



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

**Dignity at Work and Study
Policy and Procedure**

Rev	Date	Purpose of Issue/Description of Change
1.	August 2023	Updated policy & procedure
2.	February 2025	Updated following the Ordinances review (cosmetic changes).

Policy Officer	Senior Responsible Officer	Approved By	Date
Senior HR Equality Officer	Chief People Officer	Human Resources Task Group	18 May 2023
		Equality & Diversity Strategy Group	12 June 2023
		The Executive	14 June 2023
		Policy Officer and Senior Research Governance and Policy Officer	17 February 2025

1. Purpose of the Policy

- 1.1 This Dignity @ Work and Study Policy and Procedure sets out Bangor University's stance on bullying, harassment and victimisation and explains how to report and disclose any incident of harassment, clarifies how complaints of bullying, harassment and victimisation will be dealt with, and provides information about the support available.
- 1.2 This policy ensures that both staff and students have the confidence and clarity around the processes in place to deal with bullying and harassment when it occurs without fear of victimisation.
- 1.3 This policy aims to promote and provide equality, inclusivity, fairness and respect for all in our employment, all who study with us and all who we engage with.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 Bangor University is committed to fostering and promoting an environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect, and protected from discrimination, bullying, harassment, and victimisation at work and study. This includes sexual misconduct as explained in Appendix 1. For the purpose of this policy the words '**unacceptable behaviour**' are used throughout to encompass discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation.
- 2.2 Underpinning our [Strategy 2030](#) is our [People and Wellbeing Strategy](#) that sets out our commitment,

*"to promote an **inclusive environment** where everyone feels able to participate and achieve their potential. Our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is key to our long-term sustainability and success. Consequently, we will promote and support a culture of **diversity and inclusion** in the workplace by advocating **tolerance, respect** and ensuring that we value all our staff as individuals."*

- 2.3 To achieve this, Bangor University takes a **zero-tolerance approach** to behaviours of discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation (unacceptable behaviour) of any kind.
- 2.4 Zero tolerance means that any such allegations will be treated seriously and in a timely manner. Anyone found to have behaved unacceptably may be the subject of disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or expulsion.
- 2.5 Our zero-tolerance approach applies in all work situations. This includes fieldtrips, conferences and social work events. It also includes interactions with colleagues or other people connected to the University outside of a work situation, including on social media (this list of examples is not exhaustive).
- 2.6 Our zero-tolerance approach applies in all situations of study, this includes all academic related activities and extra-curricular activities, on or off campus, online or in person.
- 2.7 All members of the University community have the right to expect professional behaviour from others, and a corresponding responsibility to behave professionally towards others. All members of the University community have a personal

responsibility for complying with this Policy and Procedure and must comply with and demonstrate active commitment to this Policy.

- 2.8 The University aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination related to protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 i.e. age, disability, gender identity/Trans, gender/ sex, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion, belief or non-belief, sexual orientation as well as socio-economic background.
- 2.9 **In work** this can include eliminating discrimination in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities (this list is not exhaustive).
- 2.10 **In study** this can include eliminating discrimination in teaching and learning, dealing with complaints and discipline, and withdrawal or suspension of studies (this list is not exhaustive).

3. Scope

- 3.1 This Policy and the supporting procedures apply to all staff, students, visitors, contractors, sub-contractors, service providers and any other person associated with the University.

4 Core Principles

- 4.1 The University will promote an environment in which people who are subject to inappropriate behaviour or who witness inappropriate behaviour feel able to raise complaints without fear of victimisation.
- 4.2 All staff and students are encouraged to bring to the attention of managers any examples of any unfair treatment they have witnessed or strongly suspect is taking place.
- 4.3 The University encourages staff to deal with any harassment, discrimination, bullying or victimisation through informal resolution where appropriate. Informal resolution can lead to a quicker outcome that causes minimal disruption to relationships.
- 4.4 On occasion, individual perceptions of behaviour may differ, perhaps due to differences in attitude, values, experience or culture, and what one person considers appropriate behaviour may be unacceptable to another. The defining factor in determining if behaviour amounts to bullying or harassment is that the behaviour is unacceptable to the recipient and could 'reasonably be considered' to amount to harassment. When considering allegations of harassment, the University will therefore apply a test of 'reasonableness' to determine if harassment has taken place.
- 4.5 In line with our [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#), the University ensures that Academic Staff, Teaching Staff and Research Staff have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and this will not be considered to be bullying or harassment provided that those involved are treated with dignity, respect and courtesy.

