

Bangor University's Student Harassment Policy

1. Policy statement

Bangor University is committed to promoting a safe and supportive environment in which all students are free to learn and work without fear of harassment.

In order to do so, we will:

- work with staff, students, contractors and partners to create an understanding of acceptable behaviour and sanction responsible use of disciplinary action where appropriate;
- recognise the link between responsible behaviour and an enjoyable learning experience and seek to promote a social environment from which all may benefit;
- take very seriously our legal responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of our students, staff and visitors and aim to provide a safe, healthy and high quality learning environment;
- recognise that staff with responsibilities for teaching and the support and welfare of students have a responsibility to highlight inappropriate standards of behaviour;
- provide guidance and information to staff and students to help them develop the confidence to know what action to take if they encounter incidents of harassment.

2. Who is covered by the policy?

The policy applies to students and staff currently registered at the University. It applies whether students are on University premises or elsewhere on University business or study activities, including premises managed on behalf of the University by a third party (such as halls of residence).

The policy also applies to Students' Unions, who are independent bodies who conduct and manage their own affairs in accordance with their constitution.

In certain situations, individuals may be subject to disciplinary action, be asked to leave and/or be reported to the Police. The University does not wish to criminalise its students or visitors, but it has a legitimate interest in protecting those at the University and its own reputation from the impact of harassment.

3. What is meant by harassment?

Harassment is unwanted conduct (physical contact, verbal or non-verbal behaviour) relating to a person's gender, race, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, age, disability or any other personal characteristic which has the effect of intimidating, degrading, humiliating or offending the person. It is the impact of the behaviour rather than the intent of the perpetrator that is the determinant of whether harassment has occurred. It may be an isolated incident or be persistent and can occur against one or more individuals.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include but are not limited to:

- physical contact: ranging from unwanted touching to serious assault, gestures, intimidation, aggressive behaviour;
- verbal or written (including online and social media): unwelcome remarks, suggestions and propositions, malicious gossip, jokes and banter, offensive language;
- non-verbal: offensive literature or pictures, graffiti and computer imagery, isolation or non-cooperation and exclusion or isolation from social activities.

Bangor University believes that no student should have to accept harassment and that it is not a normal part of the student experience.

4. Guidance for Students

All students have a legal responsibility to take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others. As part of the University community, students have a responsibility to report harassment that they witness.

Students who experience or witness harassment can report the incident to any member of staff, though most usually it is reported to a personal tutor, hall warden or member of Student Services. It is important that incidents are reported as soon as possible, and where action is needed to immediately address harassing behaviour, it should be reported to the most immediately available member of staff.

In cases where immediate action is not required, students can report incidents to their personal tutor, or a member of staff whom the student feels most comfortable approaching (such as a member of teaching staff, Hall Warden or someone in Student Services).

Students should outline to the member of staff the nature of what they have witnessed or experienced. The member of staff will need to establish whether there is an immediate risk to the student or others, and if so take appropriate action (with any necessary support from their manager or University Security) to ensure a safe environment for the student and others.

Having dealt with any immediate risk, the member of staff will establish if the student has any immediate support needs and how the student wishes the incident to be dealt with. The student may wish for the incident to be reported (anonymously if preferred) for monitoring purposes only, without requiring any further support.

The student may prefer to discuss the incident in confidence with a member of staff with pastoral responsibilities (such as their personal tutor, hall warden or Student Services) in order to identify in more detail how they wish the incident to be dealt with.

Where a student has immediate concerns about personal safety, they can ask any member of staff to contact University Security or the Police, or the student may choose to contact University Security (Internal 333, External 01248 382795) or the Police directly (emergency calls: 999 non emergency: 101 or 0300 330 0101)

5. Guidance for All Staff

All members of staff have a responsibility to address issues of student harassment that they witness or receive reports of.

Witnessing Student Harassment

Depending on the circumstances, addressing witnessed student harassment could include:

- intervening to make it clear that the witnessed behaviour is unacceptable. This may include addressing language used or addressing physical action that is causing harassment. It may be appropriate to just tell the person(s) to stop the harassing behaviour, or it may be necessary to tell the person(s) to leave the premises due to unacceptable behaviour;
- checking if a student needs support to remove themselves from a harassing situation;
- contacting a more senior member of staff and/or University Security where a member of staff does not feel safe to directly address harassing behaviour they witness.

Responding to Reports of Student Harassment

Any member of staff might receive a report of harassment from a student. All staff are required to:

1. Listen carefully to, and acknowledge, what the student is saying, being careful not to make personal judgements about whether or not they agree with the student's view of harassment. Reassure the student that they have the right to feel safe and that the University will be supportive.
2. Establish whether there is an immediate risk to the student or others, and if so take appropriate action with any necessary support from their manager or University Security to ensure a safe environment for the student and others;
3. Establish if the student has any immediate support needs referring to sources of support as necessary (<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/studentservices/>).
4. Establish with the student how they wish the incident to be dealt with. The student may wish to report the incident (anonymously if preferred) without wishing for further action to be taken. In this case, a [Student Harassment Monitoring Form](#) should be completed

(protecting anonymity if requested) and passed on to the Director of Student Engagement or Senior Tutor (Academic Schools), Senior Warden (Halls) or Head of Service (Central Services).

