



## DPIR Code of Conduct

The Department of Politics and International Relations' (DPIR) Code of Conduct sets out standards of behaviour and good practice expected from academic, professional services staff, visitors, researchers, and postgraduate students.

We are committed to establishing an inclusive and supportive culture in which staff and students feel welcomed, accepted and given a voice, irrespective of individual and group difference. We each have a responsibility to create an environment where everyone feels equally safe and valued.

DPIR's Code of Conduct represents how we are all interconnected and recognises our in-person and virtual ways of working.

As a member of DPIR, we aim to:

- **create a safe and supportive workplace to research, teach and learn**
- **treat others with respect and dignity**
- **be trustworthy and accountable.**

This means, we will treat others with respect and dignity recognising that we differ from each other in backgrounds, beliefs, and cultures and that such differences can lead to conflicting expectations and interpretations of each other's behaviour, and misunderstandings.

This means, we are aware of implicit assumptions, and to work together constructively to improve understanding of other perspectives and beliefs. This could include:

- Positive personal interactions: showing respect for personal space, appreciation of all forms of diversity and an awareness and consideration of others, always.
- Understanding and respecting an individual's right to express their opinions and feelings; taking the time to listen and appreciate that the reactions of others might differ from our own personal and cultural expectations.
- Making everyone feel supported and included – it is not appropriate to make comments or jokes about the [protected characteristics](#) of any individual. Such remarks may offend and may make someone feel excluded.

Everyone in DPIR - staff, students, and visitors are part of our community. Expectations for [student conduct](#) in the Department follows the guidelines set by the University.

## **MEETINGS, LECTURES, SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES**

Open discussion, debate and challenge are essential elements of academic interaction and can only flourish when all participants treat each other with respect and consideration. All interactions should promote equal opportunities and treatment for all participants; there is a zero-tolerance policy for any interactions, intentional or unintentional, that constitute intimidation, harassment or discrimination.

The department seminar speaker guidance outlines its goals for improving speaker diversity and creating a learning environment that is conducive to the open exchange of ideas and academic debate and where all attendees. This guidance applies in all lectures, classes and seminars taking place in the department:

- Challenges should be directed towards ideas and should never be a personal attack on an individual expressing them. Participants must not use aggressive or intimidating language or disruptive behaviour such as persistent intervention or repetition of remarks or questions; and, they must respond appropriately to requests from the chair.
- Support should be given to students and early-career researchers who may have had less experience in meetings and seminars. Where the presenter has less experience, it may be helpful to allow only clarification questions during presentations, and other questions afterwards.
- Organisers and chairs of events and meetings are responsible for promoting and maintaining these principles. Participants should be reminded of the importance of treating others with respect – for example, in brief opening remarks and/or by referring to this Code of Conduct in accompanying information.

## **TEACHING AND SUPERVISION**

Teaching and supervision should be carried out in an inclusive environment to encourage participation. Organisers are responsible for ensuring that everyone is invited and welcome to contribute.

Staff and students are expected to conduct themselves respectfully to one another. Staff should be sensitive to the difference of power in the teaching relationship. Any critique or feedback should be concerned solely with the person's work and adapted to the recipient's level of experience.

Faculty should be conscious of the diversity of perspective of their audience (s) when lecturing, and when selecting examples and study material.

Everyone is encouraged to reflect on how they communicate in lectures, seminars and meetings, and the impact this can have on others.

## **SOCIAL AND NETWORKING EVENTS**

Social and networking and events organised as part of the departmental activity, such as informal drinks or team building events should follow the same guidelines; organisers and participants should be mindful to foster inclusivity and respectful exchanges.

## **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

DPIR does not tolerate any form of harassment, bullying and victimisation; and expects all members of the Department community, its visitors and contractors to treat each other with respect, courtesy and consideration adhering to the [University of Oxford's policy on Bullying and Harassment](#).

If a member of DPIR experiences bullying and/or harassment, there are processes in place to provide guidance and support.

Detailed information on how the Department aims to prevent Bullying & Harassment can be found on the Department's site (SSO required – further information below).

DPIR has a number of Harassment Advisors who offer confidential guidance and support on next steps. This includes detailed information on the options open to Department members if they wish to report an incident of bullying or harassment as either a victim or an active [bystander](#).

Harassment Advisors are trained to provide guidance on how to access further support and advice in the first instance. A conversation with a Harassment Advisor is simply that; it doesn't start a formal process but provides an opportunity for you to voice your concerns in a supportive, confidential and non-judgemental space.

## **DISCRIMINATION**

Discrimination is the prejudicial treatment of any individual based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, or sexual orientation.

DPIR does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

The Department adheres to the University's Equality policy. It is our duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that no member of our community is unlawfully discriminated against based on any protected characteristics.

## **DEALING WITH PROBLEMS**

If you encounter bullying or harassment, or witness behaviour that does not meet the standards outlined in this Code of Conduct, we encourage you to [report it](#) as soon as possible. We understand the importance of providing multiple options to report such incidents, ensuring that the individual concerned can choose an approach that feels suitable and manageable.

We are committed to addressing these issues promptly and providing the necessary support to ensure a swift resolution. Your well-being, and the maintenance of a respectful environment are our top priorities.

Complaints about Departmental facilities should be made to the Department's Operations Manager or Head of Administration and Finance. If you feel unable to approach one of those individuals, you may contact the Head of Department.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may take your concern further by making a formal complaint to the Proctors under the University Student Complaints Procedure (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>).

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by your college, you should raise it either with your tutor or with one of the college officers, Senior Tutor, Tutor for Graduates (as appropriate). Your college will also be able to explain how to take your complaint further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of its consideration.

**Additional Resources:**

**DPIR** [Classroom guidelines](#)

**Wellbeing at Oxford** - <https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/thriving-at-oxford>

**Harassment Advice:** <https://www.politics.ox.ac.uk/harassment-advice>

**18<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

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