



Student Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedures

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy and its associated procedures¹ is to support the development and maintenance of a safe study environment in which discrimination, harassment and bullying are unacceptable.

The policy outlines how University of Limerick (UL) will

- strive to proactively provide a campus environment in which all members of the campus community feel safe and are respected
- support students who have experienced any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation (as defined in section [1.3](#) below)
- respond to disclosed incidents that breach this policy

This policy acknowledges that a feeling of being targeted negatively impacts performance and productivity at study and work, a person's mental wellbeing, and the surrounding educational environment.

Discrimination, harassment, bullying and related complaints can have a range of serious effects on all concerned – the person being discriminated against, harassed or bullied; those who are accused of discrimination, harassment or bullying; and others in the study setting. The spiralling negative consequence of claims of this nature cannot be overstated. Therefore, to ensure all students are treated with dignity and respect, UL is committed to identifying and addressing all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying.

This policy sets out

- how UL defines discrimination, harassment and bullying
- what UL expects of its students
- the responsibilities of key roles within UL
- how students will be supported when issues of this nature occur

Individuals must trust in the process and have the confidence to come forward in the knowledge that their concerns will be dealt with appropriately and fairly.

The policy emphasises the importance of early intervention and an informal approach, offering as they do the best chance of achieving a good outcome, particularly in relation to restoring relationships in an educational environment. If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the policy sets out an investigation process designed to deal with complaints promptly and with minimal distress for the parties involved.

This policy relates to all incidents that undermine the dignity of UL students or the UL community (as defined in the section [1.2.1](#) below). Therefore, it encompasses any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation. Additionally, it addresses complicity and retaliation, vexatious reporting and malicious reporting.

¹ Hereafter, reference to this policy can be taken to include the policy's associated procedures, as specified in section 4.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 To Whom Does This Policy Apply?

This policy applies to

- registered UL students who have experienced discrimination, harassment or bullying during their course of study at UL where the respondent is a member of the UL community, as defined below. For example, if a student is discriminated against by a UL employee, they can report the discriminatory incident in accordance with this policy.
- registered UL students who have been accused of discrimination, harassment or bullying during their course of study at UL where the complainant is a member of the UL community, as defined below. For example, if a UL employee is harassed by a student, they can follow the procedures outlined in this policy to report the incident.

The UL community includes

- all UL employees, whether part-time or full-time, permanent or temporary
- all registered students of UL (including those undertaking employment-related activities as part of their programme of study)
- Governing Authority
- non-UL employees who work or engage with UL employees and students in the course of their work, such as those from subsidiary or associated companies, including UL Student Life, Postgraduate Students' Union (PSU), UL Wolves, Unijobs, University Concert Hall, Plassey Campus Centre and UL Arena.

In relation to staff employed by a subsidiary or associated company of UL:

- Where a UL student wishes to make a report of discrimination, harassment or bullying against an employee of a subsidiary or associated company, the relevant policies of the subsidiary or associated company will normally apply.
- Where an employee of a subsidiary or associated company wishes to make a report of discrimination, harassment or bullying against a UL student, this policy will normally apply.
- In some situations, based on the circumstances of the case, UL and the subsidiary or associated company may need to agree on who should lead the investigation process and which policy should apply in the circumstances.

1.2.2 Other Categories of Persons to Whom This Policy May Apply

This policy may apply when the complainant or respondent is a student and the other party falls within one of the following categories:

- Third-party contractors working in any area of UL operations or programmes, irrespective of contract
- Persons conducting teaching or research at or under the auspices of UL, including visiting faculty and researchers, consultants, Emeritus, adjunct appointments, external examiners, and research fellows
- UL alumni and past employees (where the incident or behaviour occurred during the course of study or work at UL and in which the responding party is a **current** student or staff member)

1.2.3 Students on Placement or Internship

Where a UL student on placement or internship in another organisation wishes to make a formal complaint of discrimination, harassment or bullying against an individual in that organisation, the dignity and respect policies (or equivalent) of that organisation will apply.

Where a UL student on placement or internship in another organisation has a formal complaint of discrimination, harassment or bullying made against them, the dignity and respect policies (or equivalent) of that organisation will normally apply.

Where a UL student on placement or internship in another organisation makes a formal complaint of discrimination, harassment or bullying against another UL student on placement or internship in that organisation, this UL policy will apply and the policy of that organisation may also apply.

In some situations, based on the circumstances of the case, UL and the host organisation may need to agree on who should lead the investigation process.

1.2.4 When the Respondent Is Not a Member of the UL Community

If the respondent is, for example, a volunteer, a contractor (or person employed by a contractor) or another individual engaged by UL, the University will consider the circumstances and shall take such action as deemed appropriate in the circumstances. UL will be restricted in the action it can take where the respondent is not a UL staff member or student and, as such, is not subject to all UL policies and procedures, such as disciplinary procedures.

If the respondent is not a person engaged by UL (such as a conference attendee), the University will offer to the complainant whatever support they require, including assisting them to liaise with the Gardaí, should they wish to do so.

1.2.5 When the Complainant Is Not a Member of the UL Community

Where a report is made by a person who is not a student or staff member of UL against a UL student, the University will consider the circumstances of the report and shall take such action as deemed appropriate in the circumstances.

1.2.6 Situations and Locations in Which This Policy Applies

This policy applies to all registered students of UL who have experienced or been accused of discrimination, harassment or bullying in the course of their study at UL at all locations and in all situations, including circumstances that arise off campus.

The policy applies to all areas of UL operations and programmes. It includes

- conduct on the UL campus
- conduct off campus, i.e. in places where UL students are engaged in an activity connected to and approved by UL
- conduct at official events such as UL-approved social functions, conferences, sporting events, field trips and work assignments
- conduct during UL Student Life or PSU activities, including clubs and societies events and when fulfilling leadership roles
- communications: written, email, telephone, social media and other online formats, within the working hours and beyond

Where the conduct is not connected to UL activities, such as during any non-UL gathering or event on or off campus (including at social gatherings involving students and staff members as well as posts on social media), this policy shall be applied where it is considered appropriate to do so having regard to the particular circumstances, including, but not limited to

- the nature of the issue(s) raised
- the extent of any ongoing interaction between the individuals concerned in the UL setting
- the potential impact on the safety, health and wellbeing of the individuals concerned and of other members of the UL community

1.2.7 Key Roles and Responsibilities

The Provost & Deputy President is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and monitored. Ultimate responsibility for the policy rests with the UL President.

The preliminary complaint process and, if invoked, the sanction phase are undertaken through the Complaints, Discipline & Vetting Unit, which operates under the remit of the Associate Vice President Academic Affairs and, ultimately, the Provost & Deputy President's Office.

The Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Office is responsible for reviewing this policy every two years. When the respondent is a UL employee, the [Policy and Procedures for Workplace Dignity and Respect](#) will apply, and the Director of Human Resources is responsible for ensuring that that policy is implemented and monitored.

1.3 Definitions

1.3.1 Dignity

Dignity refers to the inherent worth of every human being, as everyone is capable of acting morally, regardless of their background. This quality makes all human beings entitled to be respected. It also makes them responsible for treating others respectfully. Article 1 of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) states that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” Article 1 of the [EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#) asserts that human dignity is inviolable and must be respected and protected.

1.3.2 Respect

According to the UL [Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(HREDI\) Strategy \(2023-2027\)](#), respect is about dignity, human worth and care and involves fair treatment, a safe environment, fulfilling the right to privacy and valuing people. ‘Respect’ is the conduct that arises from our inherent dignity. On the other hand, disrespect, including discrimination, harassment or bullying, violates the dignity of both the person showing disrespect and the person who is disrespected. Disrespect can occur at the level of the individual or the institution. The key factor in identifying disrespectful behaviour is the impact the behaviour has on the individuals or groups that experience it rather than the intent behind it.²

1.3.3 Complainant

The complainant is the person who makes a complaint.

1.3.4 Respondent

The respondent is the person or institution against whom a complaint is made.

1.3.5 Appellant

The appellant is the person (complainant or respondent) who appeals the outcome of the formal complaint process.

² Refer to the [Equal Status Acts \(2000-2021\)](#), [Employment Equality Acts \(1998-2023\)](#) or EU directives for more information on the meaning of intent behind harassment and discrimination.

