

# Dignity at Work and Study Guidance Note

## Informal Approach to Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour - Students

If someone has behaved inappropriately towards you, or you have witnessed such behaviour, the best action in the first instance is to take care of yourself and your own mental health before deciding what to do. How you deal with a situation will depend on a number of things, not least the severity of the behaviour that you have experienced or witnessed. For some issues it may be appropriate to deal with the matter informally. In other situations it may be more appropriate to commence a formal process at the outset. Sometimes just talking it over with a friend might help. If you decide on an informal approach, when or if, you feel up to it, and only ever when you feel safe to do so, use open and constructive communication to try and sort the problem out. If you feel confident enough you can approach the person concerned and talk it through. If you feel you can't speak to them in person you may want to try e-mailing to let them know what went wrong. This may be enough to make them aware of their behaviour and stop it from continuing.

### How do I get started?

- Keep a note of the details of the inappropriate behaviour
- It may help to talk it over with someone such as a friend or a member of staff
- Look through the Guidance Notes on how to deal with having a difficult conversation. This may give you some tips on how to get started.
- Write down what you want to say, so you don't miss anything

### Who can help me if I want to take an informal approach?

Student Welfare Officer (Institute of Education in Medical and Dental Sciences only)

Personal Tutor/Regent/Supervisor

School Staff/Course Coordinator

[Student Support Adviser](#)

[A Chaplain](#)

[Student Resident Assistant or University Halls of Residence staff](#)

If you just want to talk the situation over confidentially, and seek support for the impact it has had on you, you may wish to seek support from:

#### Professional Support

- [University Counselling Service](#)
- The Student Helpline

#### Student Led Support

- [Nightline](#)
- [Aberdeen University Student's Union](#)
- [Student Union Advice](#)
- [Student Representatives](#) – Sabbatical Officers, , School Conveners, Class Reps etc.

- [AUSA Liberation and Section Forums](#) – Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students’, Disabled Students’, International Students’, LGBTQ+ Students’, Mature Students’, Part-Time Students’, Postgraduate Students’, Student Workers, Trans Students’, Women & Non-Binary Students’.

If you are a member of a Students’ Union affiliated sports club or society and the complaint relates to another member you can email [SUcomplaints@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:SUcomplaints@abdn.ac.uk). More information is available [here](#).

Although the above staff and services will seek to treat your concerns in confidence they may have to seek advice from other sources to ensure that you receive the correct advice. This will never be done without your prior consent. In cases of high risk, it may be necessary for staff/services to proceed to investigate the circumstances shared, or share these with external agencies as appropriate. You will be informed if this was necessary. In the event that several informal issues are raised against a specific person these will be looked at to ascertain whether or not they represent a pattern of behaviour. If so, this will be dealt with accordingly.