

Zero Tolerance Policy

1. Statement and Definitions

Reading University Students' Union will enforce a strict Zero Tolerance policy towards sexual harassment and discrimination in any form. Harassment, discrimination or any associated behaviours (outlined below) are defined by RUSU and includes the following:

1.1 Abuse

emotional or physical behaviour which intentionally harms or injures another person, often to gain control over them.

1.2 Anti-social behaviour

acts which cause harm, distress or discomfort to an individual, a group, a community, or an environment.

1.3 Bullying

offensive, intimidating, or malicious behaviour which can be physical, verbal and non-verbal (e.g. via text or social media).

1.4 Discrimination

when an individual or a group of people are treated less favourably based on a characteristic such as age, disability, gender reassignment or identity, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. This list is not exhaustive.

1.5 Harassment

unwanted behaviour that is offensive or makes someone feel distressed, degraded or intimidated.

1.6 Hate crime

crime which is motivated by prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or transgender identity.

1.7 Racism

the belief that someone is inferior because their colour, ethnicity, nationality or race, leading to discrimination.

1.8 Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature which could include sexual comments or jokes, touching, exposing yourself to someone without consent or sexual advances without consent, and sexual assault.

1.9 Violence

behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill a person or animal.

2. Unacceptable behaviours

This list of behaviours is not meant to be comprehensive but will outline behaviours which are deemed to be unacceptable and will not be tolerated in the Students' Union

- 2.1 Unwelcome sexual gestures, comments or innuendos with a sexual overtone
- 2.2 Unwelcome and/or irrelevant questions about your personal life (including sex, romance and sexual orientation)
- 2.3 Groping, pinching, slapping or touching another's body without their effective consent
- 2.4 Exposing yourself to someone
- 2.5 Entering the toilet that does not best accommodate your gender identity
- 2.6 Derogatory comments based on various characteristics (outlined in 1.4 Discrimination)

3. Reporting and Handling of Reports

Reporting may manifest itself in different forms, as it is not necessarily the victim who will come forward, but potentially a witness or bystander instead.

3.1 When a customer needs to report an incident, they may do so by speaking to any member of staff or security team. They can do so by using the Ask for Angela initiative to alert the member of staff that they are in a distressing or uncomfortable situation that they need to be removed from. All staff will be aware of their responsibilities and deal with the situation safely and efficiently. Staff include all bar staff, security staff, Venue Management, RUSU Welfare Officer and if necessary, signposting to the University's Welfare Team.

3.2 All members of staff will be able to signpost a customer to the online reporting system facilitated by the University of Reading, #NeverOK. In addition to this, they will be able to outline the process of reports to the reportee, which can also be found on the relevant web pages (reading.ac.uk/neverok or rusu.co.uk/neverok).

3.3 If the online reporting system is not suitable for the reportee, then it can be made clear the potential alternatives to take this matter further (see 6. Signposting to other services and authorities). There is also the option of being able to talk in person away from the time of the event, however we do encourage customers to come forwards at the time of the event for the fastest possible response.

3.4 Bystander reporting should be taken just as seriously as any individual reporting the same behaviour being conducted against themselves. The same processes are available to the bystander as would be the process for an individual who reported an incident against themselves.

4. Promotion of the Policy

- 4.1 The premises shall ensure the policy is consistently advertised to its visitors and staff.
- 4.2 The logo will be included on promotional material, including posters, leaflets and email signatures.
- 4.3 Posters of the logo and other information on the policy will be displayed as a permanent fixture in reception and by the bar.

5. Training

5.1 Management will ensure that all Full-Time Staff and Student Staff are briefed adequately on the policy.

5.2 All casual staff shall receive a briefing on the policy and its operations during staff training.

5.3 Security shall be briefed and trained on the policy and tested to ensure they can deal with a variety of situations.

6. Signposting to Other Services and Authorities

Anything that cannot or should not be dealt with internally at the Union, staff will be knowledgeable and know where to signpost to next. Depending on the circumstances and needs on the individual, the following external services will be signposted to the customer where necessary:

6.1 University of Reading Security Service

6.2 Student Welfare Team (based in the Carrington Building)

6.3 Emergency Services

7. Disciplinary actions

7.1 All perpetrators will be removed from the main space of the premises for discussion.

7.2 The manager or supervisor will, in the consultation with others, decide if the perpetrator has violated the zero tolerance policy.

7.3 If the policy has been violated, the perpetrator will be dealt with in a manner that correlates with zero tolerance of harassment.

7.3.1 This should **at minimum** involve the perpetrator's presence no longer being allowed in the premises on the day of the offense.

7.3.2 Visitors who break the policy on more than one occasion shall be dealt with in a more severe manner, including longer-term bans from the premises.

7.4 If deemed necessary by staff in the Students' Union, the student in question will be referred to either RUSU's internal procedures or the University's Student Disciplinary procedures.

7.5 If the Venue has been damaged as a result of the student's behaviour, and there is strong evidence to support this case, then action will be taken to recover costs from the student in line with University procedures.

7.6 Staff found breaking the policy shall be dealt with via the Venue Management Team, or if necessary, RUSU Management.