1.3.6 Protected Grounds

Irish law prohibits discrimination through the [Employment Equality Acts \(1998-2023\)](#) and the [Equal Status Acts \(2000-2021\)](#) under nine protected grounds. They are

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Gender | 4. Age | 7. Race |
| 2. Civil status | 5. Disability | 8. Religion |
| 3. Family status | 6. Sexual orientation | 9. Membership of the Traveller community |

1. Gender (including gender identity): A person's gender identity, including male, female, other
2. Civil status: a person's civil status, be it single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, civil partnered or formerly civil partnered
3. Family status: Being a parent of a person under 18 years or the resident primary carer or parent of a person with a disability
4. Age: A person's age; this does not apply to a person aged under 16. Children are covered by child protection legislation and UL's [Child Protection Guidelines](#) and [Child Safeguarding Statement](#).
5. Disability: Includes people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions
6. Sexual orientation: A person's sexual orientation – LGBTQI+, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, non-binary, questioning, intersex, asexual or heterosexual³
7. Race: Includes race, skin colour, nationality and ethnic origin
8. Religion (including having no religion): A person's religious belief, background, outlook or lack of religious beliefs
9. Membership of the Traveller community: Now recognised as an ethnic group

Socio-economic status is recognised as a tenth ground of discrimination in the [UL HREDI Strategy \(2023-2027\)](#):

10. Socio-economic status: An individual's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education and occupation

1.3.7 Discrimination

The Employment Equality Acts (1998-2023) and Equal Status Acts (2000-2021) prohibit discrimination on specific grounds. Generally, discrimination⁴ occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another person in a comparable situation because they differ under any of the discriminatory grounds defined above. Two examples of this are given below:

- Discrimination on the ground of gender happens when one person is treated less favourably than another because one is a woman and the other is a man. Pregnant women or women on maternity leave are also protected under the gender ground. Under EU law, a transgender person who experiences discrimination arising from their gender reassignment, or transition, is also protected under the gender ground.⁵
- Racial discrimination happens when one person is treated less favourably than another because of their race, colour, nationality, or ethnic or national origins.

Note: This policy considers the impact of the intersection between two or more protected grounds when addressing discrimination and harassment.

³ For information about sexual harassment, please refer to the [UL Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy for Students and Staff](#)

⁴ Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC), [Equality laws in Ireland](#)

⁵ IHREC, [Work & Gender](#)

Types of Discrimination

Direct Discrimination

This is defined as the treatment of a person less favourably than another person who is in a comparable situation because they have a protected characteristic that

- exists
- existed but no longer exists
- may exist in the future
- is imputed to the person concerned. (This occurs where a person is labelled as having a protected characteristic even though they do not have that characteristics.)

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice, which appears unproblematic at first sight, puts a person who has a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage when compared with another person.

This provision, criterion or practice will not amount to discrimination when UL can show that the provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and that the means of achieving that aim are both appropriate and necessary.

Institutional Discrimination

Discriminatory policies may fall under the definition of indirect discrimination in this policy if they unjustifiably place a person who has a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage when compared with another person. Complaints against such discrimination can be lodged against the institution.

Furthermore, if the institution fails to adequately address reported incidents of discrimination, harassment or bullying, those incidents themselves can become forms of institutional discrimination, harassment or bullying. UL has vicarious liability for acts carried out by employees in the course of employment, whether or not the acts are carried out with the employer's knowledge or consent.⁶

Discrimination by Association

This occurs when a person who associates with another person is treated less favourably because that other person has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by Imputation

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because it is believed that they belong to one of the categories covered by the nine grounds, whether or not that is the case. For example, if a person has a dark complexion and is treated less favourable because it is assumed they are of a different race or nationality, this would be discrimination on the race ground.

Procuring Discrimination

It is an offence under the Equal Status Acts (2000-2021) to procure or attempt to procure another person to engage in discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

Instructing Discrimination

This occurs when someone orders or instructs another person who is in some way dependent, such as an employee, to discriminate against another person.

⁶ Section 15, Employment Equality Acts (1998-2023)

1.3.8 Intersectionality

Intersectionality means recognising that people’s identities and social positions are shaped by several factors, which create unique experiences and perspectives. These factors include, among others, sexuality, gender, race, disability, age and religion.⁷

According to the Submission on the Review of the Equality Acts (IHREC, 2023)⁸, it is noteworthy that “intersectional discrimination in this context is not intended to be synonymous with ‘multiple’ or ‘compound’ discrimination, which describe discrimination on multiple grounds which are then examined independently. Intersectional discrimination describes the unique disadvantage experienced by a person as a result of a combination of grounds which can only be understood by examining them together, rather than apart.”

1.3.9 Harassment

Under the Employment Equality Acts (1998-2023), harassment is defined as “any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the discriminatory grounds which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.”⁹ Harassment can be a once-off incident.

The protection against harassment extends to situations where the person subjected to harassment does not have the relevant characteristic related to the discriminatory ground but the perpetrator believes the person has that characteristic. For example, a perpetrator believes a student to be gay, to be a Traveller or to be Muslim when the student is none of these things.

The following list of examples of harassment is illustrative rather than exhaustive:¹⁰

- Verbal harassment – jokes, comments, ridicule or songs
- Written harassment, including graffiti, text messages, emails, social media and internet posts
- Physical harassment – jostling, shoving or any form of assault
- Intimidatory harassment – gestures, posturing or threatening poses
- Visual displays – posters, emblems or badges
- Excessive monitoring of work (without reasonable cause)
- Isolation or exclusion from social activities
- Unreasonably changing a person’s job content or targets
- Inappropriate scrutiny of the activities of others
- Pressure to behave in a manner that the person believes to be inappropriate
- Cyber-harassment, whether conducted on a personal device or company equipment

In addition, the policy takes into consideration internal policies and regulations as well as teaching and learning materials that may pertain to the identified patterns of harassment, as described above, which undermine the dignity of students. The university is dedicated to addressing these issues by revising the current policies and teaching and learning materials and providing training to those individuals involved.

1.3.10 Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment as a sub-category of harassment is defined under the Employment Equality Acts (1998-2023) as any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile,

⁷ Advance HE, [Athena SWAN Ireland FAQs: Intersectionality](#)

⁸ IHREC (2023), [Submission on the Review of the Equality Acts](#)

⁹ Section 14 A (7), Employment Equality Acts (1998-2023)

¹⁰ IHREC (2022), [Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work](#)

degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Many forms of behaviour can constitute sexual harassment. A single incident may constitute sexual harassment.

Reports and complaints of sexual harassment are addressed under policies and procedures dedicated specifically to this special sub-category of harassment owing to its unique nature and sensitivity. Refer to the [UL Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy for Students and Staff](#) and the [UL Sexual Violence and Harassment Procedure for Students and Staff](#) for the complete policy and procedures, respectively, on this subject.

1.3.11 Bullying

As defined by the national [Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work](#)¹¹ (hereafter referred to as the Code of Practice on Bullying at Work), “Workplace bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could be reasonably regarded as undermining the individual’s right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work, but, as a once off incident, is not considered to be bullying”. The Code of Practice on Bullying at Work applies to study and educational places as well as to the workplace.

How Bullying Manifests Itself in the Workplace

The [Code of Practice on Bullying at Work](#) further states that bullying in the workplace (and, in the context of this policy, the educational setting) “should meet the criteria of an on-going series of an accumulation of seriously negative targeted behaviours against a person or persons to undermine their esteem and standing in a harmful, sustained way. Bullying behaviour is offensive, on-going, targeted and outside any reasonable ‘norm’. A pattern and trend must be involved so that a reasonable person would regard such behaviour as clearly wrong, undermining and humiliating. It involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is usually intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people – but the intention is not important in the identification process.”

The Code defines bullying activities as involving “actions and behavioural patterns, directly or indirectly, spoken and/or written” and that could include “the use of cyber or digital means for the goal of bullying.” According to the Code, “bullying events, delivered through cyber means, may also be covered by the requirements of the 2005 Act”.