- 4.6 The University acknowledges that it has a duty to protect its employees from frivolous or malicious complaints and as such, appropriate action may be taken if it is demonstrated that a complaint is made on a deliberately frivolous or malicious basis.
- 4.7 The University will make staff and students aware of this Policy and the obligations that it places on them in terms of respecting and having consideration for others. This includes raising awareness that unacceptable behaviour relating to harassment and discrimination may be unlawful. The University will provide staff and students with appropriate training, development and support to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities under this Policy. Specifically, we will provide Unconscious Bias training, Equality for Managers training, Preventing Sexual Violence and Harassment in Fieldwork Settings training, Anti-racism training, and Dealing with Disclosures of Unacceptable Behaviour training.

5. Responsibility

- 5.1 The University expects every member of its community to conduct themselves in ways that are consistent with this policy, and to take responsibility for their own conduct and for the consequences of their actions.
- 5.2 Within the University's decision-making structure and reporting lines, the **Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) and Wellbeing Committee** will be the principal body responsible in general terms for the Dignity at Work and Study Policy (in consultation with other appropriate Strategy/Task Groups) and shall maintain general oversight of the Policy. The EDI and Wellbeing Committee reports to the University's Executive.
- 5.3 The **Chief People Officer** will be the senior officer responsible for ensuring that the Policy is effectively implemented. They may delegate duties in this respect to other appropriate members of staff, in particular to the APVC Diversity and Inclusion, the Senior Equality Officer Human Resources and the Student Equality Officer in Student Services.
- 5.4 Pro Vice-Chancellors/Heads of Colleges, **Heads of Schools, Directors of Professional Services** and other organisational units will be responsible on a day-to-day basis for ensuring that the policy is promoted and adhered to within their areas of responsibility.

6 The Informal Dignity at Work and Study Informal Resolution

- 6.1 The University encourages individuals to solve issues informally when appropriate as this can be the most effective and efficient method of dealing with unacceptable behaviour. This Dignity at Work and Study Procedure provides an informal route to address issues raised.

7 Disclosing and Reporting Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination or Victimisation

- 7.1 The first step is to tell someone.
- 7.2 The University has put in place a number of ways to report bullying, harassment and victimisation including ways to obtain support anonymously and confidentially including:
- 7.3 If you are a member of **staff** please contact any of the following people:

- Your line manager
- An Equality Champion (contact details in Appendix 4)
- Your College or Professional Service Department's dedicated HR Officer (contact details in Appendix 4)
- Online via our dedicated webpage, with options to provide your details and gain support or to report the incident/incidences anonymously
[Sexual Violence, Harassment, Hate Crime and Racism | Human Resources | Bangor University](#)
- Your Trade Union representative (if you are a Union member).

7.4 If you are a **student** please contact any of the following people:

- Student Casework Manager or similar Student Advisor (details in Appendix 4)
- Personal or Senior Tutor/Supervisor
- Online via our dedicated online [Share and Support](#) form
- The Students' Union
- If you live in Halls contact the [Residential Support Managers](#).

7.5 Disclosing an incident of discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation does not have to lead to a formal process, the wishes of the person who has raised the matter will be respected. However, in certain instances, where e.g. the University considers there to be a risk to a person(s) or the University then formal action may follow.

8 Actions

8.1 Once you have told someone, depending on your wishes and the circumstances of the case, the following options may be considered to resolve the matter informally (this list is not exhaustive):

- The person you have told may need to speak with other staff about the case but will treat everything you disclose confidentially and restrict sharing of information to essential people only.
- An informal investigation may take place to gather information and determine the most appropriate action. Informal investigations will usually be carried out by the line manager or another manager up the line management chain.
- Action can be identified to prevent the unacceptable behaviour happening again, including supporting you to approach the person demonstrating the unacceptable behaviour or intervention by another member of staff.
- Training may be identified for the person(s) carrying out the inappropriate behaviour.

- Mediation between staff can be arranged, if appropriate. A mediator is an independent person trained in helping to facilitate the resolution of problems. Both parties must agree to take part in mediation.
 - You can be signposted to additional support.
- 8.2 If the matter cannot be resolved informally it may be appropriate to dovetail into the relevant formal procedure at an appropriate stage that doesn't entail repeating the same informal steps (usually it will be appropriate to dovetail into the formal stage) as follows:
- 8.3 **Policies and Procedures Applicable to Staff**
- Any member of staff can raise a complaint and should do so formally via the [Grievance Procedure](#).
- If the Grievance is upheld, it may result in the University invoking the Disciplinary Procedure against the person who has been found by the Grievance Panel to have carried out the unacceptable behaviour.
- 8.4 **Policies and Procedures Applicable to Students**
- Any student can raise a complaint under the Disciplinary Regulation with more information available in the [Student Zero Tolerance to Harassment Policy](#) and the [Student Sexual and Domestic Violence Policy](#).
- If the Student Complaint or the allegation of Harassment is upheld it may result in the University invoking the Disciplinary Procedure against the person who has been found by the Student Complaints Panel to have carried out the bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation.
- 8.5 **If you are not a Staff member or a Student**
- Anyone who is not a member of staff or a student should raise a complaint formally via the [Complaints Procedure](#).
- If the Complaint is upheld it may result in the University invoking the Disciplinary Procedure against the person who has been found by the Complaints Panel to have carried out the bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation.
- 9 **When Informal Resolution is not Appropriate**
- 9.1 Some cases may be too serious to attempt informal resolution in which case the relevant formal procedure as in section 8.3 or 8.4 above will be invoked from the outset.
- 10 **Policy Review**
- 10.1 This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals of not less than three years and will at all times be read and applied subject to the general law.

