and staff only)</li> </ul>

Area of Risk	Consultation options	Risk Level	Risk Level Indicators	Common risk mitigations – For this area of risk
The talk subject, speaker, the organisations they are associated with, or the organisers of the event - have attracted controversy and/or may mobilise significant protest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police</li> <li>University Security Services</li> </ul>	Low	Neither subject, speaker nor any associated organisation have attracted controversy and/or there is no evidence they have been subject to protest	n/a
		Medium	Subject, speaker, or any associated organisation have attracted controversy and/or have been subject to minor protest and/or a minor protest has been planned for this event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Security at event</li> <li>Event ticketed (and may potentially be made UoB student and staff only)</li> <li>Promotional materials shared in advance</li> </ul>
		High	Subject, speaker, or any associated organisation have attracted significant controversy and/or been subject to significant protest and/or a major protest has been planned for this event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Security at event</li> <li>Event ticketed (and may potentially be made UoB student and staff only)</li> <li>Promotional materials shared in advance</li> <li>Experienced Chairperson</li> <li>Appropriate additional speaker/s arranged to offer an opposing view</li> </ul>



### Assessors Summary Assessment form

When sending this completed form to the Decision Maker please include in your covering email details of the proposed event date, times and location, Event title, the name of the Event Organiser, and proposed Speaker(s)

Area of Risk	Risk Level Low/Medium/ High	Consultation e.g. with Security Services	Notes	Proposed Risk Mitigations
Speaker represents or is associated with an organisation proscribed by the UK government				
The speaker may include speech amounting to a terrorism related offence				
The speaker may cause or incite violence, hatred, personal harassment, alarm or distress				
Due to the talk subject, speaker, the organisations they are associated with, or the organisers of the event - the event may attract heightened media interest which may lead to potential issues around capacity				
The talk subject, speaker, the organisations they are associated with, or the organisers of the event - have attracted controversy and/or may mobilise significant protest				

## Education Act 1994: Code of Practice implementing Section 22

### Education Act 1994: Code of Practice implementing Section 22

The Education Act 1994, section 22, requires universities to issue a code of practice, setting out the manner in which the requirements of section 22 (1), (2) (4) and (5) of the Act, relating to the organisation and activities of the Students' Union, are to be put into effect.

Section 1 - The governing body, University of Bristol (UoB) of every establishment to which this Part applies shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that any students' union for students at the establishment operates in a fair and democratic manner and is accountable for its finances.

Section 2 - The governing body, (UoB), shall in particular take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that the following requirements are observed by or in relation to any students' union for students at the establishment. These requirements are set out below, together with the steps taken by Bristol Students' Union (SU) and the University of Bristol (UoB) (governing body) to ensure compliance.

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
(2a) the union should have a written constitution	<p>Bristol Students' Union (SU) Articles of Association (Articles) are the written constitution of the Union. The <u>Articles</u> are published on the Bristol SU Website.</p> <p>Any amendment to the SU's Articles of Association shall require a) the</p>	<p>Under <u>Ordinance 12</u>, the University of Bristol Students' Union is constituted as a charitable company limited by guarantee.</p> <p>The University Board of Trustees is required to ensure that a written constitution is in place, which is the</p>	<p>The University constitution was last revised in 2020/21 and brought into effect from 1 August 2021. It now brings together the provisions in relation to the Students Union into one <u>Ordinance, ordinance 12</u>. A further review of the University</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
	<p>prior approval of Student Council; b) the prior approval of the University Board of Trustees; and c) a special resolution of the Company Law Members (who are the SU Trustee Board).</p> <p>Bristol SU also has a set of Byelaws which set out further rules for membership, elections, referenda, democratic meetings, Union Officers and student groups. The Byelaws may only apply to the extent they are not inconsistent with the Articles.</p>	Articles.	<p>constitution will be undertaken in 2025/26. Thereafter, a university constitutional review will take place every 3 to 4 years.</p> <p>The Byelaws had some amendments which were approved by Student Council and the SU Trustee Board.</p>
(2b) the provisions of the constitution should be subject to the approval of the governing body and to review by that body at intervals of not more than five years	<p>The Articles set out a requirement for to review them at least every 5 years. The SU reviews the Articles every 5 years.</p> <p>The SU would seek approval of the University Board of Trustees for any amendments to the Articles before approval of Student Council and the SU Trustee Board.</p>	<p>The University Board of Trustees reviews the Articles at intervals of not more than five years, when the SU reviews them.</p> <p>Any amendments to the Articles requires the prior approval of the University's Board of Trustees.</p>	<p>The Articles were last reviewed, amended and approved by Bristol SU Trustees, Student Council and University Board of Trustees in February 2021 and sent to all the relevant bodies.</p> <p>The Articles are next scheduled for a full review in 2025/26. There have been no amendments to the Articles in 2022/23.</p>
(2c) a student should have the right:	Bristol SU website publishes that students have the right to not be a	The University are required to ensure that all full and part-time students at the	In 22/23 the SU ran a process to elect student representatives on