The Code sets out the following behaviours, which are not exhaustive, as being likely to give rise to a pattern of bullying behaviour (content in square brackets added):

- Exclusion with negative consequences
- Verbal abuse/insults [jokes, comments, ridicule or songs, banter]
- Being treated less favourably than colleagues in similar roles [other students]
- Belittling a person’s opinion
- Disseminating malicious rumours, gossip or innuendo
- Socially excluding or isolating a person within the work [or study] sphere
- Intrusion – pestering, spying or stalking
- Intimidation/aggressive interactions
- Excessive monitoring [without reasonable cause] of work [or study]
- Withholding information necessary for proper performance of a person’s job [or study]

¹¹ Health and Safety Authority and Workplace Relations Commission (2021), [Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work](#)

- Repeatedly manipulating a person’s job [study] content and targets
- Blaming a person for things beyond their control
- Use of aggressive and obscene language
- Other menacing behaviour

Additionally, in line with changes in the digitised world, UL considers the following behaviours when referring to acts of bullying:

- Cyberbullying or cyber-harassment using electronic means, such as computers, tablets and mobile phones, whether conducted on a personal device or UL equipment
- Cyberbullying through SMS, text or apps or on social media or forums, including sending, posting or sharing negative, harmful, false or mean content about someone else

In line with the [Code of Practice on Bullying at Work](#), this policy does not aim to address physical assault in an educational environment. Accordingly, where it may be a risk or where it has occurred and is therefore established as a future risk, UL retains and promotes a zero-tolerance approach to such behaviour from any quarter. Violence is a criminal matter and should be reported to An Garda Síochána.

What Does Not Constitute Bullying in the Educational Environment

The [Code of Practice on Bullying at Work](#) states the importance of distinguishing bullying from other inappropriate behaviours or appropriate engagement in the workplace (or educational environment). While a once-off incident of bullying behaviour may be an affront to dignity at work (or study) and may be unsettling, the code maintains that the level of distress from such an incident does not of itself fall within the definition of bullying and that other remedies should be sought for such scenarios. The Code claims that such once-off behaviours cannot be presumed to be done in a targeted, purposeful and unremitting way.

Furthermore, the Code asserts that “Apart from once-off behaviours, other on-going behaviours which may upset or unsettle a person may not come within the bullying definition either. Behaviour considered bullying by one person may be considered routine interaction by another, so the ‘reasonableness’ of behaviours over time must be considered. Disrespectful behaviour, while not ideal, is not of itself bullying. Conflicts and disagreements do not, of themselves, make for a bullying pattern either. There are various workplace [or study space] behavioural issues and relationship breakdowns which are troubling, upsetting and unsettling but are not of an adequate level of destructiveness to meet the criteria required for a bullying case.”

Objective criticism and corrections intended to provide constructive feedback to a student are not usually considered bullying but are intended to assist the student with their study. The following behaviours (not exhaustive) do not constitute bullying or harassment:

- Expressing differences of opinion strongly
- Offering constructive feedback, guidance or advice about study-related behaviour, which is not of itself welcome
- Reasonable corrective action taken by a supervisor relating to the direction of students (for example, taking reasonable disciplinary actions or assigning tasks)
- Arguments or other interpersonal conflict that can occur in the classroom, in teams or in student clubs and societies

Note: As harassment can be an isolated behaviour, a once-off disrespectful behaviour could be categorised as harassment depending on the identity of the targeted individual.

1.3.12 Other Disrespectful Behaviours

Instances of disrespectful behaviour that are not repeated (and therefore cannot be categorised as bullying) and are not associated with any protected grounds cannot be classified as harassment. However, they do have the potential to undermine the dignity of individuals and groups and are likely to lead to discrimination, harassment or bullying. For example, isolated incidents of incivility, humiliation or ignorance may lead to discrimination, harassment or bullying in the future.

Mindful of its commitment to being proactive, UL aims to address such behaviours to prevent potential occurrences of discrimination, harassment or bullying. Other disrespectful behaviours may be dealt under disciplinary procedures as breaches of the University's Student Code of Conduct¹².

1.3.13 Victimisation

A person is victimised when they are treated less favourably because they made a complaint of discrimination, harassment or bullying.

1.3.14 Bystander

A person who is present when something happens and who sees it but does not take part in it is referred to as a bystander.

An **active bystander** is a person who witnesses and recognises a harmful or potentially harmful act and does not ignore it or walk away.

An **upstander** is a person who is present when something happens and speaks up or acts in support of an individual or cause, particularly intervening on behalf of someone who is under threat of harm or attack.¹³

1.3.15 Complicity

A person who knowingly helps, promotes or encourages any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying or any other form of disrespectful treatment by another person is said to be complicit.

1.3.16 Informal Complaint

In certain cases, those who want to make a complaint about the behaviour of another person may wish to resolve the matter informally. The informal procedure would apply where the complainant does not want to pursue a formal investigation but wants the inappropriate behaviour to stop and may want to put measures in place to support this.

1.3.17 Formal Complaint

A formal complaint is made when a person makes a statement about discrimination, harassment or bullying to UL and requests the University to take action.

1.3.18 Precautionary Measures

When a formal complaint of discrimination, harassment or bullying is made to UL, reasonable precautionary measures may be put in place depending on the complaint and pending the outcome of UL's investigation process or a criminal investigation process. Precautionary measures, which must be reasonable and proportionate, are put in place to protect the best interests of all parties involved. A precautionary measure is neither a sanction nor a pre-determination that a breach of discipline or a criminal offence has occurred.

¹² Chapter 6 of the [Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures](#)

¹³ [Glossary of key terms for Social, Personal and Health Education \(SPHE\) \(curriculumonline.ie\)](#)

1.3.19 Burden of Proof

Under this policy, the burden of proof can be shared between the complainant and the respondent except in proceedings where it is the responsibility of the investigating body to investigate the facts. In other words, once facts are established from which it may be presumed the complainant has been less favourably treated on a prohibited ground, the onus is on the respondent to prove that the treatment was not discriminatory.

1.3.20 Vicarious Liability

When a person or entity is legally responsible for another person's actions, the person or entity is said to be vicariously liable. UL is liable for any act of discrimination by an employee in the course of their employment, whether the act is carried out with or without UL's knowledge or consent, unless UL can prove that it took reasonable steps to prevent the discrimination.¹⁴ It is therefore vital that UL has comprehensive anti-discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment policies in place and that the policies are properly applied.¹⁵

In addition, UL has a duty under the Acts to protect its employees in relation to discrimination or harassment coming from third parties such as service users, contractors and suppliers.¹⁶

1.3.21 University Advocates

Appointed by the UL President, the [University Advocates](#) are independent officers who, for the purpose of this policy, investigate and prosecute complaints related to alleged violations of this policy by students. With due regard to the rights of both the complainant and respondent, the University Advocates promptly carry out investigations to determine whether or not this policy or the UL Student Code of Conduct has been breached.

1.3.22 Discipline Committee

A complaint may be referred from the University Advocates to the Discipline Committee. The Discipline Committee comprises four members: a nominee from the President, who will chair the committee; a nominee of Academic Council; and two nominees from the students' unions.

1.3.23 Appeals Committee

Decisions of the Discipline Committee can be appealed by either side to the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee comprises four members: a nominee of the UL President, who will chair the committee; two Academic Council nominees; and the students' union President or their nominee.

¹⁴ Section 15, Employment Equality Acts (1998-2023)

¹⁵ IHREC, [Explanation of Terms - IHREC - Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission](#)

¹⁶ IHREC, [The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 – A Summary](#); Section 15, Employment Equality Acts (1998-2023)

2. Context

2.1 Legal and Regulatory Context

This policy ensures compliance with or gives action to the following legislation or directives:

- [Equal Status Acts \(2000-2021\)](#)
- [Employment Equality Acts \(1998-2023\)](#)
- Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, Section 42, [Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014](#)
- S.I. No. 674/2020 – Industrial Relations Act 1990 (Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work) Order 2020
- Data Protection Acts (2003-2018)
- EU Race Directive (2000/43/CE)

2.2 Other Context

This policy is related to the following internal policies and procedures:

- [UL Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy \(2023-2027\)](#)
- [UL Sexual Violence and Harassment \(SVH\) Policy for Students and Staff](#)
- [UL Sexual Violence and Harassment \(SVH\) Procedure for Students and Staff](#)
- UL Student Code of Conduct (chapter 6 of the [Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures](#))
- [Policy and Procedures for Workplace Dignity and Respect](#)
- [UL Acceptable Behaviour in the Workplace Policy](#)
- [UL Child Protection Guidelines](#)
- [UL Child Safeguarding Statement](#)
- [UL Safety Statement](#)

3. Policy Statements

3.1 Core Values

UL is a higher education institution dedicated to promoting equal opportunities and outcomes in relation to rights, respect, representation, recognition and resources for all its students and employees. As specified in the [UL Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2027](#), the five core values of social justice, inclusivity, respect, empowerment and agency are embedded throughout the University's institutional practices and communications. UL upholds the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty through continual assessment, action and reporting.

