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# Members’ Code of Conduct

# What is the Code of Conduct?

This Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of all members and affiliated groups when participating in any activity under the name of Edge Hill Students’ Union (Edge Hill SU), both in-person or online.

This Code of Conduct and the process set out within it is applicable to all complaints made to Edge Hill SU about the conduct of its members (students).

The Code forms one element of the Union’s system to uphold its legal responsibilities to provide safe environments for its members, staff, customers and visitors.

The Code concerns the disciplinary rules and procedures that operate within the Union. The Union believes that rules and procedures are necessary for promoting orderly relations as well as fairness and consistency in the treatment of individuals.

**Please note**: Any student at Edge Hill University (EHU) is also subject to the [University’s Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures](https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/documents/student-disciplinary-regulations/), as well as (of course) to the law.

# Why does the Code of Conduct exist?

* To protect Edge Hill SU’s members
* To protect others that are potentially affected by members’ actions
* To ensure the highest possible standards of fairness, honesty, and behaviour
* To reduce the risk of harm, injury, harassment and nuisance to members and the community in general
* To ensure that any student can feel welcomed and included in Edge Hill SU

To whom does the Code of Conduct apply?

* All members
* All persons associated to a student group

# Where can the Code of Conduct be found?

It is important that all stakeholders know what standards of conduct

and performance is expected of members. As a result, the Code shall be

publicly [available here](https://www.edgehillsu.org.uk/main-menu/governance) and shall be provided to members in relevant settings.

# Expected Behaviour

All members must abide by the rules outlined below:

* Behave in a manner which does not endanger or is anti-social towards other individuals and to abide by Edge Hill Students’ Union’s Health and Safety policy at all times
* Do not bully, harass, discriminate against, or victimise others
* Ensure all members feel welcome to participate in non-judgemental and nonthreatening discussions, activities, services, or events
* Act responsibly always when participating in activities and avoid actions which could bring the group, the Students’ Union or sponsors, funders, or partners into disrepute
* Conduct themselves in a reasonable manner relating to language, noise, and behaviour
* Not encourage or pressure others into acting against the Code
* Operate within the rules that govern the activity or the facility in which it is taking place

Student leaders (i.e. representatives, student group committees, society leaders) have a particular responsibility to uphold the Code of Conduct in the areas of activity that they lead.

# Bullying and Harassment

Edge Hill SU does not tolerate bullying, harassment, discrimination, or victimisation of any kind. We expect all members of our community to treat each other with respect, dignity, courtesy, and consideration.

Harassment is unwanted and unwarranted physical, sexual, verbal, or non-verbal behaviour which (intentionally or unintentionally) violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Harassment is unlawful when it targets someone on the grounds of a ‘protected characteristic’, this includes: age; sex; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; and sexual orientation.

Bullying is characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or the abuse or misuse of power (which does not always mean being in a position of authority) through means intended to undermine, humiliate, or denigrate a person. Bullying is not necessarily related to a ‘protected characteristic’.

Examples of bullying and harassment include but are not limited to offensive or intimidating comments; verbal abuse, insults, or jokes; graffiti or vandalism; unwanted sexual comments, groping, touching or stalking; threatening behaviour or physical violence.

Bullying and harassment are not necessarily face to face, it may occur through written communications, visual images, online, over email, social media or over the phone. They may be carried out by individuals or groups and can occur in public or in private.

Passionate speech and comment, and legitimate debate can be distinguished from bullying behaviour and harassment. However, care should be taken to ensure that others are not made to feel intimidated.

More examples of behaviours that may constitute bullying and harassment can be found in **Appendix 1**.

# Initiations and Peer Pressure Situations

In line with most universities and because of several very serious incidents at other institutions, Edge Hill SU and EHU do not permit “initiation ceremonies”.

For this purpose, an initiation ceremony is any event at which members of a group are expected to perform an activity as a means of gaining credibility, status, or entry into that group. This peer pressure is normally (though not explicitly) exerted on first year students or new members and may involve the consumption of alcohol, eating various food stuffs, nudity and behaviour that may be deemed humiliating.

Social activities such as welcome evenings, team meals, social nights, trips away and celebration events that welcome new members and offer a positive first impression of university life are encouraged. The following rules must be followed:

* All activities must be opt-in and have no bearing on the acceptance into the student group or team/squad selection etc.
* Peer pressure must not be exerted on individuals.
* Activities must not be humiliating, unlawful or degrading.
* Activities must not involve the forced consumption of any fluid/substance.
* Activities must not bring the reputation of Edge Hill SU, EHU or the student group into question or disrepute.

The organiser of the event, individual Club Captains or group Presidents and/or the groups as a whole may be held responsible for an “initiation ceremony” and may have University disciplinary action taken against them (including suspension or expulsion).

# What happens if the Code of Conduct has been breached?

Edge Hill SU is committed to addressing all breaches of the Code of Conduct and maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for members to participate in.

If you are aware of a breach of the Code of Conduct, please complete the ‘Breach of Code of Conduct’ form [found here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1RVWXKVe_IpdLUCLQ3wAzSHHZaMrPcPJxjPJAoBmNPzc/edit). You will be contacted shortly thereafter by a member of the Advice Team.