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
<p>(2ci) not to be a member of the union, or</p> <p>(2cii) in the case of a representative body which is not an association, to signify that they do not wish to be represented by it,</p> <p>and students who exercise that right should not be unfairly disadvantaged, with regard to the provision of services or otherwise, by reason of their having done so</p>	<p>member of the Union and can <u>'opt-out' of membership.</u></p> <p>If any student wants to 'opt-out' of SU membership they need to write to the Chief Executive of the SU as mentioned on the website.</p> <p>A record of this is kept by the SU in Airtable. We keep their first name, surname and academic email for the year so we can make sure their data isn't processed by our systems when we receive it from the University.</p> <p>Opting out of membership is confined to that Academic Year. Opt-out is also mentioned in the Articles and the Byelaws.</p> <p>If students opt out but still want to use union services Bristol SU will need to process some personal data for the purposes of service provision.</p> <p>Students who have opted out of Student membership may continue to access services and facilities as for all current students, although they may need to be granted 'associate</p>	<p>University are entitled to become members of the Union (by becoming a member of the charitable company by which it is constituted), unless they give notice in accordance with the Articles that they choose not to be a member of the Union.</p> <p>The University publicises that students can 'opt-out' of membership of the Students' Union at student registration.</p> <p>If students opt out at registration, then the University would not receive their data.</p> <p>The University are required to ensure the union shall not charge a membership fee for being a member of the Union (clubs and societies of the Union may levy a membership fee on their members).</p> <p>The University are required to ensure all students are entitled to use the Union services and facilities even if they have opted out of membership of Bristol SU.</p> <p>The responsibility for ensuring that all students are entitled to use the Union</p>	<p>Senate, and this is reported to the University Governance team (this happens every year)</p> <p>One student asked to opt-out of the SU in 22/23</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
	<p>member' status to sign up for some things via our website.</p> <p>Bristol SU do not charge a membership fee for being a member of the Union (but do for clubs, societies, and other related activities).</p>	<p>services and facilities even if they have opted out of membership of Bristol SU lies with the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education, together with the Executive Director of Education and Student Experience (Academic Registrar), in liaison with the CEO of the SU.</p> <p>The responsibility for ensuring that the union shall not charge a membership fee for being a member of the Union lies with the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education, together with the Executive Director of Education and Student Experience (Academic Registrar), in liaison with the CEO of the SU.</p> <p>As stated in the Byelaws, students who are not members of the Union are eligible to stand for election as student representatives on Senate.</p>	
(2d) appointment to major union offices should be by election in a secret ballot in which all members are entitled to vote	<p>It is set out in the Articles and Byelaws that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voting must be by secret ballot</li> <li>• All student members are entitled to vote (unless a student's studies have been</li> </ul>	<p>The University is required to ensure the procedures relating to major union office elections are set out in the Articles and the SU complies with this requirement.</p>	<p>The election to major union offices took place in March 2023 by secret ballot.</p> <p>DSC approved the Code of Conduct/Election rules for the major union offices 2023 election.</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
	<p>suspended).</p> <p>It is an SU Trustee responsibility to ensure that all elections take place fairly and properly.</p>		
(2e) the governing body should satisfy themselves that the elections are fairly and properly conducted	<p>Bristol SU ensure that all elections (whether carried out by referendum or, secret ballot) are fairly and properly conducted as stated in the Articles and Byelaws.</p> <p>Bristol SU Trustees appoint an external Returning Officer to monitor the conduct of elections to major union offices to ensure they are fairly and properly conducted.</p> <p>The Returning Officer produces a report after the elections each year which highlights that the elections are fairly and properly conducted. The SU Trustee Board receive this.</p> <p>The Liberations &amp; Campaigns team at the SU produce an elections report. The SU Trustee Board receive this and it gets published on the SU website</p>	<p>The University, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, is required to ensure that the elections are fair, democratic and properly conducted.