

## Dignity at Work and Study Policy – Additional Guidance Document

### Guidance for Advisers of Studies – dealing with cases of bullying and harassment

The University takes allegations of harassment or bullying seriously, and as such we want to have a supportive working environment for all staff and students. As an Adviser of Studies there may be occasions where a student will disclose to you that they have been bullied or harassed.

#### What constitutes bullying/harassment?

Please have a look at the University's [Dignity at Work and Study Policy](#), which outlines some examples of inappropriate behaviours ([appendix B](#)).

Additionally the [University's Code of Unacceptable Behaviour](#) provides examples of aggressive/abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands and undue persistence and disruptive behaviour. This Code usually applies to students, but can also cover staff.

#### What if a student tells me they've been harassed or bullied?

You don't have to try and resolve the issue yourself, although providing a non-judgemental listening ear can go a long way to making a distressed person feel better. Remember, it can sometimes take courage for the person to open up about what's been happening and they may be worried they will be blamed, or not believed.

You can suggest students seek help to resolve matters informally via the University's network of volunteer [Respect Advisers](#). The Respect Advisers Network is set up specifically for this purpose and is trained and supported by Equality & Diversity Unit.

If the student has already attempted informal resolution, or if under the circumstances informal resolution is not appropriate, they may wish to make a formal complaint to the University, or refer the matter for consideration under the Code of Student Conduct. The [SRC Advice Centre](#) can advise the student further on these matters. The SRC Advice Centre is also a Third Party Reporting Centre, so if a Hate Crime has been committed, the Advice Centre staff can help with reporting it to the police if the student wishes.

Other sources of support include:

- [Equality and Diversity Unit](#)
- [Counselling and Psychological Services](#)
- [Chaplaincy](#)

#### What if I don't think the student has actually been harassed/bullied?

Often whether something constitutes bullying or harassment can be a grey area. As an Adviser of Studies it's not your job to determine whether or not an individual has actually been harassed or bullied. To help the student reach their own decision about what has happened to them, it's best to suggest they read through the Dignity at Work and Study Policy and direct them to the Respect Advisers Network or other sources of support outlined above.

### **What can I do in my capacity as Adviser of Studies?**

Being harassed or bullied can have a significant detrimental effect on the individual and their studies. You may wish to explore with the student whether there is any particular support they may need with their academic work whilst the issue is being addressed. The student may have been absent as a result of the bullying/harassment. You may need to advise them on minimum attendance requirements, how to notify a claim of good cause, and the Student Absence Policy.

You may also be able to support a request for a deadline extension or a good cause application, or contact other University staff on a need-to-know basis to explain the situation, so the student does not have to keep re-telling their story to different people.

The student may be thinking of leaving or changing their course as a result of what has happened. You may need to advise them of the options available to them.