Appendix 1

Key Definitions and Examples

Harassment

The Equality Act 2010 uses a single definition of harassment to cover protected characteristics:

'Harassment is unwanted conduct, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. It encompasses many different types of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. It can occur through a single explicit incident or may be sporadic or ongoing.'

Harassment occurs when a person engages in unwanted behaviour that is related to a person's or group of people's protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and includes: age, disability, gender identity/Trans, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Harassment can constitute unlawful discrimination, for which staff and students can be held legally and personally liable.

Harassment encompasses many different types of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. It can occur through a single explicit incident or may be sporadic or ongoing. The defining features are that the conduct:

- Is unwanted and unwelcome
- subjects a person or group to intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, offence or loss of privacy, or creates an environment which is hostile, intimidating or offensive to that person or group
- is unwarranted by the working, study or social relationship between those involved and would be regarded as such by any similarly situated reasonable person.

Examples of harassment can include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Violence or threat of violence
- unwanted physical contact, sexual advances or innuendo
- verbal abuse, including threats, derogatory name calling, insults, ridicule or belittling of an individual
- sending offensive text messages
- ostracism or exclusion from normal conversation in the work or study environment, or from social events; intrusion by pestering, spying or stalking
- coercion, such as pressure to subscribe to a particular political or religious belief.

Bullying

ACAS says bullying "may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, microaggressions, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient."

Bullying is abuse of personal power or a position of authority, either in aggressive or more subtle ways, which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable and undermines their self-confidence.

Bullying behaviour can occur in many different types of relationship. It is possible, for example, for a junior colleague to bully a person in a senior role, for a student to bully a member of staff, or a woman to bully a man.

Legitimate, constructive and fair criticism of staff or student performance or conduct will not be considered to be bullying or harassment provided that those involved are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect.

Examples of bullying can include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Psychological intimidation, humiliation, excessive and/or unreasonable criticism or fault-finding of any colleague or peer
- preventing an individual progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities
- unfair allocation of work and responsibilities or setting unreasonable goals or targets in work
- asserting a position of intellectual superiority in an aggressive, abusive or offensive manner whether orally or in writing, publicly or in private
- a manager or supervisor sending out of hours emails to staff requesting meetings or actions in an unreasonable timescale
- a manager or supervisor requesting a meeting without providing an explanation where this could cause concern or worry.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when a person is mistreated because they have made, or intend to make, a complaint of discrimination (including harassment and/or bullying) or have helped another person to make a complaint. It includes situations where a complaint hasn't yet been made but someone is victimised because it's suspected they might make one.

Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which is committed by force, intimidation or coercion. The conduct can relate to physical acts against individuals or acts which create a hostile environment including online. It can occur between individuals whether or not they are previously known to each other, individuals in an established relationship as well as individuals who have previously engaged in sexual activity.

[Universities UK](#) in their Changing the Culture Report specifically identifies staff to student sexual misconduct as,

“All behaviour of a physically or emotionally intimate or sexual nature by a staff member that, reasonably considered, is inappropriate and/or unacceptable. This includes unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that:

- 1. has the purpose, or may reasonably be considered to have the effect, of violating a student's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for a student; or*
- 2. is an abuse of power over a student; or*
- 3. is more or less favourable treatment of a student because the student has rejected or submitted to such behaviour – through any medium, including online.*

Even if the behaviour is not expressly unwanted, this would still be regarded as sexual misconduct if points 2 or 3 apply.”

Appendix 2

Sexual Harassment on Fieldtrips/Away from the University Campus

Fieldwork away from the University may involve different or greater risks than generally encountered in research activities on campus. Fieldwork may involve periods where a group of students and staff reside in a location away from the University campus and need to contend with living as well as working alongside others for extended periods of time.

