

Zero Tolerance Policy

Policy Statement

We at Lancaster University Students' Union are working in partnership with Lancaster University to take a zero tolerance commitment against discrimination, harassment and bullying within all areas of our activity. The aim of this is to achieve the Union's vision of becoming an inclusive, accessible and safe space for all our members as zero tolerance is the complete unacceptance of antisocial behaviour and will automatically result in an investigation with the appropriate measures taken by the University if such accusations are found to be true. This policy compliments the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy that the Union has and will affect all who are members of Lancaster University Students' Union but will specifically give more protection to those with protected characteristics as outlined within the Equality Act 2010. It is important we as members and a Union convey this message in every activity and event we do to illustrate that Lancaster is a truly welcoming place to all with the overall vision to educate that no form of discrimination is acceptable and provide a safe where all students feel welcome during their studies here, of which they can then take into future employment and their lives.

Principles:

- We take a Zero Tolerance stance against any behaviour of discrimination, bullying or harassment by those within the scope of the policy and are subject to the relevant disciplinary procedures within the University.
- To actively support students who have undergone discrimination, harassment or bullying.
- To grow as many contacts as possible with relevant stakeholders to forward the movement for zero tolerance to discrimination, harassment and bullying.

Scope of Policy

The Union will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying towards its members, staff and visitors or anywhere within the Union and its venues. This will go beyond the premises of normal working hours in the Union such as at: Sports Fixtures, events, trips abroad and social media.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it illegal to discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics; however we as a Union believe that we should go further than this by specifying the zero-tolerance attitude the Union will be taking to achieve its goals, and acts as a place where the students can hold us accountable in the future by ensuring we deliver on the objectives set out.

This Policy applies to anyone in the LUSU community, whether that be: members, staff or visitors. The scope of this policy is to protect all of those who come into contact with discrimination and the zero tolerance towards that.

Existing Policy

The University are currently in the process of writing a Harassment Policy that will cover all staff and students within the institution, so will be used in conjunction with this policy where overlap is apparent.

The University is also Subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, which places further commitments on ensuring the campus is more inclusive and does not discriminate on any of the characteristics laid out within the Act.

Definitions and Examples of Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

The legal definitions for discrimination, harassment or bullying are covered within the Equality Act 2010 and the Lancaster University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy found at: <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/hr/equality-diversity/EDI-Plan-2016-2020-COUNCIL-web.pdf>

Examples of Discrimination:

An example would be where a requirement is applied to staff or students where, for instance the proportion of black students from these groups who can comply for a job description is considerably smaller than the proportion of white students; or the proportion of those from an LGBTQ+ group who can comply is considerably smaller than the proportion of a majority heterosexual group.

Examples of Bullying:

Bullying can often be physical or psychological in nature and usually includes feelings of authority between the two in the relationship.

Examples of physical bullying are assault between students, unwanted sexual advancements or the stealing of property intended to cause distress to the effected individual.

Psychological bullying is far more common and can refer to teasing or taunting, verbally threatening another and gossiping and spreading rumours about the victim.

Examples of Harassment:

The Union considers any unwelcome behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment to be harassment.

Stalking is also considered a form of harassment, regardless of whether the perpetrator is known or a stranger to the victim. It is usually persistent and unwanted conduct of one or different kinds, it can be physical or psychological and take place directly against a person, or by approaching a third party about a person. Following a person home, sending or leaving them unwanted and repeated messages on their telephone or email, bullying them on social media or making intrusive or unwanted visits are examples of how stalking may take place.

Harassment may also involve the actions of a third party, if this third party treats a person less favourably because the person has rejected or submitted to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or behaviour that is related to gender identity or sex. Examples could include a person being moved from a committee, department or study group, because the person being moved has rejected sexual advances of another member of the same group.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Lower the rate of discrimination, harassment and bullying on campus by taking a zero tolerance approach to provide a safer space on campus with statistical evidence which can back up such claims
- To make changes within the Union so discrimination is less likely to happen
- Promote a culture in which it is known, at all levels within the Union's activity, that all forms of discrimination, bullying and harassment are unacceptable within all forms of personal and professional life.
- Continue to build upon the work currently done with various stakeholders to gain more insight and information on how discrimination can be tackled

Implementation Plan

To ensure these objectives are reached the Union shall:

- Train all Staff to recognise the various forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying in order for them to discourage this behaviour when it is seen and to support members and colleagues through the appropriate channels.
- Pursue the By-Stander intervention programme so students can confidently discourage this behaviour when it is seen
- Actively support those who report discrimination, harassment and bullying and promote the services available to students across the University
- Work with specific departments in the Union to highlight where discrimination may be an issue and write an action plan on how this can be overcome
- For the Vice-President (Welfare and Community) to contact relevant external groups and stakeholders to see what else can be done to forward the Union's commitments.

- Anonymously record all reports of these behaviours to be presented to the University's Equality and Diversity Committee for reference and comment but to also gain evidence on how our zero tolerance commitments are working, so then it can be annually reviewed.