3.2 Zero-Tolerance Approach

UL is committed to providing students with a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation. UL applies a zero-tolerance approach to behaviours of this kind. When such behaviours are found to have occurred, they are deemed by UL to amount to a breach of discipline and a failure to meet required standards of conduct.

3.3 Collective Responsibility

All UL students and employees have a responsibility to themselves and to other UL students to contribute positively to promoting an institution where everybody is treated with dignity and respect and that is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying and from conduct that is likely to contribute to discrimination, harassment or bullying. All members of the UL community are expected to act as active bystanders or upstanders (as defined in section [1.3.14](#)) when safe to do so.

All students are responsible for reading and supporting this policy and cooperating with its procedures, including any investigation that might ensue. Additionally, all students are expected to be aware of the effects of their own behaviour, to challenge disrespectful misbehaviours and to report any incidents witnessed while maintaining confidentiality. It is important not to make false, malicious or vexatious complaints.

3.4 Reporting Issues

UL encourages people to come forward when affected by discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation and will strive to instil sufficient confidence in those affected that the reported issues will be dealt with appropriately, fairly and in a timely manner. Complaints will be treated with fairness, sensitivity, respect and confidentiality, and those who make a complaint will not be victimised (see next section).

Disclosures or reports made under this policy are not limited to UL premises or to the immediate geographical location of UL.

While the University provides a range of informal and formal options for resolving issues of discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation, it promotes informal options, where appropriate, as the most effective means of doing so.

In exceptional circumstances, UL is obligated under the law to report complaints or disclosures to the Gardaí, even when contrary to the wishes of the complainant – refer to section [3.6](#) for details.

3.5 Victimisation

Students involved in a complaint will not be penalised, treated less favourably or subjected to other adverse treatment because of pursuing their rights by way of taking action, supporting action or giving notice of intention to take or support action under this policy or under equality legislation. UL

will do all within its power to protect the parties involved in a complaint from intimidation, victimisation or discrimination arising from their involvement in the investigation process. Victimisation or retaliation against a complainant, witness or any other party will constitute a serious disciplinary offence and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal (in the case of an employee) or termination of registration (in the case of a student).

3.6 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a key principle of this policy and is essential to the integrity of the complaint process. All individuals involved in any process under this policy must keep as confidential any information that is disclosed to them as part of the process with the exception of accessing confidential support services or otherwise as required by law. Any unauthorised disclosure of confidential information will be considered to be a breach of this policy and will be dealt with in accordance with the [UL Student Code of Conduct](#). Throughout all proceedings, UL will act in compliance with its obligations under the Data Protection Acts 2003-2018.

UL reserves the right, and may be under an obligation, to share information in exceptional circumstances where such disclosure is necessary to protect an individual or the wider UL community from harm or to prevent a crime from taking place. For example, UL is obliged to report to the Gardaí complaints or disclosures, contrary to the wishes of the complainant, when the alleged incident involves a child under the age of 18 years or a vulnerable person. In addition, UL is obliged report to the Gardaí incidents that it believes pose a clear and imminent risk to the safety of the complainant or any other person on campus or any other person to whom it owes a duty of care.

3.7 Training

UL recognises the importance of providing appropriate training to ensure that this policy is understood by all students. The University undertakes to put in place a series of training initiatives aimed at combating discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation and fostering a culture of dignity and respect.

3.8 Risk Assessment

UL assesses the risk of discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation occurring in the educational environment and includes in its Safety Statement any necessary preventative measures.

3.9 Right to Legal Representation

UL respects the right of both complainant and respondent to access legal representation. Students are entitled to have legal representation if they choose. They should, however, be aware that any costs associated with representation will be solely their responsibility as UL does not cover expenses arising from the disciplinary process.

4. Procedures

4.1 General Procedure Statement

The following procedures will be used wherever a complaint of discrimination, bullying or harassment is made by or against a UL student.

In the event of a complaint being withdrawn by the complainant, UL may, in its discretion, investigate the issue in the interests of each party involved or in regard to its duty of care.

It is expected that UL students will normally pursue issues relating to discrimination, harassment or bullying under the informal procedures (where appropriate) in the first instance. However, UL recognises that there may be situations where the seriousness of the complaint warrants formal investigation from the outset.

These procedures have been designed to resolve allegations of discrimination, harassment or bullying swiftly and effectively and with minimal distress to all parties involved. In an investigation, all parties involved will be treated with fairness, sensitivity, respect and confidentiality. Additionally, they will be accorded due process throughout.

4.2 Timescale

Complainants are advised to make any informal or formal complaint of discrimination, harassment or bullying as soon as possible after the alleged incident to promote the possibility of a timely and effective outcome.

Under this policy, complaints can be made within **six months of the graduation of the student involved in the case** (as complainant or respondent). However, in exceptional circumstances, the Complaint, Vetting & Discipline Unit may extend this period at its discretion.

The focus of the process will not be on the length of time that has passed since the incident but rather on the impact of the delay on the likelihood of a fair investigation being carried out. Based on the information received as part of the investigation, the investigating body can recommend that a fair investigation will not be possible due to the passage of time and in consideration of the following issues:

- The circumstances of the alleged complaint
- The complexity of the alleged complaint
- The cause of the delay

Please note that an incident involving a member of staff or student no longer affiliated to UL would be difficult to investigate as they would be under no obligation to participate in a UL investigation. In these instances, relevant guidance or instructions will be provided if the complainant wishes to pursue further investigation.

4.3 Options Available to the Complainant

UL will not put pressure on a complainant to take a specific course of action and will fully support and respect the complainant's decision to proceed with an informal or formal complaint.

If a student has experienced any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying from another UL student or from a UL employee, they are advised to book an appointment with the relevant union support officer – [Student Information and Support Coordinator \(SISC\)](#) or [Postgraduate Engagement Officer](#) – to initially discuss their experience in the context of this policy.

4.3.1 Informal Complaint Procedure

Stopping the Behaviour

Making an informal complaint may be appropriate when the complainant simply wants the discriminatory act or offensive behaviour to stop or when the act or behaviour is not of a serious nature. The informal complaint may be verbal or written.

The complainant should, where possible, immediately make it clear to the respondent that the behaviour is unwelcome, unacceptable and offensive. In many instances, this may be sufficient to resolve the problem.

Working with a Third Party

The complainant can seek support from a third party to convey their dissatisfaction with the respondent's behaviour and to set up meetings to resolve the issue informally. The aim of the support will be to assist the complainant to deal with and raise the issue informally, effectively and constructively at source.

The third party can be chosen by the complainant from one of the following support service providers:

- [UL Student Life Support Services](#)
- [Student Information and Support Coordinator \(SISC\)](#)
- [Student Personal Advisor Support System \(PASS\)](#) (all students in UL are allocated an academic advisor)
- [Student Engagement & Support Officer in each faculty](#)
- Students' Union representative
- [UL Chaplaincy](#)
- [Student Counselling Service](#)
- [Disability Services](#)

The Dignity & Respect Designated Officer in the Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Office can also be consulted for signposting to the right person.

The third party involved in the informal complaint process should keep a brief nominal record of all interventions at this stage: the informal complaint, meetings, agreed actions and signed records of the final meeting. If inappropriate behaviour is identified from any involved parties, steps will be taken to cease the behaviour and implement monitoring measures to prevent recurrence. This involves drafting a plan with agreed-upon actions, which will be signed by both parties at the final meeting.

Records

Whether issues are resolved or unresolved, the third party will provide both parties with a note or letter outlining the outcome of the informal complaint and any agreements, if reached. The third party will retain a copy of the note or letter for possible future reference. These records, which do not include details of discussions, serve as evidence of UL's response to the informal complaint and its attempts to resolve it. The records may be referred to in the future in cases where, for example, the attempt to resolve the issue informally fails or the reported conduct persists after the informal procedure has been followed.

