



# **Aston Societies Federation Code of Conduct**

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# Aston Societies Federation

## Code of Conduct

*The Aston Societies Federation is an integral part of Aston Students' Union aims to enhance the Aston student experience by leading and developing student led activities through a student focussed and democratically led Societies structure. The Societies Federation is committed to its members and in return expects its members to uphold respectable and honourable behaviour.*

### 1. Aims and purpose of the Code of Conduct

- 1.1 The Aston Societies Federation Code of Conduct (the Code) is intended to provide a clear and fair framework for maintaining standards of behaviour by members of Societies while they are engaging in and representing Aston.
- 1.2 The Code aims to ensure the highest possible standards of organisation, commitment, fairness, honesty and behaviour in relation to the conduct of all members of Societies.
- 1.3 The Code aims to support inclusive, vibrant and positive Societies.
- 1.4 The Code aims to help to protect the positive reputation of the Student Activities department, members of the Societies Federation, Aston Students' Union and Aston University.
- 1.5 The Student Activities department regards any breach of this Code as a serious matter and may take action against an individual or a society acting in breach of the Code.
- 1.6 The Code will apply in addition to other policies determined by the Student Activities department, Aston Students' Union and Aston University.

### 2. Who the Code of Conduct applies to

- 2.1 All members of Societies including those considered to be "social" members by the individual society.
- 2.2 All persons officially appointed to the society including external speakers.

2.3 Any alumni attending a society event.

### **3. When the Code applies**

3.1 The Code applies:

- 3.1.1 When organising or participating in a society meeting or event.
- 3.1.2 When members are attending any social event under the banner of a society, Aston Students' Union or Aston University event.
- 3.1.3 When members are undertaking an activity where they are verbally/visually representing a society, Aston Students' Union or Aston University.

### **4. Standards of the Code**

4.1 All members of the Societies Federation must:

- 4.1.1 Respect and comply with the society constitution.
- 4.1.2 Respect and comply with all Aston Students' Union policies.
- 4.1.3 Respect and comply with all Aston University policies.
- 4.1.4 Maintain high standards of personal behaviour at all times.
- 4.1.5 Respect the rights, dignity and values of others.
- 4.1.6 Be fair, considerate and honest in all dealings with others.
- 4.1.7 Not encourage or pressurise others into acting against the Code.
- 4.1.8 Operate within the rules of their national organisation guidelines where applicable.
- 4.1.9 Be aware of how their actions may be perceived by others.
- 4.1.10 Conduct themselves in a reasonable manner relating to language and temper.
- 4.1.11 Refrain from any form of harassment of others.

- 4.1.12 Not be unduly intoxicated so as to behave offensively or to cause embarrassment to the Student Activities department, the Society, Aston Students' Union or Aston University at any event or social function organised under the umbrella of the society, the Students' Union or Aston University.
- 4.1.13 Refrain from any behaviour that may bring Aston University, Aston Students' Union, the Societies Federation or the society into disrepute.
- 4.1.14 Not act in an unlawful manner.

## **5. Behaviour that may be considered to be in breach of the Code**

5.1 Some examples of what may be considered to be a breach of the Code include:

- 5.1.1 Acting in an unlawful way.
- 5.1.2 Being, or encouraging others to become, unduly intoxicated at any official event or society social function.
- 5.1.3 Using or possessing any illegal or prohibited drug. The trafficking in prohibited substances or administering or attempting to administer prohibited substances to another student all constitutes a breach of the Code.
- 5.1.4 Harassing and/or victimising or abusing others on the basis of their year of study/age. This includes behaviour considered to be an initiation.
- 5.1.5 Doing or vocalising anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult or humiliate another person at an event on the basis of their sex, disability, race, colour, age, religion, national, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.
- 5.1.6 Do anything which adversely affects, reflects on or discredits the Student Activities department, the Society, Aston Students' Union or Aston University.

## **6. Breaches of the Code**

6.1 Breaches of the Code can be brought to the attention of the Vice President (Student Activities) and/or the Societies Engagement Coordinator and/or the Activities Manager and/or the Advice & Membership Services Manager.

6.2 Breaches of the Code can be reported as a Complaint under the Aston Students' Union Complaints Procedure. This requires a written complaint to be made to the President or the Chief Executive.

