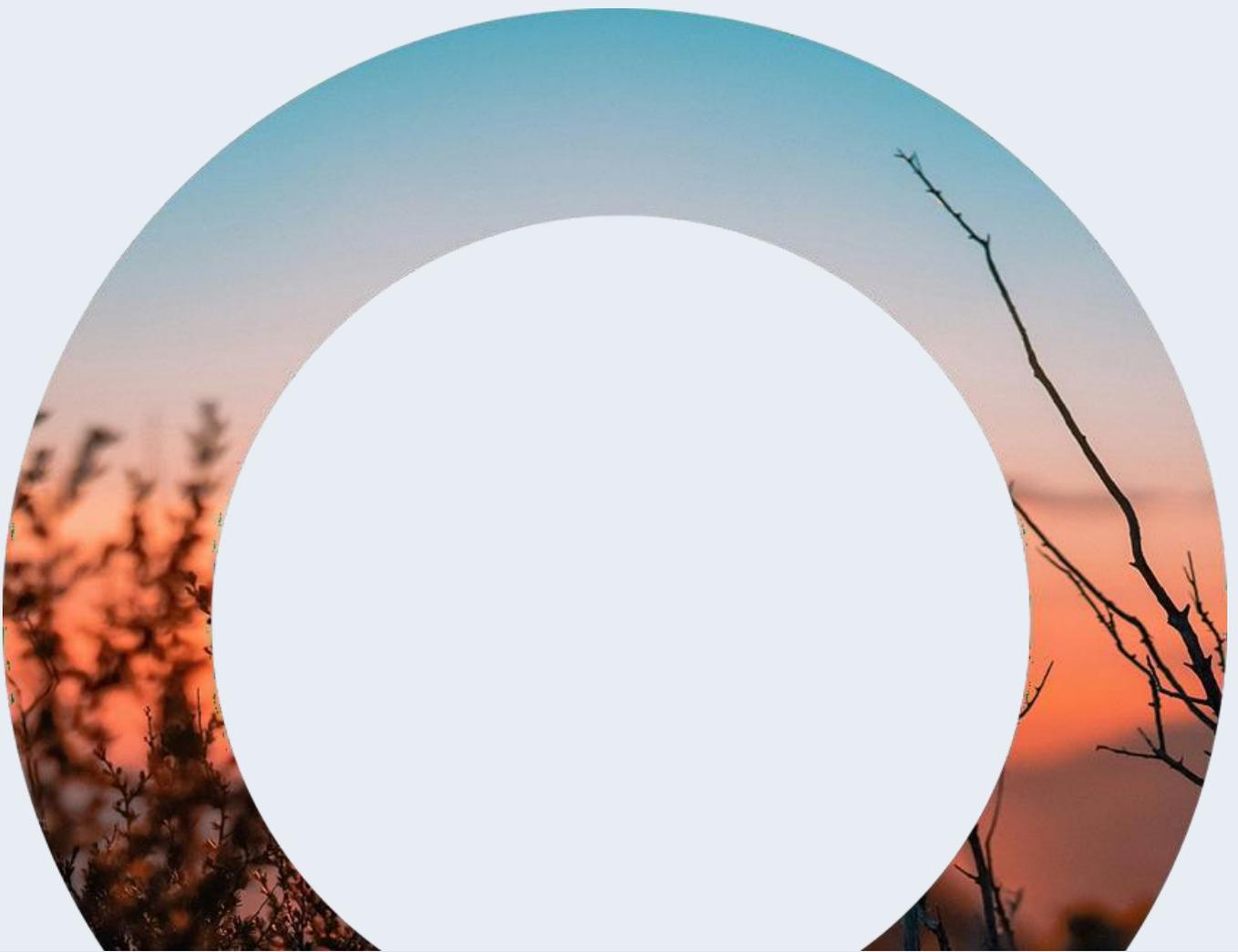


Values and Behaviours Policy

Approved Sep 25- Review Sep 27



At Open SU, our mission is ‘to make a positive difference for all OU students’. Our vision is that we will:

- Empower a student voice that is strong and effective in representing the diversity of our members.
- Work collaboratively with the University to ensure that students are at the centre of decision making.
- Build an inclusive community which nurtures a sense of pride and belonging.
- Provide relevant, quality services which enhance the student experience.

We want every member, including volunteers, staff, and those elected, selected, or appointed to positions of responsibility, to feel valued and respected. This includes the partners we work with from other organisations. This policy document is designed to support the way all Open SU members, volunteers and staff work together and represent the organisation. It aims to promote an environment where we are living our values and in which everyone feels comfortable, safe, and secure.