Records shall be kept in accordance with GDPR and data protection legislation. In the interests of fairness, all parties to the complaint should be reminded of the need to maintain confidentiality to the greatest possible extent both at this stage and throughout the process.

4.3.2 Formal Complaint Procedure

Submission

If an informal approach is deemed inappropriate or if the reported conduct persists after informal procedures have been followed, a formal complaint may be initiated. Formal procedures are invoked in any of the following situations:

- a) The complainant wants the complaint to be dealt with formally.
- b) The person to whom the complainant reports the allegation considers the complaint to be sufficiently serious to warrant the complaint being dealt with under the formal procedure (having first informed the complainant).
- c) Attempts to resolve the matter informally have failed.
- d) The conduct complained of continued after the informal procedure was followed.

To invoke the formal complaint procedure, the complainant should complete and submit the online formal complaint form through [this link](#). The complainant should clearly present the primary facts related to the alleged incident in the complaint form. The submitted form will be received by the Complaint, Discipline & Vetting Unit for initial investigation. The complainant will receive a copy of the submitted complaint form and a receipt confirming that it has been received by the Complaint, Discipline & Vetting Unit for initial investigation.

When submitting a complaint, complainants are advised to seek support from one of the following support service providers:

- [Dignity & Respect Designated Officer](#) (Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Office) – for signposting to the right person
- [UL Student Life Support Services](#)
- [Student Information and Support Coordinator \(SISC\)](#)
- [Student Personal Advisor Support System \(PASS\)](#)
- [Student Engagement & Support Officer in each faculty](#)
- Students' Union representative
- [UL Chaplaincy](#)
- [Student Counselling Service](#)
- [Disability Services](#)

Any of the above support services will help the complainant to articulate the details of the alleged incident as clearly as possible.

Notification

The Complaint, Discipline & Vetting Unit will review the complaint within five working days of receiving the complaint. The Unit will identify and notify the respondent in writing that an allegation of discrimination, harassment or bullying has been made against them. This notification will be provided within five working days of the complaint being submitted or as soon as possible. The respondent will be given a copy of the complainant's statement and will be advised that they are required to respond to the allegation in writing within 20 working days. The complainant will be provided with a copy of this response.

Refer to section [7.3.1](#) for more details on the complaint submission process.

Investigation

The complaint and response will be examined in detail by the Complaint, Discipline & Vetting Unit within five working days of receiving the response. If a response is not submitted within the 20 working days, the Unit will examine the complaint after the 20 working days has elapsed. When the respondent is a student, the case will be forwarded to the University Advocates (as defined in section

[1.3.21](#)), and when the respondent is a UL employee, the case will be referred to the Director of Human Resources for review with respect to UL's [Policy and Procedures for Workplace Dignity and Respect](#). The respondent may be the University when the act of discrimination, harassment or bullying occurred at institutional level.

The University Advocates will review the case promptly to determine whether or not this policy or the UL Student Code of Conduct has been breached. To help its deliberations, the University Advocates may request additional evidence from one or both parties. Frequently, the investigation will involve interviewing the complainant and any potential witnesses and reviewing relevant documentary evidence.

As previously defined in section [1.3.19](#), the burden of proof can be shared between the complainant and the respondent except in proceedings where it is the responsibility of the investigating body (i.e. the Advocates) to investigate the facts. This means that once a complainant provides evidence to prove they have been less favourably treated on a prohibited ground, the onus is on the respondent to prove that the treatment was not discriminatory.

Determination

After reviewing the complaint and available evidence, the Advocates will determine that

1. the facts of the case do not fall under the definition of discrimination, harassment or bullying as defined in this policy
or
2. the facts of the case arguably fall under the definition of discrimination, harassment or bullying as defined in this policy

In the event of the latter, the Advocates will ask the respondent to attend a meeting with them. The purpose of this meeting is to complete the investigation by hearing from all involved parties.

Anyone who attends this meeting will be formally cautioned under the Student Code of Conduct (section 2.3 of chapter 6 of the [Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures](#)) before the meeting proceeds. Attendance at this meeting is not mandatory, and declining to attend will not give rise to any adverse inference.

Outcome

A meeting with the Advocates may clarify that

- no violation of this policy or the Student Code of Conduct has occurred
or
- this policy or the Student Code of Conduct has been violated, and there is sufficient evidence to prove the alleged incident

In the latter situation, there are two possible outcomes:

- In accordance with the justice of the case, the case may result in a voluntary agreement between the University Advocates and respondent. At the discretion of the Advocates, the issue may be presented for mention to the Discipline Committee (as defined in section [1.3.22](#)).
- In the absence of a voluntary agreement or at the discretion of the Advocates, the case will be listed for a full hearing before the Discipline Committee. The Discipline Committee will consider the evidence presented by the University Advocates and make a determination on whether a breach of the relevant policies has occurred. In the event of a determination that a breach of the policies has occurred, the Discipline Committee will consider submissions from the University Advocates in relation to the appropriate penalty to apply.

The University Advocates may make a decision either at the end of the meeting or shortly after the meeting but within 10 working days at the latest.

Following the completion of the investigation, the University Advocates or the Discipline Committee (if involved) will report the result to the Complaint, Discipline & Vetting Unit, and the Unit will inform both the complainant and the respondent within a reasonable time period of the action to be taken.

Refer to section [0](#) for more details on the investigation process.

Precautionary Measures

Pending the outcome of an investigation following the submission of a formal complaint, UL may decide that precautionary measures need to be put in place. A precautionary measure is not a penalty or a sanction and does not indicate that it has been concluded that the person concerned has committed a breach of discipline or a criminal offence. Rather, precautionary measures may be put in place in the best interests of all parties involved, including witnesses. Decisions in relation to a precautionary measure will be made by the University Advocates. The complainant and respondent will be informed in writing of the decision as it relates to them.

Potential precautionary measures may include the following:

- A voluntary no-contact agreement
- A requirement that the respondent not contact the complainant or specific witnesses
- A requirement that the respondent remain out of specific common areas at specific times
- Alternative time arrangements in lab, study area, etc.
- In cases involving a student and supervisor, the appointment of another supervisor

In cases involving an employee, HR can adopt the following precautionary measures:

- Neutral suspension from work (if one party to the complaint is an employee)
- As an alternative to suspension, giving one party the option of taking voluntary leave (if that party is an employee)

In the event of an action carrying with it an immediate threat to life or the safety of any person or property, the Provost & Deputy President or person duly authorised to act in their stead may exclude the person who is reasonably suspected of being responsible for such action from access to UL facilities or property pending a formal hearing of any complaint made in that regard (regulation 1.10 of the [Student Code of Conduct](#)).

4.3.3 Appeal Against the Formal Complaint Decision

If a complainant or respondent is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint, they have the right to appeal the outcome on either of the following grounds:

- A material procedural irregularity demonstrably affected the outcome. In this instance, the appeal will focus on the conduct of the investigation in terms of fair process and adherence to procedure. It should be noted that an appeal is not a re-hearing of the original issues.
- There is material new information that one of the parties was unable, for valid reasons, to provide when the matter was being investigated and that would have significantly affected the outcome.

If a complainant or respondent chooses to appeal, they must comply with the following conditions:

1. The appeal form must be completed and submitted via this [link](#) within 10 working days of receiving notification of the outcome of the investigation. The appeal form must provide sufficient detail on the grounds for the appeal. Failure to submit the form by the deadline will mean that this internal procedure is concluded.
2. The relevant supporting documents must be uploaded along with the appeal form.

Once it receives the appeal, the Complaint, Discipline & Vetting Unit will forward the appeal to the Appeals Committee for consideration. The Appeals Committee will consider the request and conduct investigations. The Appeals Committee's decision, which is final, will be communicated to both parties.

The reasoned decision of the Appeals Committee will be announced by the Chairperson in the presence of the parties.

The Office of the Provost & Deputy President will confirm in writing the reasoned decision of the Appeals Committee within five working days of the hearing. A copy of the reasoned decision will be sent to the appellants. The complainant will be notified of the outcome of the hearing.

Refer to section [0](#) for more details on the appeals process.

4.3.4 Vexatious or Malicious Complaints

If a complaint is found to be vexatious or malicious, the complainant may be subject to disciplinary action. Such a complaint will generally be treated as misconduct under the UL Student Code of Conduct.