</p> <p>The SU elections report goes to the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Governance</li> <li>• University Legal Contact of the SU Trustee Board.</li> </ul> <p>The Head of Governance reports this to the University Board of Trustees.</p>	<p>NUS was the Returning Officer in Mar 2023 elections.</p> <p>The Returning Officer monitored the conduct of the elections and ensured the elections were fairly and properly conducted.</p> <p>There were 0 complaints and therefore 0 appeals.</p> <p>The Liberation &amp; Campaigns team produced a report which included the Returning Officers Report. This report was approved by SU Trustee Board and it was submitted to the university.</p> <p>The Head of Governance informed the University Board of Trustees of the conduct of the elections via the University Secretary's Report at the Board meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> May</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
			2023.
(2f) a person should not hold sabbatical union office, or paid elected union office, for more than two years in total at the establishment	<p>This is provided for in the Articles.</p> <p>Student members must be eligible students on UnionCloud to run in the election, which the SU checks.</p> <p>The SU Liberation &amp; Campaigns Team communicate this information to potential candidates, who sign a candidate declaration which includes the line "I am currently a Full Member of Bristol SU" (this does not include Associate Members or those whose studies are currently suspended)</p> <p>As part of the candidate declaration, candidates confirm that they have not held paid elected office at Bristol SU for more than 1 year</p>	<p>The University Board of Trustees is required to ensure this is provided for under the Articles.</p>	<p>This information was included in the candidate information in the Mar 2023 elections.</p> <p>As part of the candidate declaration, candidates in Mar 2023 confirmed that they have not held paid elected office at Bristol SU for more than 1 year.</p> <p>Bristol SU staff checked the students were eligible students.</p>
(2g) the financial affairs of the union should be properly conducted and appropriate arrangements should exist for the approval of the union's budget, and the monitoring of its expenditure, by the	<p>Bristol SU Trustee Board monitor the SU finances through the monthly Management Accounts. They are sent to the Trustee Board each month and the most recent accounts are discussed at the SU Trustee Board subcommittee – Finance, Audit, Risk</p>	<p>Bristol SU Associate Director of Finance submits the budget to the University:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Chief Financial Officer</li> <li>b) Head of Governance</li> </ul> <p>The Chief Operating Officer presents the budget to the University Board of Trustees on behalf of Bristol SU.</p>	<p>The University Finance Contact attended the finance items at Bristol SU Trustee meetings in 2022/23.</p> <p>The University Finance Contact received the monthly management</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
governing body	<p>and Governance (FARG)</p> <p>Bristol SU Trustee Board approve the budget annually in Jun.</p> <p>Bristol SU Trustee Board approve the annual report and accounts annually in Oct.</p>	<p>In accordance with the Articles, the University Board of Trustees annually approve the budget for the Union in respect of each financial year before, or at the earliest possible date after, the start of the financial year.</p> <p>Bristol SU Associate Director of Finance submits the annual accounts and report to the University:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Chief Financial Officer</li> <li>b) Head of Governance</li> </ul> <p>as soon as is reasonably practicable following the approval by Bristol SU Trustees. This is then presented to the University Board of Trustees for approval on the recommendation of the University's Finance &amp; Infrastructure Committee.</p> <p>The financial management of the Union is monitored on behalf of the University Board of Trustees by the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Financial Officer</li> <li>• University Finance Contact of the SU Trustee Board (the Group Finance Director)</li> </ul>	<p>accounts in 2022/23</p> <p>Bristol SU Trustee Board approved the budget at the SU Trustee Board meeting on 6 Jun 2023</p> <p>The University and University Board of Trustees approved the 2022/23 budget at the University Board of Trustees meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023.</p> <p>Bristol SU Trustee Board approved the annual report and accounts at the SU Trustee Board meeting 25 Nov 2023</p> <p>The University and University Board of Trustees discussed the SU 2022/23 annual report and accounts at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023.</p>
(2h) financial reports of the union should be published	Bristol SU publishes the annual report and accounts (in SORP format) on	The University is required to ensure Bristol SU complies with the	The 2022/23 annual report and accounts was submitted to and



Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
<p>annually or more frequently, and should be made available to the governing body and to all students, and each such report should contain, in particular</p> <p>(2hi) a list of the external organisations to which the union has made donations in the period to which the report relates, and</p> <p>(2hii) details of those donations</p>	<p>the Bristol SU website. These are made available to all students.</p> <p>The annual report and accounts is externally audited and sent to the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University</li> <li>• Companies House</li> <li>• Charity Commission</li> </ul> <p>There is a section in the Report on external organisations and it would be listed if the SU has made a donation in the period to which the report relates</p>	<p>requirements of the Companies Act and Charities Act in keeping financial records and the audit of accounts.</p>	<p>published on Companies House website and published on the Bristol SU website.</p> <p>These will be submitted to the Charity Commission with the Annual Return in Mar/Apr 2024.</p> <p>Bristol SU Standing Committee awarded a grant of £750 to Bristol Student Housing Co-op, as per note 12 of the accounts. No other grants or donations were made to external organisations. RAG society make donations to charity, from funds raised specifically for this purpose and not from SU funds.</p>
<p>(i) the procedure for allocating resources to groups or clubs should be fair and should be set down in writing and freely accessible to all students</p>	<p>The <u>grants criteria and the process</u> are set out in student-friendly language on the SU website.</p> <p>The SU's Byelaw 9, student groups, sets out the SU's entitlement to award grants, and confirms the Officer oversight of those decisions</p>	<p>The University is required to ensure that the procedure for allocating resources to groups or clubs should be fair, set down in writing and accessible to all students.</p>	<p>Section 9 of the byelaws was reviewed and amended in Feb 2022. It includes updated clauses on how assets and funds are redistributed in the event a group disaffiliates or fails to affiliate.</p>
<p>(j) if the union decides to</p>	<p>Bristol SU publishes notice of NUS</p>	<p>The University is required to ensure that</p>	<p>NUS affiliation was approved at</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
<p>affiliate to an external organisation, it should publish notice of its decision stating</p> <p>(ji) the name of the organisation, and</p> <p>(jii) details of any subscription or similar fee paid or proposed to be paid, and of any donation made or proposed to be made, to the organisation,</p> <p>and any such notice should be made available to the governing body and to all students</p>	<p>affiliation at the Annual Members Meeting for approval</p> <p>Affiliations must be approved annually at the Annual Members Meeting, as set out in the Byelaws and Articles</p> <p>The AMM information is made available to students via the Bristol SU website.</p>	<p>Bristol SU makes its decision to affiliate to an external organisation available to students.</p> <p>The AMM information is made available to the University via the Bristol SU website.</p>	<p>the AMM in 2023.</p>
<p>(k) where the union is affiliated to any external organisations, a report should be published annually or more frequently containing</p> <p>(ki) a list of the external organisations to which the union is currently affiliated, and</p> <p>(kii) details of subscriptions or similar fees paid, or donations made, to such organisations in the past year (or since the last report)</p>	<p>Bristol SU publishes notice of all affiliations to an external organisation in its annual report and accounts, stating the name and details of any financial transactions. This is available on the SU website</p> <p>NUS affiliation is shared and noted at the AMM each year and any discussion is recorded in the minutes which are published on the Bristol SU website</p> <p>The Byelaws also specify that a</p>	<p>The University is required to ensure that no affiliation to any organisation may be made or continued unless it is approved at least once in every calendar year by a referendum or otherwise in accordance with the Education Act.</p> <p>The annual accounts and report are published on the Bristol SU website for students and sent to the University and University Board of Trustees.</p>	<p>The affiliations were listed in the annual accounts and report 2022/23. The Annual Report and accounts was reviewed by the University Board of Trustees on 16<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023.</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
<p>and such reports should be made available to the governing body and to all students</p> <p>(l) there should be procedures for the review of affiliations to external organisations under which</p> <p>(li) the current list of affiliations is submitted for approval by members annually or more frequently, and</p> <p>(ii) at such intervals of not more than a year as the governing body may determine, a requisition may be made by such proportion of members (not exceeding 5 per cent.) as the governing body may determine, that the question of continued affiliation to any particular organisation be decided upon by a secret ballot in which all members are entitled to vote</p>	<p>referenda be called every three years on affiliation to NUS and this takes place during the major union office elections in March.</p>		
<p>(m) there should be a complaints procedure available to all students or groups of students who</p>	<p>Bristol SU has a Complaints Policy and a Student Code of Conduct, which are separate from the University. The SU Trustee Board</p>	<p>The University has a separate Complaints Policy.</p> <p>The University is required to ensure</p>	<p>The Complaints Policy has been reviewed and some changes were made and approved by SU Trustee Board in May 2023.</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
<p>(mi) are dissatisfied in their dealings with the union, or</p> <p>(mii) claim to be unfairly disadvantaged by reason of their having exercised the right referred to in paragraph 2ci or 2cii above</p> <p>which should include provision for an independent person appointed by the governing body to investigate and report on complaints</p>	<p>approve any amendments to these.</p> <p>The SU Complaints Policy and Code of Conduct are on the Bristol SU website and available to all students.</p> <p>The Executive and Governance Manager is the SU Complaints Officer who manages the complaints process</p> <p>Some Bristol SU staff have been trained as investigating officers to investigate complaints</p> <p>Bristol SU also uses an independent organisation to investigate and report on complaints if needed</p> <p>An assurance report on how complaints are managed is sent annually to the SU Trustee Board.</p>	<p>Bristol SU has a Complaints Policy which is followed and reviewed every few years to ensure compliance.</p> <p>The University could provide an independent person to investigate and report on complaints relating to the SU if necessary.</p>	<p>Bristol SU also has a student Code of Conduct, which is available on the SU website. It was last reviewed in 2019 and is being reviewed later on in 2023 (date to be confirmed).</p> <p>An assurance report on how complaints are managed was sent to SU Trustee Board on 15 Mar 2023</p> <p>An Internal Audit on the SU's Complaints Policy and processes took place in May 2023 by the University of Bristol Internal Audit Team. The SU received a reasonable assurance status.</p>
<p>(n) complaints should be dealt with promptly and fairly and where a complaint is upheld there should be an effective remedy.</p>	<p>Bristol SU ensures that the Complaints Policy governs the procedure for complaints.</p> <p>SU staff know where to find the Complaints Policy and how people can complain.</p>	<p>The University is required to ensure that Bristol SU has a fair Complaints Policy and procedure that ensures complaints are dealt with promptly (where they can) and effectively.</p> <p>The responsibility for this area is owned</p>	<p>A day tracker was revised in Airtable (the complaints database) in May 23, to help with prompt resolution.</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 2	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
	<p>Bristol SU ensures that timelines for individual complaints seek to resolve promptly (where they can) and fairly, with effective remedies</p> <p>Students wishing to make a complaint complete an online form</p> <p>The SU Complaints Officer responds and sends to investigating officers to investigate complaints</p>	<p>by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education, together with the Executive Director of Education and Student Experience (Academic Registrar), in liaison with the CEO of the SU and the University's legal team.</p>	

