

School of Life Sciences

Events Code of Conduct

Introduction

Events, e.g. conferences, meetings, workshops and socials, are an important part of university life. The School of Life Sciences is committed to providing an environment at all events that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment; where everybody involved is treated with dignity and respect. All attendees and organisers are expected to read and follow the Code of Conduct set out in this document. Event organisers have the right to remove any individual from an event if they break the Code of Conduct.

Ethos

As stated the School's vision is for a true culture of inclusivity and diversity, as described in the [Life Sciences Equality Diversity and Inclusion strategy](#). In order to achieve this vision, it is important that our values are adhered to at all events, whether they are held on campus, online or are hosted externally. This Code of Conduct aims to ensure all delegates, guests, participants, speakers, sponsors, volunteers, staff and students are able to fully enjoy, participate and contribute to events. It aims to ensure that no one feels harassed or uncomfortable at any School event and that all events provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for all involved.

Expectations for attendees

All staff are expected to be familiar with the University [policy on Dignity and Respect](#). The School of Life Sciences will not tolerate harassment or intimidation of any group or individual, particularly with regards to characteristics protected by the Equality Act, or aspects of diversity not currently covered by the Act.

The expectations set out below apply to all staff, students and visitors attending an event hosted by the School of Life Sciences or attending externally organised events, wherever they may be. Any attendee found to be breaking these expectations may be asked to leave and further action may be taken.

- Behave professionally and respectfully
- Do not use libellous, defamatory or otherwise tortuous language
- Be kind to others. Do not insult or put down other attendees or organisers
- Do not take unwanted photos or videos; seek consent first
- Do not disrupt organisers, speakers or those asking questions, or carry out sustained interruptions
- Communicate in a manner that is appropriate for the audience, including people of many different backgrounds. Use inclusive language. Do not use offensive language or gestures
- Do not engage in offensive conduct, comments or jokes
- Do not make threats, bully or harass, nor make personal attacks
- Do not make sexualised or other inappropriate comments, nor share inappropriate images/videos
- Do not make inappropriate physical contact or engage in persistent unwelcome attention
- If the event is online, do not post or otherwise transmit any junk or spam or material that contains anything offensive or malicious

What to do if the Code of Conduct is broken at an event

If you witness unacceptable behaviour, either directed at yourself or someone else, or have any concerns, you should contact the organiser immediately. Organisers will be happy to help participants contact venue security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment or intimidation to feel safe at the event.

Consequences of breaking the Code of Conduct

Inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. If you are asked to stop behaving inappropriately, you are expected to comply immediately. The consequences of such behaviour may include, but not be limited to:

- Verbal and/or written warning
- Removal of the person from the event
- If online, muting the person
- Inappropriate content being removed from the event
- Prevention from attending subsequent events
- Informing Line Managers of the inappropriate behaviour
- Formal action through the [staff](#) or [student](#) disciplinary procedure

Expectations for event organisers

The University has an [External Speakers' Procedure](#), which should be adhered to when arranging events.

It is important that event organisers incorporate EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) considerations when event planning. The School recognises that there are many groups who are still underrepresented among our staff and students. One way this issue can be addressed is to take active steps to promote equality, diversity and inclusion at all events associated with the School.

It is recognised that the size, range and format of School events can vary widely, as can the resources available to organisers and practical constraints (e.g. available facilities) under which they operate. The expectations below offer examples of good practice. The School encourages organisers to be as ambitious as possible in seeking to achieve these expectations, and the School EDI co-leads are available to discuss specific plans.

- To ensure a safe and inclusive environment, organisers should share the Events Code of Conduct at the start of any event, or prior to its occurrence. It should be made clear that participation is dependent on agreeing to abide by the code
- Ensure any additional needs are accommodated (e.g. holding events in accessible venues) and all facilities, such as toilets, are accessible
- If the event includes speakers, ensure there is a diversity of voices (e.g. gender, ethnicity, disability). See the School of Life Sciences policy on 'gender and protected group representation at events and seminars' (coming soon) for more information and guidance
- Consider using available databases to aid the search for high-quality speakers from underrepresented groups (e.g. <https://500queerscientists.com/> or <https://500womenscientists.org/>)
- Ensure you ask permission if you plan to take photos/video at the event. Make sure attendees are aware if there will be a photographer/filmmaker present and have ample opportunity to ask not to be included. You should make people aware when registering and also at the event
- Be accessible and family-friendly. Where possible consider start and finish times of the events for those responsible for child care
- If an attendee at your event is found to be breaking the above expectations provide them with a warning and reminder of the Code of Conduct. If it continues, ask them to leave, or if the event is hosted online mute them or remove them. In the event that the attendee refuses to leave, contact security (on campus, call 01273 67 8234, or in an emergency 01273 87 3333)
- Any incident should be reported to the School Administrator

For more information or advice, contact the School Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead: Lifesci-edi@sussex.ac.uk.