

Bullying, Harrassment, Racism and Sexual Misconduct Policy

1. This policy applies to all students and apprentices of the National Film and Television School and to behaviour on and off the School site. The NFTS is committed to a working and learning environment that is free from any form of violence abuse or harassment, and where gender identity, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and personal boundaries are respected. We expect all students and apprentices to promote and foster an inclusive environment, and ensure that no student, apprentice or staff member experiences violent or abusive behaviour, threats of such behaviour or any forms of abuse or harassment.
2. All references to students in this policy should be read to include apprentices.
3. The NFTS strongly encourages anyone who considers that they are suffering bullying, harassment, racism or discrimination¹ to take action using the procedures set out in this policy. The NFTS commits to take seriously and to investigate thoroughly any allegations of this type that are formally brought to its attention. No person will be treated less favourably for making an allegation in good faith. If the complaints are substantiated, the School's Student Misconduct procedure may be invoked.

Harassment

4. Harassment is unwanted behaviour which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive environment. Harassment may manifest itself in many ways, including verbal, physical and visual harassment. Examples include but are not limited to derogatory statements, abusive language, assault, physical interference, cartoons, drawings, emails and attachments affecting the dignity of another person.
5. Under this Policy unacceptable behaviour, whether intentional or not, can take a variety of different forms. The following descriptions are not exhaustive, but give an indication of the types of behaviour which the School considers to be unacceptable:
 - engaging in harassment on the grounds of a person's sexuality (or assumptions about a person's sexuality) including making derogatory homophobic, transphobic, or bi-phobic remarks or jokes aimed at a particular person, offensive comments relating to a person's sexuality, refusal to acknowledge a person's gender or identity, or threats to disclose a person's sexuality to others;
 - making offensive references to a person's race, ethnicity, skin colour, religion or nationality, dress, culture, background or customs which have the effect of ridiculing or undermining an individual or fostering hatred and/or prejudice towards individuals or particular groups;

¹ The Equality Act 2010 describes discrimination as 'Less favourable treatment to a person (or persons) that is not capable of being justified'.

² ². The School has adopted the IHRC's definition of anti-Semitism: <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>

- ignoring, disparaging, or ridiculing a person because of assumptions about their capabilities, or making offensive reference to an individual's appearance, in the context of their disability;
 - controlling or coercive behaviour, such as pressure to subscribe to a particular political or religious belief.
6. Online harassment may take the form of intimidating, hostile, offensive, or graphic posts on social media sites or chat rooms, or communications by email, text, or instant messaging.
7. Anyone posting information or comments online should avoid:
- Using offensive language
 - Sharing illegal content
 - Sharing provocative or inappropriate images
 - Forming or joining online groups that victimise others.

Bullying

6. Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour or an abuse of power, which is meant to undermine or humiliate the recipient. Bullying is a serious form of harassment and can occur in many types of relationship.
7. Examples of bullying include but are not limited to:
- Psychological intimidation, humiliation, excessive and/or unreasonable criticism or fault-finding of another individual
 - Spreading of malicious rumours or gossip
 - Isolation or non-cooperation at work or in study groups
 - Purposefully excluding someone from team or social activities
 - Picking on someone or setting them up to fail.

Sexual Misconduct

8. Sexual misconduct includes any behaviour of a sexual nature which is unwelcome, unreciprocated and which might cause a stressful or intimidating working, studying or social environment. It includes the following, whether or not within a sexual or romantic relationship, including one off incidents or encounters, and / or where consent to some form of sexual activity has been given and then withdrawn, or if consent has been given on previous occasions:
- sexual intercourse or engaging in a sexual act without consent;
 - attempting to engage in sexual intercourse or engaging in a sexual act without consent;
 - sharing private sexual materials of another person without consent;
 - kissing without consent;
 - touching inappropriately through clothes without consent
 - inappropriately showing sexual organs to another person;
 - repeatedly following another person without good reason;

- making unwanted remarks, looks, suggestions or jokes of a sexual nature.

Racism

9. Racism is when a person is treated less favourably, excluded, disadvantaged, harassed, bullied, humiliated or degraded because of their race or ethnicity. Examples of racism can include any unwanted conduct related to an employee's race, especially when it violates their dignity or creates an offensive environment.

Procedures for dealing with complaints of harassment, bullying or sexual misconduct

10. Owing to its very nature, bullying, harassment, racism and/or sexual misconduct are often not witnessed and victims, afraid of not being believed, are sometimes reluctant to come forward. It is frequently the word of one against the other, the perpetrator perhaps being perceived to be in a more senior position. The victim may also refrain from coming forward because of embarrassment and/or fear of subsequent victimisation. The NFTS does not tolerate any behaviour that is or could be perceived to be intimidating or discriminatory on any grounds and any allegations will be taken extremely seriously.
11. Any student who feels that they are being bullied or harassed or is experiencing unacceptable behaviour is encouraged to contact a member of staff with whom they feel comfortable discussing the behaviour, which could be a Student Wellbeing adviser, their Head of Department or tutor, or the Registrar.
12. The School undertakes to deal with all cases promptly, fairly and sympathetically. Reports may be made in the first instance, in confidence, to a Student Support and Wellbeing Adviser or to the School's Registrar who can advise you on how to initiate formal procedures (see the end of this document for contact details). Alternatively, you can use the Support and Report online tool <https://nfts-supportandreport.co.uk/> to report the matter.
13. If you find yourself being bullied or harassed or subject to any unacceptable behaviour, you may find the following points useful. These may be put into operation before any formal complaint is made.
 - You might feel it may be appropriate in some circumstances to attempt to resolve the situation informally in the first instance. You may wish to make it clear to the perpetrator verbally, and in writing if necessary, that the behaviour is unacceptable. You could write a logical and non-abusive letter to the perpetrator, explaining what they are doing and why the behaviour should stop.
 - Keep notes and any available evidence (such as screen shots etc) of the times and nature of all incidents, and where possible, get witnesses to provide factual material for the case.
14. In circumstances where you find it difficult or embarrassing to broach the subject with the perpetrator personally then a friend, a Student Union representative or a Student

Support and Wellbeing Adviser can make the initial approach on your behalf. Both parties should keep a note of the details of the approach.

15. If informal methods do not resolve the matter, or if you would prefer to have it dealt with formally by the School, it is recommended that you discuss the matter first with the Student Support and Wellbeing Adviser. With their support you should then submit a detailed report of the incident/s in writing to the Registrar and include as much information and evidence as possible of the allegation (including dates, times and places) together with details of the alleged harasser and witnesses, if any.
16. On receipt of the written report, an initial investigation will be undertaken and a decision made whether or not any formal action can be taken. If formal action is taken, the matter will be dealt with under the [Student Misconduct Policy](#).
17. Any person who thinks they may have witnessed harassment, bullying, racism or discrimination is encouraged to seek help and advice from Student Support and Wellbeing.
18. If at any stage it becomes apparent that the report was submitted with malicious or frivolous intent, it will be rejected with written reasons given. In that case, the person submitting such a report may be subject to disciplinary action.
19. At the conclusion of an investigation, the person who submitted a report will be told whether or not the matter has been upheld, and any remedial action taken. In this case, they will be asked to respect confidentiality with regards to the outcome.
20. The School is committed to providing support for members of its community affected by these issues. Support information is available on the Support and Report pages <https://nfts.workplace.com/groups/353587961973130> including internal and external support providers.
21. Contact details:
Student Support and Wellbeing: swellbeing@nfts.co.uk / tel: 01494 781382 or 731385.
Eleanor Wheal, Registrar: ewheal@nfts.co.uk

Updated November 2023