#### **Section 4**

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 4	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
<p>22.4 The governing body of every establishment to which this Part applies shall as regards any students' union for students at the establishment bring to the attention of all students, at least once a year</p> <p>a) the code of practice currently in force under subsection 3</p> <p>b) any restrictions imposed on the activities of the Union by the law</p>	<p>The Executive &amp; Governance Manager publishes this Education Act 1994: Code of Practice implementing Section 22 on the Bristol SU website annually.</p> <p>The <u>Bristol Freedom of Speech Code of Practice</u> and <u>External speaker Code of Practice</u> are on the SU website. Bristol SU co-created the University Free</p>	<p>The University is required to have a free speech statement and policy available to all students and to provide an annual Prevent return to the Office for Students.</p> <p>The University co-created the University Free Speech Policy/Process with Bristol SU and it is available on the University of Bristol <u>website</u>.</p>	<p>All financial resources provided to the Union were used for the SU's charitable purposes in 2022/23. UoB Board of Trustees scrutinises the budget and annual accounts.</p> <p>The SU Executive &amp; Governance Manager will publish this Code of Practice on the Bristol SU website in Mar 2023.</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 4	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
<p>relating to charities.</p> <p>c) where the establishment is one to which section 43 of the Education (No. 2) Act 1986 applies (freedom of speech in universities and colleges), the provisions of that section, and of any code of practice issued under it, relevant to the activities or conduct of the union.</p>	<p>Speech Policy/Process.</p> <p>Bristol SU published 'Free Speech and External Speaker – Key Information' explaining in student-friendly language Bristol SU's policy and practice around Freedom of Expression. This addresses standards and requirements expected in student-friendly free speech FAQs. It links to the University Freedom of Expression Code of Practice, which we operate under.</p> <p>The SU will draw attention to this to students in our annual email about the Annual Members Meeting (AMM).</p> <p>Bristol SU ensures, as part of the re-affiliation process, that student group presidents (or equivalent) confirm that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the student Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Agree to uphold it</li> <li>• Agree to ensure members understand and abide by it</li> </ul> <p>Bristol SU ensures the SU Development Team review and</p>	<p>Under section 22.4b of the Education Act 1994, the University is obliged to draw to the attention of students the restrictions imposed on the activities of the Student Union by the law relating to its charitable status.</p> <p>The University is required to ensure that resources provided to the Union through the University of Bristol should be used only for charitable purposes, in representing and furthering the interests of students.</p>	<p>The University Governance team will publish <u>this Code of Practice</u> on the University website in Mar 2023</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 4	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
	approve all constitutions annually, addressing any stated activities that are not permitted.		

## **Section 5**

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 5	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
<p>22. 5 The governing body of every establishment to which this Part applies shall bring to the attention of all students, at least once a year, and shall include in any information which is generally made available to persons considering whether to become students at the establishment</p> <p>a) information as to the right referred to in subsection 2ci and 2cii, and</p> <p>b) details of any arrangement it has made for services of a kind which a students' union at the establishment provides for its members to be provided for students who are not members of the union</p>	<p>Bristol SU website publishes that students have the right to not be a member of the Union and can <u>'opt-out' of membership.</u></p> <p>Bristol SU students opting out of SU membership will be unable to vote or stand in Bristol SU elections and may not hold Committee positions reserved for full members. All other SU services and opportunities are available to them.</p> <p>An internal process for students who opt-out has been created and that students know what opting out of membership to the SU means and what services/facilities they can access</p> <p>Bristol SU has arrangements in place via Associate Memberships, for people who are not student members, to</p>	<p>The University is required to ensure the SU publicises the option for current or potential students to opt-out of being a member of the SU</p>	<p>One student emailed to ask to opt out in 2023/23</p>

Education Act 1994 Section 22, 5	Bristol SU Practice	UoB Practice	Any changes or updates in 2022/23
	<p>have access to some SU provisions.</p> <p>There is specific reference for students who are suspended and their rights in the byelaws</p>		

### Definitions within the Education Act:

Section 6 - In sections 2,4 and 5 above the expression “all students” shall be construed as follows

- a) in relation to an association or body which is a students’ union by virtue of section 20.1, the reference is to all students at the establishment
- b) in relation to an association or body which is a students’ union by virtue of section 20.2, the reference is to all undergraduate, or all graduate, students at the establishment or to all students at the hall of residence in question, as the case may be
- c) in relation to an association or body which is a students’ union by virtue of section 20.3, the reference is to all the students who by virtue of section 20.1 or 20.2 are comprehended by that expression in relation to its constituent or affiliated associations or bodies

Section 7 - In this section the expression “members” in relation to a representative body which is not an association, means those whom it is the purpose of the union to represent, excluding any student who has exercised the right referred to in subsection 2.c.ii.

Section 8 - In subsection 2.j to 2.l the references to affiliation to an external organisation, in relation to a students’ union for students at an establishment, include any form of membership of, or formal association with, an organisation whose purposes are not confined to purposes connected with that establishment.

Section 9 - Subsection (2)(d) and (l)(ii) (elections and affiliations: requirements to hold secret ballot of all members) do not apply in the case of an open or distance learning establishment, that is, an establishment where the students, or the great majority of them, are provided with materials for private study and are not required to attend the establishment to any significant extent or at all.



# Support to Study Policy and Procedure

## Policy

### 1. What is support to study?

- 1.1 The support to study policy aims to help individuals to participate fully and satisfactorily as students when they might be struggling because of health-related issues. It is not just about academic studies; it is also about the ability of a student to live independently and safely whilst at University and to interact appropriately with others. There will be times when a student's physical or mental health may mean that they pose a risk to themselves, to other students or to the activities of the University and that risk needs to be understood across the University.
- 1.2 The University is committed to supporting student wellbeing and recognises that a positive approach to the management of physical and mental health is crucial to student learning and academic achievement.

### 2. How to use this policy

- 2.1 University staff with concerns about a student's wellbeing should:
  - a) Complete a Wellbeing Access form; or
  - b) Contact the relevant Student Wellbeing (SWS) or Residential Life (RLS) Manager to discuss whether informal or formal processes would be the most appropriate action.
- 2.2 If it is agreed to progress to Support to Study stage 1 or Fitness to Study stage 2, staff members should complete a referral form and send it to the relevant SWS or RLS Manager who can add any relevant additional information.