Our values

We are a dedicated and compassionate community whose values are built on being welcoming, accountable, bold, adaptable, and sustainable. This means we are responsible for ensuring our behaviour models and champions these underpinning values in everything we do and each decision we make.



Welcoming

We ensure every student feels welcome and supported whilst celebrating diversity, embracing all backgrounds, and fostering a sense of belonging.



Accountable

We are accountable to our members and actively work toward their best interests.



Bold

Empowering people to be creative and ambitious in their actions, whilst striving to improve the experience of all our members.



Adaptable

We are dynamic in meeting the needs of our diverse members and reactive to changes that affect their experience.



Sustainable

Ensuring we are responsible in our activities, safeguarding the future of Open SU and promoting a positive environmental impact.

Expected behaviours

Alongside our values, Open SU also upholds expected behaviours of its members, volunteers and staff alike. We expect those interacting in Open SU spaces, or on Open SU business, to be honest and respectful in all our interactions. We will hold ourselves and each other to account, while assuming good intentions.

Openness and Collaboration

- We work together to proactively share information and celebrate each other's successes.
- We make it easy to engage with one another, and welcome new voices.
- We seek contributions from others, recognising the impact collaboration can have and value their input.
- We are open-minded, empower new voices and practice active listening.

Culture of Support and Inclusion

- We practice positive intent and seek to identify the best in each other.
- We take time to consider others, and model kindness through all our interactions. This includes being kind to ourselves by being mindful of our wellbeing and encouraging others to do the same for themselves.

It is important that Open SU treats all members fairly and applies this Values and Behaviour Policy in a consistent way. We are responsible to each other for creating the positive culture that will support us in achieving our mission; this means we must be committed to feeding back and reporting issues in a timely manner to allow concerns to be addressed. Please refer to our [Resolving and Settling Differences Procedure](#) to report issues and concerns.

Zero tolerance of bullying and discrimination

According to the Equality Act 2010, bullying is a form of harassment, which can be defined as behaviour that is meant to or has the effect of either:

- violating an individual's dignity, or
- creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Open SU has a zero-tolerance approach which extends to all places and online platforms where Open SU members may be found, including but not limited to: in person, social media groups, Open SU-facilitated spaces and via direct messaging and email.

This approach applies to both bullying (behaviour repeated with the intent to harm) and to discriminatory behaviour (direct, indirect, harassment, victimisation and microaggressions) relating to a person's protected characteristics.

These characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, political beliefs, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Examples of Unacceptable behaviour

- Persistent and aggressive questioning of individuals;
- private messaging or emailing another member in a manner that is unkind, unhelpful and upsetting to the recipient;
- making comments that are designed to undermine an individual based on a protected characteristic;
- belittling the contribution of a volunteer;
- using discriminatory language or swearing excessively.

The OU's [Bullying and Harassment Policy](#) poses the question 'Would a reasonable person think that the behaviour amounted to bullying or harassment?' and answers it 'In most cases people know, or should know, that remarks or actions are causing offence, and that this is unacceptable.' We abide by that and all associated OU policies.

Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour in any Open SU space

Please refer to our [Resolving and Settling Differences Procedure](#),

Volunteer behavior

We expect all volunteers, whether elected, selected, or appointed, to uphold the same standards of behavior as staff and other members. However, because volunteers may encounter more situations where conflict may arise, our Volunteer Policy includes support to help them understand these expectations and know how to report inappropriate behavior. This is also included in a volunteer's induction.

If concerns are raised about a volunteer through our [Resolving and Settling Differences Procedure](#), we will approach each case with due care when reviewing the situation. In some cases, this may lead to a volunteer being suspended or stepping away from their role, depending on the outcome. Volunteers will be informed of the instances when they may appeal.

Reporting issues which occur outside of Open SU spaces

Any incidents that occur during Open University events should be reported using the [OU Dignity and Respect Policy](#). If you have experienced any form of discrimination, bullying or harassment you can use the University's [Report + Support](#) system to report your concerns.

No matter where it happens, online or offline, if a member behaves in a way that is found to damage the Open SU's reputation, disciplinary action may be taken. If the issue occurs on unofficial social media groups, pages, or accounts, members are encouraged to use the complaints process provided by the platform or follow the relevant Open University policy.

Review period

This Policy will be reviewed at least every two years, and changes will be approved by the Board of Trustees.