Please note that where a complaint is not upheld following a formal investigation, this does not necessarily indicate that the complaint was false, malicious or vexatious. The application of this provision should not in any way deter students or employees from bringing forward legitimate complaints.

4.3.5 Withdrawal of Complaints

From time to time, complainants may seek to withdraw their complaint after initiating a formal investigation. A complaint can be withdrawn by emailing the Complaints, Discipline & Vetting Unit at dignityandrespect@ul.ie.

In the event of a complaint being withdrawn by the complainant, UL reserves the right to investigate the claim or the reason for its withdrawal. At its discretion, UL may conduct an investigation in the interests of each party involved or in consideration of its duty of care.

4.3.6 Anonymous Complaints

Investigations into anonymous complaints are often limited and inconclusive and can be unfair to the person against whom an anonymous complaint is made. To ensure fairness to all parties involved and to ensure due process, UL will not accept anonymous complaints or testimony from anonymous witnesses.

However, members of the UL community who wish to report incidents of discrimination or harassment anonymously can use the [Speak out toolkit](#) to alert the University. It is important to note that while this platform raises awareness of ongoing incidents, it does not trigger the investigation process.

4.3.7 Investigations by An Garda Síochána

Where the complainant identifies a breach of this policy that constitutes a potential criminal offence or an immediate threat to safety, they have the right to report the matter to the Gardaí. Individuals should also inform UL through school/department heads so that appropriate steps can be taken and support provided.

Should a complaint submitted to UL be investigated by An Garda Síochána, the University reserves the right to suspend its own investigation, based on the individual facts of the case, until the investigation by An Garda Síochána has come to an end. Once UL is notified by the complainant that the Garda investigation has been completed, the University investigation will commence.

Furthermore, An Garda Síochána may request that UL's internal investigation be suspended until An Garda Síochána states that the internal investigation can resume. UL will keep the situation under review. The complainant and respondent will have the right to contest this decision, which will be considered by UL.

4.3.8 Monitoring and Reviewing This Policy

UL is committed to reviewing this policy every two years to align with changes in the law, relevant case law, UL's experience of implementing it, feedback from people's experiences, and any other external factors or developments that are relevant. The review process will be conducted by the Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Office in consultation with key stakeholders.

5. Related Documents

- [UL Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy \(2023-2027\)](#)
- [UL Sexual Violence and Harassment \(SVH\) Policy for Students and Staff](#)
- [UL Sexual Violence and Harassment \(SVH\) Procedure for Students and Staff](#)
- UL Student Code of Conduct (chapter 6 of the [Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures](#))
- [Policy and Procedures for Workplace Dignity and Respect](#)
- [UL Acceptable Behaviour in the Workplace Policy](#)
- [UL Child Safeguarding Statement](#)
- [UL Child Protection Guidelines](#)
- [UL Safety Statement](#)

6. Support Services

6.1 Internal Support Services


- [UL Student Life Support Services](#)
- [Student Information and Support Coordinator \(SISC\)](#)
- [Student Personal Advisor Support System \(PASS\)](#)
- [Student Engagement & Support Officer in each faculty](#)
- Students' Union representative
- [UL Chaplaincy](#)
- [Student Counselling Service](#)
- [Disability Services](#)
- [Student Health Centre](#)
- [Dignity & Respect Designated Officer](#) (Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Office)

6.2 External Support Services

- [Doras Luimni](#)
- [GOSHH](#)
- [Limerick Mental Health](#)
- [Mid West Aries](#)
- [Pieta](#)
- [Move Ireland \(Men Overcoming Violence\)](#)
- [Samaritans](#)

7. Appendices

7.1 [Complaint Form](#)

 <p>UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH</p> <p>Student Dignity & Respect Policy Complaint Form</p>	
<p>This form is used for reporting incidents relating to discrimination, harassment or bullying as defined in the Student Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedures.</p>	
1. Complainant Information	
Full name	
University ID number	
Address	
Contact email	
Contact phone number	
Which UL community category applies to you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Student – Other
<p><u>Protected Grounds</u> Please select the characteristics (grounds) that may have been a factor in the incident you're reporting. Select all the grounds that apply. (You can find the definition of protected grounds in the Student Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedures under Definitions.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gender – Civil status – Family status – Age – Disability – Sexual orientation – Race – Religion – Membership of the Traveller community
2. Respondent Information	
Full name	
University ID number (if known)	
Contact email	
Contact phone number	
Which category best describes the respondent?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Student – Employee – Institution (UL) – Other
3. Witness Information (if applicable)	
Full name	
University ID number (if known)	
Contact email	
Contact phone number	
Which UL community category best describes the witness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Student – Employee

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Other – Not a UL community member
4. Incident Details	
Date of incident	
Time of incident	
Location of incident:	
In your opinion, which option best describes the behaviour displayed in the incident? (Please select all options that apply.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Discrimination – Harassment – Bullying – Not sure
Describe the incident. (Please provide as much detail as possible, including what happened, who was involved, and if there were any witnesses.)	
Select and upload any documentation (if available) that supports your complaint.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Documents – Emails – Text messages – Screenshots – Photos – Other (please specify):
5. Informal Resolution	
Have you attempted to resolve the issue through the informal complaint procedure?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Yes, but it was not successful. – No, I prefer to make a formal complaint.
6. Support Services	
Have you liaised with any UL support service in relation to the incident?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Yes – No
If yes, please select the relevant support service. Select all applicable options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dignity & Respect Designated Officer – UL Student Life Support Services – Student Information and Support Coordinator (SISC) – Student Personal Advisor Support System (PASS) – Faculty Student Engagement & Support Officer – Students' Union representative – UL Chaplaincy – Student Counselling Service – Disability Services – Other (please specify):
7. Optional Questions	
The following questions are optional, but your responses will assist the investigating body in identifying the intersectional nature of the complaint. (Please refer to the Definitions section of the Student Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedures for a definition of intersectionality.)	
Do you consider yourself to have a disability within the definition of the Disability Act 2005? The Disability Act 2005 defines disability in relation to a person as “a substantial restriction in the capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Yes – No – Prefer not to say

<p>of the person to carry on a profession, business or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment”</p>	
<p>What is your ethnic group/background?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – White – White Irish – Irish Traveller – Roma – Any other White background – Black or Black Irish – African – Any other Black background – Asian or Asian Irish – Chinese – Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi – Any other Asian background – Middle Eastern/North African (Arab/Persian/Turk/Kurd/Afghan) – Other, including mixed-group background – Mixed (please specify): – Other (please specify): – Prefer not to say
<p>How do you describe your gender?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Male – Female – Non-binary – Prefer not to say
<p>Do you identify as transgender?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Yes – No – Prefer not to say
<p>What is your sexuality?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Heterosexual – Asexual – Bisexual – Gay/lesbian (homosexual) – Transgender – Queer – None of the above – Prefer not to say
<p>Which best describes your religious affiliation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Non-religious – Atheist – Roman Catholic – Anglican or member of the Church of Ireland – Orthodox Christian – Protestant – Presbyterian – Muslim – Jewish – Other

– Prefer not to say

8. Declaration

I certify that the information provided in this complaint form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that providing false information may result in disciplinary action. I consent to UL using the information provided in this form to investigate and resolve this complaint. I also consent to the information being shared with the investigating team and decision-making bodies and, at the discretion of University of Limerick, with the respondent.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

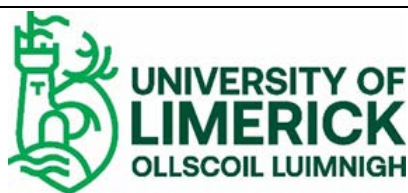
9. Submission Instructions

Please click the Submit button at the end of this online form to submit the completed form. Please refer to the Student Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedures for further guidance and assistance on the complaint process.

Note: In circumstances where the submission link is not accessible, this complaint form can be emailed to dignityandrespect@ul.ie along with attached supporting documents.

Thank you for your cooperation in upholding University of Limerick’s commitment to creating a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for all members of the UL community.

7.2 [Appeal Form](#)



Student Dignity & Respect Policy Appeal Form

This form is to be completed online and submitted via the provided link within 10 working days of receiving the investigation outcome notification. Failure to meet the deadline concludes the internal procedure.

