

The University is committed to providing a fair, consistent and accessible service for all students. However, we must also provide a safe working environment for our staff, and ensure that our work is undertaken in an efficient and effective manner. It is recognised that people may act out of character in times of trouble or distress, however, the University will not tolerate behaviour which is deemed to be unacceptable and action will be taken to protect staff.

The Unacceptable Behaviour Policy is primarily applicable, but not limited to the following policies and procedures:

Student Complaints
Academic Appeals
Academic Misconduct
Code of Discipline
Fitness to Practise

The term 'student' also includes anyone who communicates with the University for or on behalf of one of its students.

The University's definition of 'unacceptable behaviour' might include, but is not necessarily restricted to, cases in which there is clear evidence that the student has behaved in one or more of the following inappropriate ways:

- Bringing a complaint which has the aim or effect of harassing an individual or which is motivated by malice;
- Making unreasonable demands of case handlers, for example; requesting responses within an unreasonable timescale; insisting on seeing or speaking to a particular member of staff; continual phone calls, emails, or letters; repeatedly changing the substance of the complaint, or raising unrelated concerns;
- Communicating with the University in an abusive, offensive, defamatory, aggressive, threatening, coercive or intimidating manner. The University considers that inflammatory statements and unsubstantiated allegations can amount to abusive actions or behaviour;
- Submitting a case containing materially inaccurate or false information or evidence;
- Insistence on pursuing non-meritorious complaints and/or unrealistic, unreasonable outcomes;
- Persistent refusal to accept a decision once a procedure has been exhausted.

When a student's behaviour or complaint is considered to be unacceptable, as a first step, the University will normally tell the student why their behaviour or complaint is considered to be unacceptable and will ask them to desist.

Any decision regarding unacceptable behaviour made in relation to this policy will be communicated to the student in writing by the Complaints and Conduct Manager or Head of School/Department. The University will try to ensure that any action taken is the minimum required to address the unacceptable actions or behaviour, taking into account any relevant personal circumstances of the student. The options the University is most likely to consider are:

- Requesting contact in a particular form
- Requiring contact to take place with a named officer of the University
- Requiring the tone and language of the correspondence to be respectful and moderate
- Restricting telephone calls or emails to specified days and times
- Asking the student to appoint a representative, usually an Education Adviser from the Students' Union, to correspond with the University; and/or
- Asking the student to enter into an agreement outlining expectations of their future conduct

In instances where a complaint is considered to be frivolous and/or vexatious, or where a student continues to behave in a way that is considered to be unacceptable, the Complaints and Conduct Manager/ Head of School/Department will decide whether University disciplinary proceedings should be initiated in accordance with the Code of Student Discipline or whether to terminate contact with the complainant. In exceptional circumstances, this may mean that consideration of the complaint is also terminated.

Should the student not agree with the restriction or wishes to object to a decision to terminate contact or to dismiss a complaint, s/he should contest the decision in writing to the Director of Service Development by emailing studentcomplaints@nottingham.ac.uk within 10 working days of the date of the communication.

The Director, or nominee, will consider the student's representations and, where the Director considers the student's objection to be reasonable, the Director will write to confirm that the restriction is lifted or to confirm an alternative restriction, if appropriate.

Where the Director considers the restriction to be unavoidable and reasonable, the Director will confirm the decision and issue the student with a Completion of Procedures letter within 28 days.

Where a student submits multiple complaints on substantially the same issue, the University reserves the right to treat the matter as a single complaint and to decline to respond to each separate subsequent complaint.