

This policy draws on the *Behaviour Policy of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education*.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The University prides itself on being a responsive and supportive organisation and in listening to its students. We also have a responsibility to provide a safe and respectful working environment for our staff.
- 1.2 We may decide to restrict access to our service where we consider a person's actions or behaviour are likely to have a negative effect on our staff or our work.
- 1.3 This policy sets out the kinds of actions and behaviour that may have a negative effect, and what we will do in these circumstances. This policy applies to all students and anyone acting on their behalf. The list of behaviour is not exhaustive, and the policy may be applied in the case of other behaviour which affects our staff or our work.
- 1.4 The University values feedback from its students, both individually and through the student representative system. It is not the intention of this policy to inhibit feedback, including critical feedback.
- 1.5 We recognise that some people may have challenging behaviour that arises from their disability. We will always consider specific disability-related issues and provide support when required, but we may still use the policy if there are actions or behaviours which are having a negative effect on our staff or our work.

2 Examples of actions or behaviour which may have a negative effect on our staff or our work

Aggressive, offensive or abusive actions or behaviour

- 2.1 All of our staff have the right not to be subjected to aggressive, offensive, harassing or abusive actions, language or behaviour, regardless of the circumstances.
- 2.2 This means any actions or behaviour that could cause staff to feel intimidated, threatened or offended. These include, but are not limited to: threats, physical violence, personal verbal abuse, derogatory or rude language or acts, whether made to the member of staff directly or elsewhere (including online). Deliberately provocative or inflammatory statements and unsubstantiated allegations can also amount to abusive actions or behaviour. Violence is not restricted to acts of aggression that may result in physical harm; it also includes behaviour or language that may cause staff to feel afraid, threatened or abused.

Unreasonable demands or persistence

- 2.3 If a person makes unreasonable demands on YSJU staff, or is unreasonably persistent, that may have an impact on our ability to provide appropriate services to that person or to other students.
- 2.4 Examples of unreasonable demands may include: requesting responses within an unreasonable timescale; insisting on speaking to or corresponding with a particular member of staff, frequent phone calls, e-mails, or letters; repeatedly changing focus with regards to the issue being raised or raising unrelated concerns; or attending our offices without an agreed appointment.
- 2.5 Examples of unreasonable persistence include: persistent refusal to accept that a decision has been made by the University; insisting that we answer questions when we have done so or explained why we will not; sending e-mails to multiple members of staff; or repeatedly trying to revisit a case through our internal processes, once those processes have come to an end.

3 Our approach

- 3.1 When we consider that a person's actions or behaviour are likely to have a negative effect, we will tell them why and we will give them the opportunity to modify their actions or behaviour. If the actions or behaviour continue, we will take steps to prevent or minimise the negative effects. Wherever possible, we will continue to address any substantive concerns raised by the person. We will try to ensure that any action we take is the minimum required to protect our staff and to ensure that they can work effectively.

- 3.2 University staff may either place a caller on hold or end the telephone call if the caller is aggressive, offensive or abusive, or is making unreasonable demands. Staff members are accountable for their actions and should make a note of any instances of when calls have been terminated, including the reason(s) for ending the call.
- 3.3 It may be necessary to apply restrictions to the person's contact with us. A decision to do this may be taken by the manager of the person reporting the problem. Some of the options that we may consider are:
- a) To restrict or block future contact from a person. For example, we may:
 - Require that contact is with a specified member of staff only.
 - Limit the person to making telephone calls on a specified day and time per week.
 - Not accept any further telephone calls from the person - we will keep at least one other form of contact.
 - b) Require the person to communicate with the University through a representative - or a different representative where it is the representative whose behaviour is causing concern.
 - c) Read and file future correspondence but acknowledge or respond to it only if the person is raising new information or making a new complaint.
 - d) Take action under the [Code of Discipline and Disciplinary Procedures](#).
 - e) Report the matter to the Police or appropriate governing body, or take legal action. In such cases, we may not give the person prior warning of taking that action. We will record any incidents which lead us to take action under this policy, and what action we have taken to address the issue.
 - f) Anyone who is unhappy with a decision we have made under this policy may submit a complaint under the University [Complaints procedure](#).

4 Implementation assistance

4.1 Please direct requests to the University Secretary's Office at casework@yorkjs.ac.uk.

Associated links: <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/ssr/policies-and-regulations-/discipline-/>
<https://www.yorks.ac.uk/ssr/policies-and-regulations-/appeals-and-complaints-/>

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