## **7. Disciplinary Procedures & Sanctions**

7.1 A society/individual alleged to have breached the Code will be then be invited to a meeting to openly discuss the issue raised with a member of Aston Students' Union staff who is investigating the alleged breach on behalf of the Societies Federation.

7.2 The investigating member of staff may speak with other members, with members of University staff and others to gain a detailed insight into the alleged breach.

7.3 If the member of staff believes that there is evidence of the alleged breach a Disciplinary Committee will be convened. The disciplinary shall include:

- I. Vice President – Student Activities or another Sabbatical Officer (as appropriate)
- II. Student Activities & Voice Manager
- III. Student Activities Executive Committee Chairperson

7.4 The Disciplinary Committee will issue the level of sanctioning they deem appropriate in line with Aston Students' Union policies and sanctions outlined in the Code.

7.5 Sanction guidelines are set out below. These guidelines are simply a term of reference for any Disciplinary Committee

## **8. Appeals Procedures**

8.1 Anyone who wishes to appeal against a disciplinary decision of the Disciplinary Committee should do so in writing within ten (10) working days of receiving the letter, which confirms the action taken.

8.2 An Appeal Committee will be established to hear the appeal and its decision is final.

8.2.1 In the event of an appeal, the Membership Services Manager shall convene a meeting of the Appeal Committee.

8.2.2 The Appeal Committee shall be convened as soon as possible within receipt of an appeal

8.3 The Appeal Committee shall be comprised of the Union Executive Committee:

8.3.1 The above may sit on the Committee if they are independent and not have had any substantive involvement in the matter under appeal.

## **Appendix 1**

### **A.1 Level 1 possible outcome - Formal Warning from Aston Students' Union/Societies Federation:**

#### **Union/Societies Federation:**

A.1.1 Inappropriate behaviour.

A.1.2 Mild abuse or trolling over social media.

A.1.3. Contravening SU, University and Government Covid-19 rules. Contravening local lockdown rules:

- Not wearing a mask at an indoor event or within a public building
- Not ensuring social distancing

### **A.2 Level 2 possible outcome – Social/event Bans, Removal of Committee Positions, Community Service:**

A.2.1 Extreme inappropriate behaviour.

A.2.2 Abusive language or trolling over social media.

A.2.3. Contravening SU, University and Government Covid-19 rules. Contravening local lockdown rules

- Following a formal warning not wearing a mask at an indoor event or within a public building
- Following a formal warning not ensuring social distancing
- Allowing event capacity to be exceeded
- Not following the SA event procedure

### **A.3 Level 3 possible outcome - Banned indefinitely from the Society in question:**

A.3.1 Physical inappropriate behaviour.

A.3.2 Abusive language using a social media account where the author can be identified or can reasonably be assumed to be the author i.e. an Individual and/or Society account.

A.3.3 Physical or verbal abuse.

A.3.4 Vandalism/causing damage to property in public whether the owner consents or not.

A.3.5 Indecent exposure.

A.3.6 Antisocial behaviour.

A.3.7 Contravening SU, University and Government Covid-19 rules. Contravening local lockdown rules

- Following a level 2 sanction not wearing a mask at an indoor event or within a public building
- Following a level 2 sanction not ensuring social distancing
- Not informing the relevant Covid-19 officer of a positive test

**A.4 Level 4 possible outcome- Reported to the University and/or Police for sanctioning and disciplinary actions:**

A.4.1 Abusive language using a social media account where the author can be identified or can reasonably be assumed to be the author i.e. an Individual and/or Society account.

A.4.2 Physical or verbal abuse.

A.4.3 Vandalism/causing damage to property in public whether the owner consents or not.

A.4.4 Indecent exposure.

A.4.5 Antisocial behaviour.

A.4.6 Abuse or trolling\* over social media.



A.4.7 Criminal activity.

A.4.8. Contravening SU, University and Government Covid-19 rules. Contravening local lockdown rules

- Having coronavirus and attending an event or not self-isolating as recommended
- Careless endangerment of others through actions that contravene Covid-19 rules and guidance e.g. coughing on people carelessly

\*Trolling – To make a deliberately offensive or provocative online post with the aim of upsetting someone or eliciting an angry response from them. An example is the repeated attempt to steer an online conversation towards an inflammatory topic of that person's (the troll's) choice.