We are sensitive to the fact that when sexual violence and harassment occurs in a fieldwork setting, the consequences and responses can be very different to when it happens in normal day to day life. Fieldwork often presents environments where there is limited communication with outsiders, with people working long hours and in close quarters and there are often limited ways to leave. Coupled with the power asymmetry which exists in staff/student, Principal Investigator/research staff type relationships and that it can sometimes be abused, we also acknowledge that sexual violence and harassment can be particularly problematic to address and respond appropriately to in fieldwork settings.

Bangor University's 'Preventing Sexual Violence and Harassment in Fieldwork Settings' training aims to:

- Outline expected behaviours to *everyone* who takes part in fieldwork as part of their study or job role.
- Create a *positive culture* within fieldwork, where participants can work or study without discrimination or bias.
- Consider the prevention of sexual violence and harassment when *planning and leading* field work or planning to *participate*.
- For those in leadership positions, to learn how to *effectively respond* to sexual violence or harassment in a fieldwork situation, including understanding reporting options when outside of the UK.
- Ensure all those involved in fieldwork are aware of *mechanisms to disclose* or report sexual violence and harassment that they experience or witness.

A link to the online training and further information can be found [here](#).

Appendix 3

Bangor's Staff and Students Resident Outside the UK

Bangor University has a growing population of staff and students who reside, work and study in locations outside the United Kingdom. They are valued members of the University and are entitled to be provided equivalence in the way that they experience dignity and respect to the counterparts in the United Kingdom.

For the purpose of this document relevant staff are considered those who are either employed directly by Bangor University, or those employed by a third-party organisation on behalf of the University. Relevant students are considered those who are either registered for study at Bangor University or are registered for study with a third party, but will receive a Bangor University degree.

The word 'equivalence' is applied to recognise that when staff and students are resident outside the United Kingdom, they will need to work within a framing defined by local societal norms and legal and regulatory framings.

The guidance presented here applies equally to interactions between individuals or groups at a single location, and to interactions between staff and students at Bangor and their peers at one or more remote locations. It should also apply in both directions, such that no one group or location should assume that their needs or perceptions take precedence over another. Developing a shared cultural understanding for global working and study is an important way of promoting this shared approach to dignity and respect.

Wherever possible, staff and students should aspire to apply the highest standards or norms to show dignity and respect to others. As an absolute minimum, staff and students should be encouraged to apply standards based on how they would wish to be treated in the reverse direction or the way they would be expected to act within their own physical location.

There will be occasions when differences in social and cultural norms or legal and regulatory constraints lead to situations that individual staff or students find uncomfortable. In such situations, they should discuss with the relevant people listed in Appendix 4 for advice.

There will also be occasions when staff and students at Bangor University (as defined above) located inside or outside the UK will interact with staff and students from partner organisations who are neither employed by (staff) or registered with (students) Bangor University. In such cases Bangor's staff and students should wherever possible treat others with the same level of dignity and respect as their peers who are members of the University.

All of Bangor's global partnerships that involve Bangor staff or students (as defined above) will be expected to communicate these expectations to relevant students and staff, along with outlining appropriate processes for any concerns to be raised by inclusion in student and staff handbooks or equivalent.

Appendix 4

Contacts for Disclosures of Harassment, Bullying, Victimisation and Discrimination

For staff

Please contact your **Equality Champions**, their names and contact details can be found on the [Human Resources Equality and Diversity](#) webpage.

Or you can contact your **Human Resources Officer for Colleges and Professional Service Departments**

HR Officer	Area of responsibility
Catherine Hughes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences• Canolfan Bedwyr• Students Union
Gareth Owen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finance• Marketing, Recruitment & Communications• Student Services
Jade Whitehead	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Estates and Campus Services• Digital Services• Governance & Compliance• Human Resources• Strategy, Planning & IRIS• Vice-Chancellor's Office
Matt Coles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• College of Medicine and Health
Nia Blackwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• College of Science and Engineering

If you are a member of a Trade Union you may wish to contact them:

[Contact Us | UCU Bangor](#)

[Unison Bangor](#)

[Unite the Union - Bangor University branch](#)

For students

Please contact any of the following:

Student Casework Manager [Helen Munro](#)

International Student Support [Marcel Clusa](#)

Head Wardens – Fiona Watkins, Anne-Marie Jones halls@bangor.ac.uk

Students' Union (SU) – Student Voice Department undeb@undebbangor.ac.uk

SU General - Academic Advice and Welfare Projects Coordinator - [Tara Hine](#)

For anyone else

To report Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying or Victimisation at the University when you are not a member of staff or a student, please see our [General Complaints Procedure](#)

This should be used if the person raising the complaint is not a member of staff or a student.

The complaint should be sent to complaints@bangor.ac.uk