5. Clarify with the student that their immediate safety and support needs have been met, and that they understand who they can contact if they wish to discuss the incident further. In cases where the student wishes to discuss further action, they should be referred to a member of staff with pastoral responsibilities (such as their personal tutor, Hall warden or member of Students Services as they prefer).

If the member of staff feels that the risk to the student or to others is such that they must override the student's wishes not to report the incident, then this should be made clear to the student, and advice sought from the member of staff's line manager to establish appropriate action to manage the risk or to pursue disciplinary action.

6. **Guidance for Staff with Pastoral Responsibility**

Staff with pastoral responsibility are likely to be the main point of reference for students reporting harassment or may have cases referred to them by other members of staff. Staff with pastoral responsibilities include: Personal Tutors, Senior Tutors, Hall Wardens or Senior Wardens, staff in Student Services.

When a student makes a disclosure of harassment, staff with pastoral responsibilities should:

1. Ensure that the conversation with the student can be conducted in private and without interruption. Listen carefully to, and acknowledge, what the student is saying, being careful not to make personal judgements about whether or not they agree with the student's view of harassment. Reassure the student that they have the right to feel safe and that the University will be supportive.
2. Establish whether there is an immediate risk to the student or others. Whilst the student's right to confidentiality should be respected, in instances where there may be an immediate risk to the student or others, the member of staff should seek advice from a Senior Member of staff, Disciplinary Officer, Security (Internal 333, External 01248 382795) and/or the Police (emergency calls: 999 non emergency: 101 or 0300 330 0101) .
3. Help the student access the support they need.
 - If they have future concerns about safety, ensure they understand they can contact University Security Staff whilst on University premises or the Police when they are off campus and ensure they have the correct phone numbers as given above.
 - If there has been a sexual assault the student should be advised that the North Wales Sexual Assault Centre can provide services and advice without an obligation to report a crime (0808 156 3658; www.amethystnorthwales.org.uk)

- If the student does not have a safe place to stay - contact the Halls Office (1248 382667) or the Student Housing Office (01248 382034)
 - If the student or member of staff is concerned that a crime has been committed, advice should be sought from Gwenan Hine (Head of Compliance) in the Planning Office (01248 382413)
 - Make the student aware of other sources of personal support they may wish to access later (www.bangor.ac.uk/student-services).
4. Clarify with the student that their immediate safety and support needs have been addressed, and then outline to the student the options available for reporting the incident:

Option 1: Ask for the incident to be reported for monitoring purposes but with no request for further action to be taken. The report can be anonymous if the student prefers.

Action: member of staff ensures the student is aware of sources of support, and completes a [Student Harassment Monitoring Form](#) to be forwarded to the Director of Student Engagement or Senior Tutor (Academic Schools) Senior Warden (Halls) or Head of Service (Central Services)

Option 2: Ask for the incident to be reported for monitoring purposes and informal action taken to address the behaviour such as staff reminding the person(s) who was reported of the appropriate and expected standards of behaviour.

Action: the member of staff completes a [Student Harassment Monitoring Form](#) and any additional notes for discussion with the Director of Student Engagement or Senior Tutor (Academic Schools) Senior Warden (Halls) or Head of Service (Central Services). Agreed action for informally addressing the behaviour is agreed within the School, Halls or Service, consulting with the reporting student on agreed action.

Option 3: Ask for the incident to be formally reported to a Disciplinary Officer – this is appropriate in a situation where the student wants to pursue formal action through the University against the person they are reporting.

Action: The member of staff must not attempt to resolve the concerns by contacting the person against whom an allegation has been made. Such action could represent a breach of procedure that might invalidate any subsequent disciplinary action.

For Option 3, the incident must be reported to a Disciplinary Officer (a Senior Warden if the incident occurred in Halls, or the Academic Registrar if the incident did not occur in Halls).

Formal reports can be submitted in various formats:

- a) by the student in writing (by letter or email);
- b) by the student in person (in an interview with Senior Warden, or Academic Registrar or nominee);
- c) by the responding member of staff in writing, preferably in a report countersigned by the student.

Incidents reported to a Disciplinary Officer will be considered under the Ordinance for Student Discipline. The member of staff should ensure that the Director of Student Engagement or Senior Tutor (Academic Schools) or Head of Service (Central Services) is aware that formal action has been requested. The Academic Registrar (01248 382027) can provide advice on procedure under the Ordinance for Student Discipline.

5. Complete a [Student Harassment Monitoring Form](#) for all reported incidences so that the University can fulfil its responsibility to monitor levels of reported harassment within the institution. The process is as follows:
 - the responding member of staff completes a [Student Harassment Monitoring Form](#) with additional written notes as needed maintaining anonymity as requested by the student. The member of staff passes the record to the Director of Student Engagement or Senior Tutor (Academic Schools), a Senior Warden (Halls) or to their Head of Service (Central Services);
 - the Director of Student Engagement, Senior Tutor, Senior Warden or Head of Central Service will ensure that the [Student Harassment Monitoring Form](#) is sent to Gwenan Hine (Head of Compliance) in the Planning Office so that the University is able to monitor incidents of reported harassment.

Maria Lorenzini, Director of Student Experience can advise Schools and Services on the implementation of this policy as required. (01248 383543; m.lorenzini@bangor.ac.uk).