



University of Lincoln Students' Union Staff Protocol

University of Lincoln Students' Union (ULSU) recognises the importance of clarifying the relationship and accountability between Staff and Members. ULSU aims to create and promote healthy working relationships based on mutual support and respect, which are vital to the success and wellbeing of the organisation and its Members. This can only be achieved if all Members of ULSU, ULSU Staff, the University and the local community treat each other with respect.

It is expected that all ULSU Members and members of ULSU Staff, are not subjected to unacceptable behaviour. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Inappropriate language and/or tone of voice
- Intimidating behaviour or language
- Physical violence or threatening behaviour

The purpose of this document is to provide further guidance and initial information on where or who to consult if and when issues arise. This document should be read in conjunction with the ULSU Code of Conduct.

Glossary

The following terms are utilised throughout this Policy and defined below for clarity:

- Staff – collectively refers to Team Members and Full-Time Staff.
- Sabbatical Officers – refers to the elected Student Leaders of the Students' Union.
- Part-Time Officers – refers to elected Volunteer Officers of the Students' Union.
- Representative – refers to any other Member of ULSU within an elected position, such as the President of a Sport or Society.
- Members – collectively refers to all student members of ULSU, including Team Members, Officers and Representatives.
- Complainant – refers to the individual making a complaint or, for the purposes of this policy, raising any concerns.

Responsibilities and Expectations

Officers and Representatives of ULSU are elected by ULSU Students and must adhere to their individual responsibilities and in line with the ULSU Code of Conduct.

All ULSU Members share a collective and individual responsibility to ensure that under no circumstances will a discussion take place on matters relating to the responsibilities, conditions of employment, performance or conduct of members of staff other than in appropriate, confidential forums such as a Board of Trustees or Sub-Committee meeting; this includes making reference to staff members and their work, either individually or as a collective, in any form of media or public forum, including but not limited to blogs, speeches, news articles and social media.

No ULSU Member should ever name individual staff members or groups of staff when criticising or praising the work of ULSU in public; staff and groups of staff should not be referenced or singled out in any political or public spaces, including online.

Whilst we recognise that freedom of speech and open debate are central to the culture of academic freedom, welfare has to be at the heart of ULSU's policies and practices. As such, the



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freedom to express views can sometimes be tempered by the need to secure freedom from harm. This approach is clearly outlined within the ULSU External Speakers Policy.

ULSU consider that public criticism of staff members or groups of staff has the potential to harm both their professional reputation and their personal wellbeing and therefore to do so would contravene this guidance. Furthermore staff do not have the right to reply to any such comments, and therefore there can be no appropriate challenge or response made to criticism or opinions.

Contravention of this guidance by members may result in disciplinary procedures in line with the Student disciplinary procedures for Member(s), Committees, Societies and Sports Clubs forming part of the Code of Conduct of the Students' Union.

ULSU Staff - Accountability

In the first instance, all members of staff are accountable to their designated Line Manager and from there to their respective SMT Lead; ultimately all staff are accountable to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is accountable to the ULSU Board of Trustees.

Raising Concerns

There are various processes and policies which apply to complaints and disciplinary processes, depending on the nature of the concern and the person or group in question – the ULSU Complaints Policy outlines the differing processes and is available in the footer of the ULSU website. Complaints submitted via the process outlined therein may ultimately be redirected to be investigated under a different procedure, depending on the nature of the matter.

Democracy of ULSU

Neither staff nor members must not become involved inappropriately in the democracy of ULSU or external political matters; further guidance on this can be found in:

- ULSU Political Activity Policy
- ULSU Guidance on Political Activity.
- ULSU Social Media Staff Policy and Guidance
- ULSU Social Media Policy for Students

It is expected that all staff and members will respect and maintain the integrity of the democratic governance of ULSU.

Where a decision is made or policy set by the Board of Trustees, it is expected that staff will not publicly criticise, challenge or undermine a set decision or policy. Staff must not publicly criticise any elected Officer or Representative of ULSU.

Sabbatical Officers – Accountability

ULSU will endeavour, where practicable, to deal with concerns regarding Sabbatical Officers informally to come to an efficient resolution. Where this is not possible, complaints will be dealt with depending on what the matter is regarding:

- If the complaint is regarding a Sabbatical Officer's actions as a Trustee, this will be dealt with by the Chief Executive, with the support of the Board of Trustees where necessary.



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- Where the complaint is regarding a Sabbatical Officer's actions as a Student Leader and Representative of ULSU, this will be investigated formally and in line with the Bye-Law 3, which could result in an Accountability Forum if necessary.

Concerns regarding Part-Time Officers or Representatives

If an individual has concerns regarding Part-Time Officers or any other Representative in terms of their behaviour and/or actions as a Representative of ULSU, this must be raised initially via the relevant Sabbatical Officer if the complainant is a Part-Time Officer, Representative or any other Member. Where this is not practicable, the complainant in question should contact the Student Voice Department of ULSU.

Code of Conduct

ULSU will not tolerate any breaches of the Code of Conduct by its Members, including conduct within democratic spaces and events. Any breach of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary procedures in line with the Student disciplinary procedures for Member(s), Committees, Societies and Sports Clubs forming part of the Code of Conduct of the Students' Union.

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