1. Appellant Information

Case reference number	
Appellant name	
Appellant UL ID number	
Address	
Contact email	
Contact phone number	

2. Reason for Appeal

1. Specify any procedural irregularities affecting the outcome. Explain why you believe the investigation was not conducted fairly or correct procedure was not followed.	
2. Provide new information that was unavailable during the investigation and that you believe would significantly affect the outcome.	
Upload supporting documentation (if any)	

3. Declaration

I certify that the information provided in this appeal form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that providing false information may result in disciplinary action. I consent to UL using the information provided in this form to investigate and resolve this appeal. I also consent to the information being shared with the investigating team and decision-making bodies and, at the discretion of University of Limerick, with the other parties involved in the case.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

4. Submission Instructions

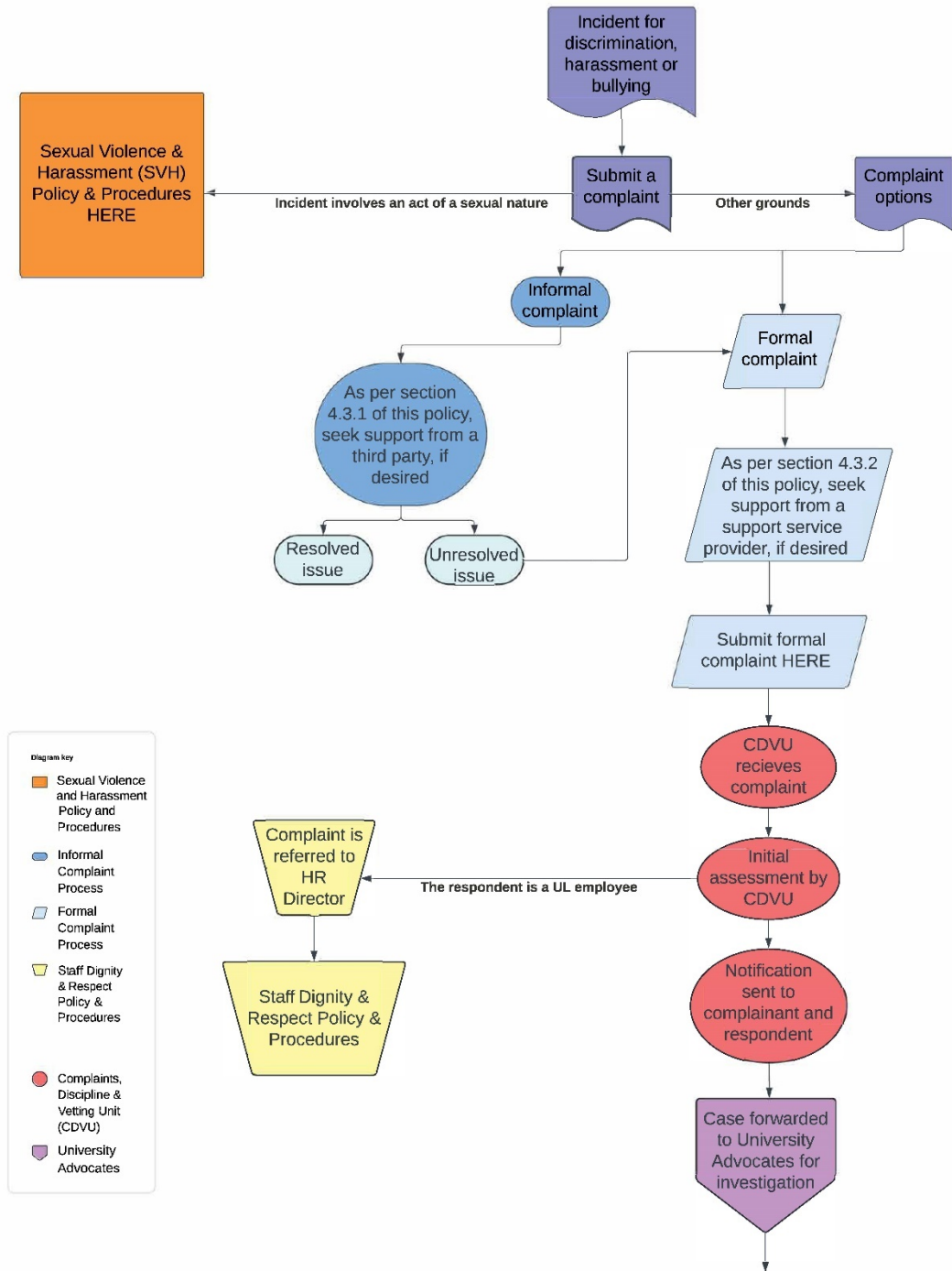
Please click the Submit button at the end of this online form to submit the completed form. Please refer to the Student Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedures for further guidance and assistance on the complaint and appeal processes.

Note: In circumstances where the submission link is not accessible, this appeal form can be emailed to dignityandrespect@ul.ie along with attached supporting documents within 10 working days of receiving the investigation outcome notification.

Thank you for your cooperation in upholding University of Limerick's commitment to creating a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for all members of the UL community.

7.3 Process Flowcharts
7.3.1 Complaint Submission Process

Flowchart 1:
Complaint Submission Process



See Flowchart 2 for the Investigation Process

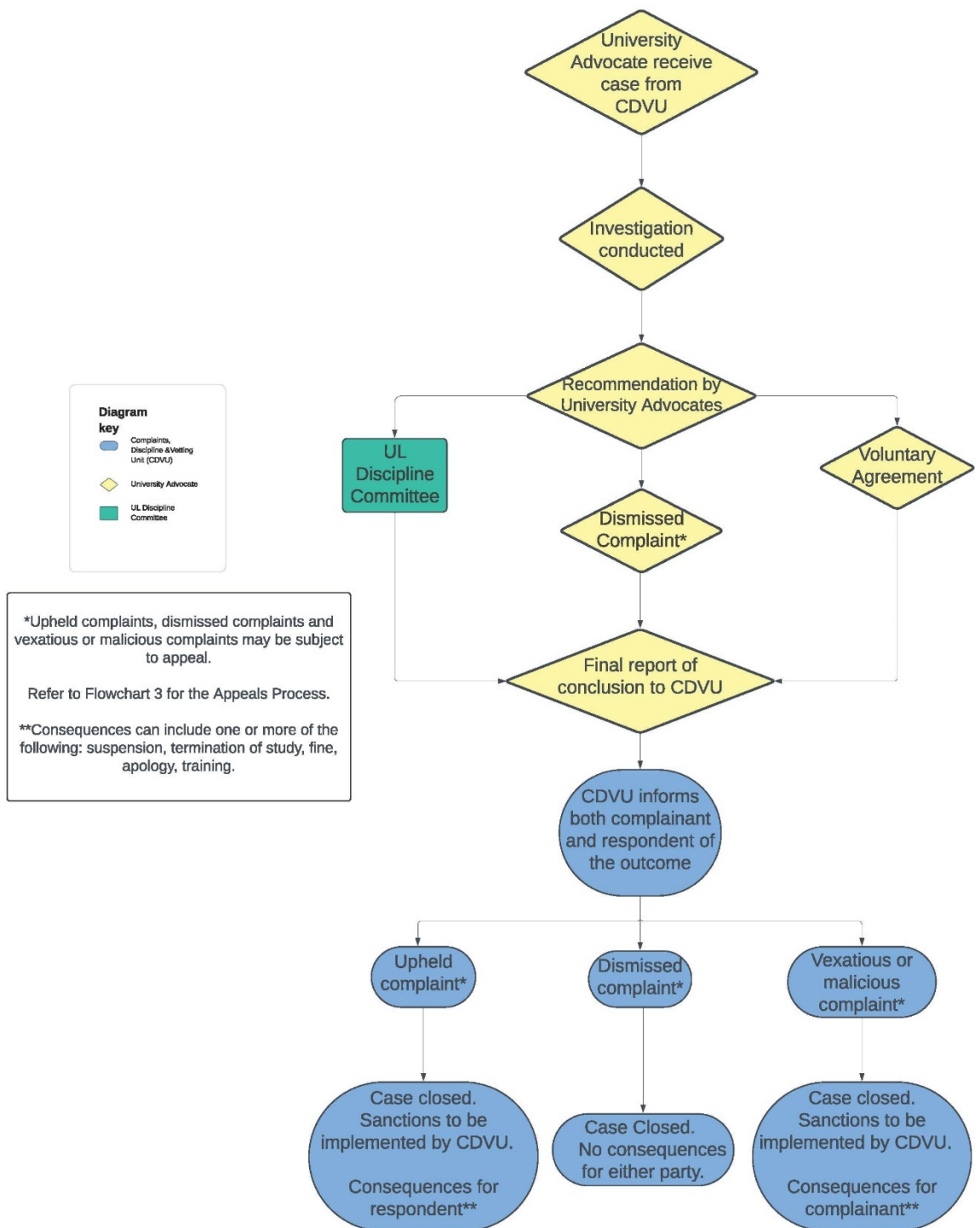
Text outline description.