# Informal / Stage 1

If it is safe and appropriate to do so, a member of the Edge Hill advice team will work with students to resolve the issue. This might include recommending support services, mediation, or training for those who have breached the Code of Conduct or been affected by a breach of the Code of Conduct.

Student Leaders (e.g. representatives and society committees) should not investigate a breach of the Code of Conduct on their own and should not remove group members at their own discretion. Student Leaders should work with Edge Hill SU staff to resolve breaches of the Code of Conduct.

# Formal / Stage 2

Where a satisfactory outcome cannot be achieved through the informal / stage 1 process, or where a serious breach of the Code of Conduct has taken place, Edge Hill SU will refer the complainant to Edge Hill University or the police (stage 2).

#  Appendix 2: Examples of behaviours that breach the Code of Conduct

Behaviours not listed may still be bullying or harassment and/or a breach of the Code of Conduct.

# Harassment

# Age

Age related harassment refers to unwanted behaviour relating to a person’s age or perceived age. Examples include:

• being patronised as being ‘too young’ to understand or do something

• being isolated or excluded from a student group because you’re ‘too old’

# Disability

Disability related harassment refers to unwanted behaviour related to disability, impairment, or additional need, and can include perceived disability. Examples include:

• Giving demeaning uninvited or un-necessary assistance

• patronising or ‘talking down’ to someone with a disability

# Gender Reassignment or Gender Identity

Harassment on the grounds of gender reassignment or identity refers to unwanted behaviour related to transgender, transsexual or transvestite identities. ‘Trans’ is an inclusive term used to describe people who: have undergone, are undergoing or will undergo gender transition (commonly called a ‘sex change’); identify as someone with a different gender from the sex that they were ascribed at birth, but who may have decided not to undergo medical treatment; or someone who chooses to dress in the clothing typically worn by a person of another gender. Examples include:

* inappropriate moralising about a person’s gender identity
* being ridiculed for wearing clothing traditionally associated with another gender
* persistently using the wrong pro-noun when addressing a trans person or nonbinary person (misgendering)

# Marriage and Civil Partnership

Discrimination on these grounds refers to unwanted behaviour relating to your marital or civil partnership status. Examples include:

• Being isolated or excluded from a student group because you are married or in a civil partnership

# Pregnancy and Maternity

Discrimination on these grounds refers to unwanted behaviour relating to being pregnant or having recently (within 26 weeks) given birth. Examples include but are not limited to:

* being told to stop breastfeeding in public

# Race

Racial harassment refers to unwanted behaviour related to race or ethnic background, which can include nationality, citizenship, and language. Examples could include:

* ridiculing racial, ethnic, or cultural differences
* using racist symbols (for example Nazi swastikas)
* ridiculing someone for their use of language

Antisemitism and Islamophobia are both rooted in racism and Edge Hill SU has adopted specific definitions to help us tackle antisemitism and islamophobia within our communities.

# Antisemitism

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed/perceived as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed towards Jewish and non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, towards Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. Examples include:

* Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion
* Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions
* Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews
* Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust)
* Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust
* Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
* Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
* Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation
* Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis
* Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis
* Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel

# Islamophobia

Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness. Examples include:

* Stereotyping Muslims by assuming they all think the same
* Holding debates about Muslims with which they could not join in
* Accusing all Muslims of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Muslim person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Muslims

# Religion or Belief (including Non-belief)

Harassment on grounds of religion or belief refers to inappropriate and unwanted behaviour related to someone’s religion, or lack of religion, or any religious or philosophical belief including a lack of belief. Examples include:

* ridiculing items worn for religious reasons
* denigrating cultural customs
* derisory comments against an individual’s beliefs

# Sex

Sexual harassment can occur in many ways but always has a distinctive feature, the inappropriate and unwanted introduction of sexual comments or comments that relate to a person’s sex (including intersex people). Examples include:

* comments that emphasise the gender or sexuality of an individual or a group
* sexually provocative remarks or jokes
* persistent unwelcome requests for social or sexual encounters and favours
* display of, or electronic transmission of, pornographic, degrading, or indecent pictures
* unnecessary and unwelcome physical contact with non-intimate areas of the body

# Sexual Orientation

Harassment on these grounds refers to unwanted behaviour relating to a person’s known or presumed sexual orientation. For Edge Hill SU’s purposes, sexual orientation means attraction towards people of the same sex or gender; attractions towards people of another sex or gender, attraction towards people of all genders, and all minority sexual orientations including those who feel no or limited sexual attraction (e.g. asexual). Examples include:

* intrusive questioning about a person’s domestic circumstances and/or sexual preferences
* excluding same-sex partners from social events and student groups
* actual or threatened unwanted disclosure of sexuality, i.e. ‘outing’

# Class or Socio-Economic Background

Although class is not a protected characteristic by law, Edge Hill SU will not tolerate victimisation or discrimination based on someone’s socio-economic background or class. This means treating someone unfavourably due to their own or their parents’ income, occupation, or social background. Examples include:

* Stereotyping someone because of the school they went to
* Mocking someone based on their accent or occupation

# Bullying

Examples of bullying include:

* shouting and sarcasm
* verbal and physical abuse
* public humiliation
* belittling about abilities, personality and/or personal appearance
* persistently ignored and/or talking down to
* subject to practical jokes
* subject of malicious rumours or gossip
* excluded or ostracised