### 3. Informal Support and Action Planning

- 3.1 Staff from Schools and advisers from SWS and RLS will often engage in informal support and action planning with students as part of their regular interactions. Support and action planning should be used in most cases where the risk to the student's health and wellbeing is low; their academic position is vulnerable but recoverable; and the impact of their behaviour on others is limited.
- 3.2 This should include consideration of the following:
  - Referring the student to their Senior or Personal Tutor for academic support;
  - A target to improve attendance or engagement;
  - Signposting to specialist support internally and externally;
  - Agreed actions for the student to complete;
  - A follow-up date to review progress.

### 4. Stage 1 Support to Study

- 4.1 There may be times when efforts to improve a student's situation through informal support and action planning have not been successful or where there is potential for escalation in the level of risk.

- 4.2 If a student would benefit from a more structured intervention, they may be referred to Stage 1 of the Policy and a Support to Study Case Meeting may be arranged. More evidence or advice may be needed such as medical evidence, advice from the Secretary's Office or Disability Services before the Case Meeting can be arranged.

### **Support to Study Case Meeting Procedure**

- 4.3 The Student Resolution Service (SRS) will convene a meeting normally within 21 days of the original referral and will clerk the meeting.
- 4.4 Members of the Panel:
- A Manager of Residential Life or Student Wellbeing Service as Chair;
  - An academic member of staff e.g. Senior Tutor;
  - Faculty Heads of Student Administration or their nominee.
- 4.5 The student will be invited to the Case Meeting and will usually be expected to attend. The student may be accompanied by an Adviser from the Students' Union Academic Advice, someone involved in their care or support or a friend or family member. Timing of any meeting should consider the student's outstanding exams, assessment submissions or other academic commitments; meetings may need to be slightly delayed to accommodate deadlines.
- 4.6 The meeting is intended to be a positive, supportive and timely process; it should focus on the current issues and future steps. The meeting should always consider risk to the student, their studies and to others. The purpose of the meeting is to agree an Action Plan that will support the student to improve their engagement with their course, their self-management of their health and wellbeing and potential outcomes.
- 4.7 The Action Plan may include:
- Referral to appropriate internal and external specialist services;
  - Liaison with the student's emergency contact;
  - Involvement of Partner Institution if they have one;
  - Recommend specific academic arrangements for example submitting extenuating circumstances, suspending studies, changes of mode of study;
  - A timeframe for actions to have taken place or for improvements to have been made.
- 4.8 The Action Plan should be agreed by the Panel and normally will be shared with the student within seven days of the meeting and be sent by email.
- 4.9 There may be times when an agreement cannot be reached, where the issues cannot be addressed by a Support to Study Case Meeting or where the Action Plan is not improving the situation. In these cases, the following actions may need to be considered:
- a) Referral to Fitness to Study Stage 2;
  - b) Referral to alternative University Procedures e.g. the Student Disciplinary Regulations, Fitness to Practise.

## **5. Stage 2 – Fitness to Study Panel**

5.1 This stage will only be invoked in the following circumstances:

- a) If the student does not respond to an invitation to attend a Support to Study Meeting on more than one occasion or does not engage with the action plan agreed and there is potentially high risk to the student or others;
- b) Following a referral from a Support to Study Case Meeting;
- c) Where a risk assessment has found high or urgent risk but emergency suspension is not required;
- d) Prior to returning to studies following a suspension made by a Fitness to Study Panel under Stage 2, under the emergency provision in section 6, or following a voluntary suspension where serious welfare or mental health concerns were identified);
- e) As a recommendation from a Pro Vice-Chancellor as a condition of granting an exceptional supplementary year or suspension;
- f) As an outcome of an academic appeal;
- g) If in the opinion of the Director of Student Support and Wellbeing the risk to the student or the University Community is sufficiently serious to warrant an immediate referral without consideration of stage 1.

5.2 It is not necessary to have been through stage 1 of this Policy before commencing stage 2.

### **Fitness to Study Panel procedure**

5.3 The Deputy University Secretary (or their nominee) will convene a Fitness to Study Panel to consider the case and will appoint a clerk to the Panel from the Secretary's Office.

5.4 The Members of the Panel will usually be:

- The Director of Student Support and Wellbeing or Assistant Director of Complex Student Casework and Safeguarding who will act as Chair;
- An academic representative of the student's school (usually the Senior Tutor or supervisor);
- A representative of the student's faculty (usually the Faculty Education Director or the Faculty Head of Student Administration);
- A senior representative of Residential Life or Student Wellbeing.

5.5 In addition, the following may be invited to advise the Panel:

- A representative from Disability Services if appropriate;
- A representative from the Student Visas team if the student holds a student visa;
- A representative from the Global Opportunities team if the student is a Study Abroad student.

5.6 In most cases the student will be asked to attend a psychiatric and/or occupational health or other professional assessment and a report will be

produced for the Panel including an opinion on the student's fitness to study. Alternatively, the student may be able to provide their own medical evidence. The final decision as to whether the student is fit to study will be made by the Panel.

