

Disability Advisory Service Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

Introduction

1. The Disability Advisory Service's (DAS) mission is to support disabled students to fulfil their potential at the University. DAS works with the collegiate institution to promote equal and fair access to study and student life. It is a great privilege to be able to contribute to the journey of so many individuals who are determined to succeed and overcome the challenges they encounter.
2. Our staff are fully committed to providing a fair and accessible service for all the students we work with; they want to make a positive difference to the experience of disabled students and do everything within their power to achieve this goal.
3. Despite our best efforts, we recognise that sometimes things can go wrong. We will always do our best to address and resolve concerns that are raised with us as quickly, fairly, and efficiently as possible inline the departmental [complaints procedure](#).
4. DAS will treat all students with understanding, dignity, respect and fairness. Equally, we expect that our staff will be treated in the same way. In a small minority of cases, behaviour towards DAS staff is unacceptable. This policy sets out what we consider to be unreasonable behaviour and the actions that we might take if we consider student behaviour to be unacceptable.

Unacceptable behaviour

5. DAS understands that studying in a demanding environment can be stressful, and that sometimes this can come through in people's interpersonal interactions (whether by email, in conversation or another form). Living with a disabling condition or impairment often adds further challenges and may be especially so if the individual's disability has direct or indirect implications for their social communication. We will always be sensitive to these factors and make adjustments where reasonable.
6. However, we must also take fair and proportionate measures to ensure our staff can work safely and efficiently. Whatever the circumstances, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable treatment that can lead them to feel intimidated, frightened, or distressed. This includes action, behaviour or language that is:
 - abusive, offensive, or defamatory
 - aggressive or threatening
 - unreasonably persistent or demanding

These things may occur in written form, verbally or through physical actions, including (but not limited to):

- unsubstantiated allegations
- inflammatory statements
- derogatory remarks
- rudeness

- excessive/repeated requests and/or frequency of contact
 - unreasonable expectations placed on the service
 - persistent refusal to accept a decision or explanation
7. These behaviours will be considered unacceptable if they are negatively impacting on DAS's ability to deliver its services, e.g., because staff wellbeing is jeopardised, or it is hampering our ability to deal with student casework or perform other key functions.

Our approach to handling unacceptable behaviour

8. We will take prompt action to protect staff if we think an individual's interactions with us are unacceptable.
9. In the first instance we will let the individual know which behaviour is unacceptable and explain why. We will ask the individual to change their behaviour so we can work with them respectfully and constructively.
10. If the unacceptable behaviour persists, we will restrict the individual's ability to communicate with us. This may include:
- a. Ending calls or meetings (whether online or in-person) when the interaction becomes unacceptable.
 - b. Refusing access to our building.
 - c. Assigning a single point of contact within the service and asking the individual to communicate solely with this person.
 - d. Limiting the communication channels available, for example restricting access to email dialogue only.
 - e. Limiting the amount of correspondence that we will agree to engage with.
 - f. Asking the individual to correspond with us through a nominated representative on their behalf.
 - g. Setting out agreed terms for all future communication with our team and asking the individual to formally sign up to these terms.

Any decision to restrict an individual's access to DAS will be taken by the Head of DAS and the Director for Student Welfare and Support Services (SWSS), who must agree this is a proportionate and appropriate response. They will write to the individual explaining what action is being taken, why and for how long the restriction will be in place.

11. If the unacceptable behaviour persists or has already become so detrimental to the health and safety of our staff that local action is no longer appropriate, we will consider referring the case to the Proctors' Office as a disciplinary matter.

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