Flowchart 1: Complaint Submission Process

- 1. Incident for discrimination, harassment or bullying (Node1)**
- 2. Submit a complaint (Node 2)**
 - a. Node 2 option 1: (Incident involves an act of a sexual nature) Sexual Violence & Harassment (SVH) Policy & Procedures**
 - b. Node 2 option 2: (Other grounds) Complaint Options (Node 3)**
- 3. Complaint options (Node 3)**
 - a. Node 3 option 1: Informal complaint (Node 4)**
 - b. Node 3 option 2: Formal complaint (Node 5)**
- 4. Node 4 option: As per section 4.3.1 of this policy, seek support from a third party, if desired.**
 - i. Resolved issue.
 - ii. Unresolved issue (Go to Node 5)
- 5. As per section 4.3.2 of this policy, seek support from a support service provider, if desired (Node 6)**
- 6. Submit formal complaint Here (Node 7)**
- 7. CDVU receives complaint (Node 8)**
- 8. Initial assessment by CDVU (Node 9)**
 - a. Node 9 option 1: Complaint is referred to HR Director**
 - Staff Dignity & Respect Policy & Procedures HERE
 - b. Node 9 option 2: Notification sent to complainant and respondent.**
 - Case forwarded to University Advocates for investigation

7.3.2 Investigation Process

**Flowchart 2:
Investigation Process**



Text outline description.

Flowchart 2: Investigation Process

1. **University Advocates receive case from CDVU (Node 1)**
2. **Investigation conducted (Node 2)**
3. **Recommendation by University Advocates (Node 3)**
 - a. **Node 3 Option 1**
 - Voluntary agreement. If yes go to 4. Final Report of conclusion to CDVU. If not, go to Node 3 Option 2.
 - b. **Node 3 Option 2**
 - Dismissed complaint [See Note 1]. If yes go to 4. Final Report of conclusion to CDVU. If not, go to Node 3 Option 3.
 - c. **Node 3 Option 3**
 - Final report of conclusion to CDVU. If yes go to 4. Final Report of conclusion to CDVU. If not, go back to Node 3 Option 1.
4. **Final report of conclusion to CDVU (Node 4)**
5. **CDVU informs both complainant and respondent of the outcome (Node 5)**
 - a. **Node 5 Option 1 - Upheld complaint [See Note 1].**
 - Case closed, Sanctions to be implemented by CDVU, Consequences for respondent [See Note 2]. If yes, end. If the outcome is not acceptable, go to Node 5 Option 2.
 - b. **Node 5 Option 2 -Dismissed complaint [See Note 1].**
 - Case closed, No consequences for either party. If yes, end. If the outcome is not acceptable, go to Node 5 Option 3.
 - c. **Node 5 Option 3 - Vexatious or malicious complaint [See Note 1]**
 - Case closed, Sanctions to be implemented by CDVU, Consequences for complainant [See Note 2]. If yes, end. If not the outcome, go to Node 5 Option 1.

Notes:

Note 1:

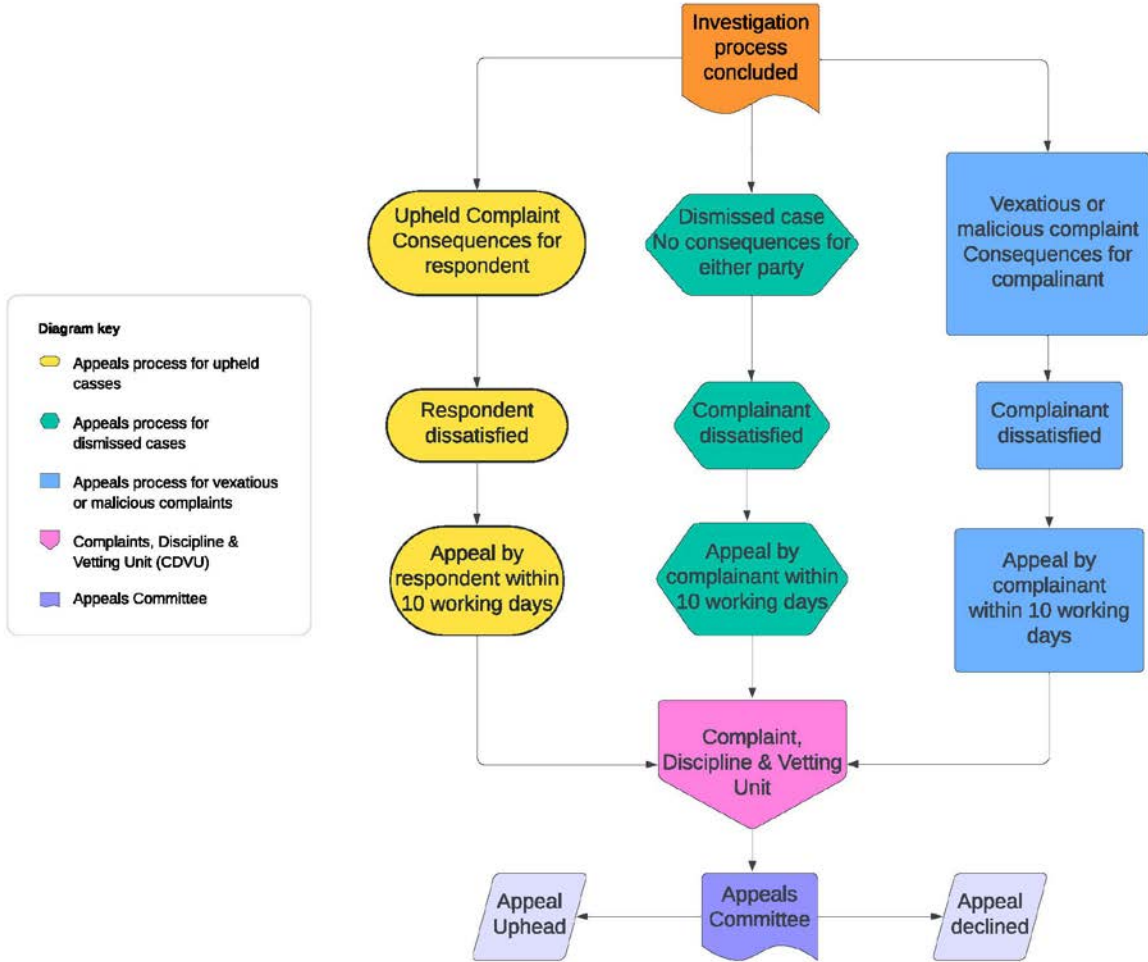
Upheld complaints, dismissed complaints, and vexatious or malicious complaints may be subject to appeal. Refer to Flowchart 3 for the Appeals Process.

Note 2:

Consequences can include one or more of the following: suspension, termination of study, fine, apology, training.

7.3.3 Appeals Process

Flowchart 3: Appeals Process



Text outline description.

Flowchart 3: Appeals Process

- 1. Investigation process concluded (Node 1)**
 - a. Node 1 Option 1: Upheld complaint. Consequences for respondent**
 - Respondent dissatisfied
 - b. Node 1 Option 2: Dismissed case. No consequences for either party**
 - Complainant dissatisfied
 - c. Node 1 Option 3: Vexatious or malicious complaint. Consequences for complainant.**
 - Complaint dissatisfied
- 2. Appeal by respondent within 10 working days (Node 2)**
- 3. Complaint, Discipline & Vetting Unit (Node 3)**
- 4. Appeals Committee (Node 4)**
 - a. Node 4 Option 1: Appeal Upheld**
 - b. Node 4 Option 2: Appeal Declined**

8. Document Control

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