- 5.7 The student will have the opportunity to submit documents for the Panel to consider and will be sent a copy of any documents seen by the Panel, unless it is considered that receiving the documents will be detrimental to the student's health.
- 5.8 The student will be invited to the Panel meeting and will usually be expected to attend. The student may be accompanied by an Adviser from the Students' Union Academic Advice, someone involved in their care or support or a friend or family member. Students are expected to give the details in advance of anyone attending the Panel meeting with them. The Panel may still meet and decide outcomes in the student's absence.
- 5.9 Exceptionally the Chair may consider that attending the meeting would be detrimental to the student's health and the student may ask for a representative to attend on their behalf, such as a Student Adviser from the Academic Advice team in the Students' Union.
- 5.10 The Panel may order the proceedings at its discretion and may ask for additional information before making a decision, such as further medical evidence.
- 5.11 Possible outcomes of the meeting include, but are not limited to:
  - Approval to continue with studies or return to studies, which may be granted subject to recommendations or conditions;
  - A short-term suspension to allow the student to be assessed by a medical professional, access support services both within and outside of the University or for the University to obtain further information. The suspension may be reviewed at the request of the student as set out below in relation to emergency suspension;
  - Suspension with conditions. A student who is suspended from the University may be prohibited from participating in University activities and may also be prohibited from entering the University premises or have restricted rights to enter the premises, for their own safety or the safety of others. The specific terms of the suspension will be notified to the student in writing, depending on the circumstances of the case. The decision to suspend a student shall be reviewed as necessary by the Panel;
  - Requirement to withdraw - if the Panel concludes, taking into account the individual circumstances of the case and any supporting medical evidence, that there is no reasonable prospect of the student re-engaging with their programme, the student may be required to withdraw. This outcome should only be considered in the most serious cases;
  - Any other action considered to be appropriate and proportionate.
- 5.12 The Chair has the power to make the final decision if the Panel is unable to make a unanimous decision. The decision will be detailed in a letter which will normally be sent to the student within 14 days of the Panel Meeting. The Panel can use its discretion in how best to inform the student of the outcome and the contents of the letter.

## **6. Emergency Temporary Suspension**

- 6.1 If it is considered that the risk to the student or to others is very high and an immediate emergency suspension is the most appropriate course of action, the Executive Director for Education and Student Success may make the decision to suspend the student immediately. Examples may include where:
- A risk assessment has found urgent risk to self or others;
  - A student has been admitted to hospital under a section of the Mental Health Act 1983 or as a voluntary in-patient for psychiatric treatment;
  - A student has been admitted to hospital for any other reason, where they are likely to be unable to study for a protracted period of time.
- 6.2 A student who is subject to an emergency suspension order is prohibited from entering university premises and from participating in university activities. The emergency suspension may, exceptionally, include specific allowances, such as the permission to take an examination or to enter university premises to attend a meeting with a support service, such as the Student Counselling Service.
- 6.3 The terms of the suspension will be individual to each case and will be notified to the student in writing. The decision will be delivered to the student, in a meeting wherever possible, by a senior member of staff. A student will be marked as 'suspended' or 'temporarily withdrawn' on their student record during the period of suspension so that accommodation and tuition fees do not continue to accrue.
- 6.4 The decision to suspend may be reviewed at the request of the student, usually no earlier than four weeks after the student has received notification of the suspension.
- 6.5 A review will only take place if the student can provide appropriate medical evidence that demonstrates that they are fit to return to their studies, meet the requirements of their programme and live independently in residences or the community. A student may request an immediate review if they can provide the necessary evidence at that time. The review will take place as soon as possible and normally within 21 days of the receipt of the request. Once this evidence has been received, a Fitness to Study Panel will be convened under stage 2 of this Policy to review the suspension. The Panel will consider whether the student is fit to return and if so any support that the student may require. Even if a student is fit to return to their studies, it may not be academically viable for them to return at that point in the term. Any return to study may be conditional.

## **7. Right of appeal**

- 7.1 The student may appeal against a decision to suspend or requirement to withdraw made under stage 2 of this Policy. A letter setting out the grounds of appeal should be addressed to the University Secretary and emailed to [university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk). The appeal should be received within 21 days from the date of the letter setting out the decision to suspend or the requirement to withdraw. The student is encouraged to seek assistance from the Academic Advice Service in the Students' Union when preparing the letter

of appeal.

7.2 The appeal will be heard by a committee of the Board of Trustees. The membership and procedure of an appeal committee will be the same as that set out under the Student Complaints Procedure.

7.3 The grounds of appeal are:

- a) That the decision was not reasonable;
- b) That the procedure was not correctly followed when making the decision;
- c) That new evidence has come to light that was not available to the Stage 2 Panel which may have materially affected the decision.

## **8. Nominees**

References in this Policy to the holders of any office shall be construed to refer either to the office holder or to their respective nominee.

## **9. Days**

Any reference to a 'day' within this Policy refers to a calendar day that the University is generally open and so includes weekends but does not include UK public holidays or university closure days, unless otherwise stated.

## **10. Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)**

If the student is still dissatisfied, they may take the case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education, which provides an independent scheme for the review of student complaints. The OIA will consider cases only when the University's own internal complaints procedure has been exhausted. It will not intervene on matters which turn purely on academic judgment. Further information about this scheme is available at [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)

*Approved June 2024*

## **Review / Contacts / References**

<b>Policy title:</b>	<b>Support to Study Policy and Procedure</b>
<b>Date approved:</b>	June 2024
<b>Approving body:</b>	<b>University Education Committee</b>
<b>Last review date:</b>	August 2023
<b>Revision history:</b>	Created 2013-14, reviewed annually
<b>Next review date:</b>	June 2025
<b>Related internal policies, procedures, guidance:</b>	<a href="#">Support-to-Study.pdf (bristol.ac.uk)</a>
<b>Policy owner:</b>	<i>Secretary's Office/Education and Student Success</i>
<b>Lead contact / author:</b>	Associate Director of Legal Services/Director of Student Support and Wellbeing

# Fitness to Study Appeal Form

This appeal form must be completed if appealing a decision under Stage 2 of a Fitness to Study Panel to suspend or withdraw a student under the [Support to Study Policy](#) ("the Policy").

## HOW TO MAKE AN APPEAL UNDER THE POLICY

You have 21 days (including weekends but not university closure days or bank holidays) to submit an appeal from when you receive your decision. Completed appeal forms and all relevant evidence should be submitted to the Office of the University Secretary: [university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:university-secretary@bristol.ac.uk)

## ADVICE & SUPPORT

Before submitting your appeal contact the [Bristol SU Academic Advice Service](#) for free, confidential and independent advice. They will help you understand whether you can appeal and help prepare your appeal. Please read through their appeals guidance on their [webpage](#).

## Section 1: About You

Personal details	
Title	Click or tap here to enter text.
Preferred Forename	Click or tap here to enter text.
Surname	Click or tap here to enter text.
Student Number (7 digit number on UCard)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Programme of Study	Click or tap here to enter text.
Year of Study	Click or tap here to enter text.
Email Address (University)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Email Address (Alternative contact)	Click or tap here to enter text.
<i>Emails will be sent to the addresses you provide on your appeal form.</i>	
<p><b>1. Date on which you were notified of the decision against which you are appealing.</b></p> <p>This is the date you received the decision letter:</p> <p>Click or tap to enter a date.</p>	
<p><b>2. Grounds for appeal</b> in accordance with Section 7.3 of the <a href="#">Policy</a>. If your appeal is based on more than one ground, please tick all that apply.</p>	

**A. That the decision was not reasonable:**

☐

- Set out below your reasons for believing the decision was not reasonable:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**B. That the procedure in the Policy was not correctly followed when making the decision:** *If you are appealing on this ground, you must state in what way you believe the procedure in the Regulations was not followed.*

☐

Click or tap here to enter text.

**C. That new evidence has come to light that was not available to the original decision maker which may have materially affected the decision:**

☐

- i. What is the new evidence?

Click or tap here to enter text.

- ii. Why were you not able to provide this evidence previously?

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Section 3: Additional Information:

**Provide further information you believe relevant (maximum 200 words)**

Click or tap here to enter text.

#### Appeal outcome

**What outcome are you seeking from this appeal:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Section 4: Declaration and Signature

**Declaration**



- I declare that the information given in this form is true to the best of my knowledge
- I have read section 7 of the [Policy](#) before completing the form
- I have attached all relevant evidence that I wish to be considered to support my appeal
- I understand that I must adhere to the outcome decision as published to me while I await the outcome of my appeal

If any information on this form is not completed correctly the form will be returned which will delay the processing of the appeal.

Signed: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

#### Additional Information

- The University will have due regard towards maintaining confidentiality in relation to your appeal but, in order for it to be considered fully, the content may need to be disclosed to members of staff who are involved in putting the procedure into effect and deciding on your appeal. For further information, please see the [Education and Student Success Confidentiality Statement](#).

Bristol SU Academic Advice Service would like to receive your feedback to help them improve the advice they give.  
Please tick as appropriate:

I have contacted Bristol SU Academic Advice for advice about this appeal	<input type="checkbox"/>
I give permission for the outcome of my appeal to be shared with Bristol SU Academic Advice	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you received advice from another source you would like informed of the outcome of this appeal. If yes, provide contact details:  Click or tap to enter a date.	

**ACCESSIBILITY:** Should you require any accessibility support with accessing this form, please contact [Secretarys-Office@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:Secretarys-Office@bristol.ac.uk)

## **Statement on the possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol by students**

The University has a duty of care for its students and aims to provide a safe and healthy environment for all. The University also has a duty to operate within the law. As part of this, the possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs or unlawful supply of alcohol on University property or as part of any University activities is prohibited.

The University provides the following welfare services and these are available to provide confidential advice for any students who are concerned about their own or someone else's drinking or drug use:

Student Counselling Service

Students' Health Service

Information about the health risks associated with the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol can be found on the Student Counselling Service and Students' Health Service web sites.

Information about the legal sanctions for unlawful possession or distribution of drugs and alcohol can be found on the Gov.uk website.

Students found in possession of or dealing in illegal drugs in halls of residence will be subject to Residential Disciplinary Procedures (see particularly appendix D).

Students found in possession of or dealing in illegal drugs on other University premises will be subject to University Disciplinary Regulations.