

UCL Department of Earth Sciences, Code of Conduct relating to participation in Fieldwork.

Statement

All students and staff at UCL have the right to participate in fieldwork free from bullying, harassment, and sexual misconduct, of any form. These behaviours are not permitted at the University, in the work and learning environment, and there is no place for them in the field. In order to move these statements beyond the aspirational it is necessary to frame a code of conduct that should be signed up to by those organising and running, and those participating in, fieldwork activities. **Studies have clearly shown that projects with clear rules and unequivocal consequences for breaching those rules, provide the safest environments for students and staff** (Clancy *et al.* 2014; Flaherty 2017; Nelson *et al.* 2017).

Definitions

Fieldwork: is defined as work carried out physically in the field of a geological nature; however, the definition also includes work in museums, laboratories, and within the extra-university community in general e.g. teaching at schools or societies.

Bullying, harassment, and sexual misconduct: the core of the following definitions are taken from the UCL Report + Support website. These documents have been considered with reference to UCL's Dignity at Work Statement for staff and within the purview of UCL's core behaviour framework for staff. There is considerable overlap between categories of unacceptable behaviour, and this behaviour will often cross over between the definitions given below. **Taken together the underlying categories constitute the Code of Conduct that project staff and students are expected to comply with.**

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Power does not always mean a position of authority, but can include both personal strength and the power coerce through fear or intimidation.

Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct. Non-verbal conduct includes postings on social media outlets. Bullying may include, by way of example:

- Shouting at, being sarcastic towards, ridiculing or demeaning others
- Physical or psychological threats

- Overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision
- Inappropriate and/or derogatory remarks about someone's performance
- Abuse of authority or power by those in positions of seniority
- Deliberately excluding someone from meetings, communications or presentations without good reason.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic (such as age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race and ethnicity, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation), which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Harassment interferes with an individual's learning, working or social environment.

Harassment may include, for example:

- Unwanted physical conduct or 'horseplay', including touching, pinching, pushing, grabbing, invading their personal space and more serious forms of physical or sexual assault.
- Offensive or intimidating comments or gestures, or insensitive jokes or pranks
- Mocking, mimicking or belittling a person's disability
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist jokes, or derogatory or stereotypical remarks about a particular ethnic or religious group or gender
- Outing or threatening to out someone as gay, lesbian, bisexual or trans
- Ignoring or shunning someone, for example, by deliberately excluding them from a conversation or social activity.

A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended 'target'. For example, a person may be harassed by racist jokes about a different ethnic group if they create an offensive environment.

Sexual misconduct is unacceptable behaviour of a sexual nature. It can include, but is not limited to:-

- Sexual harassment
- Sexual violence and assault
- Intimidate partner violence
- Grooming
- Coercion or bullying with sexual elements
- Sexual invitations and demands
- Sexual comments
- Non-verbal communication
- Creation of atmospheres of discomfort
- Promised resources or advancement in exchange for sexual access.

The responsibilities outlined below are taken from UCL's Dignity at Work Statement and the UCL's code of conduct for students, they are to be extended to any fieldwork activity that involves members of UCL staff or UCL's student body.

Project Directors', Staff and Students' Responsibilities:-

- Everyone engaged in fieldwork must abide by the Code of Conduct. They must ensure that they behave in an appropriate manner, showing respect for staff, students and others working alongside or engaged with the UCL community.
- All staff and students must be aware of their behaviour. Inappropriate behaviour may be verbal or written, intentional or unintentional. Comments or actions made outside the standard workplace, but within the sphere of the work or study environment, such as at work-related social events or on social media can be subject to UCL disciplinary procedures.
- Fieldwork project staff have particular responsibility for setting standards and ensuring appropriate workplace behaviours are maintained. They should set a good example and ensure concerns raised are acted upon. Students must behave in a manner that allows the staff to maintain the expectations and standards of workplace behaviour.
- Students and staff are encouraged to appropriately challenge inappropriate behaviour and raise concerns with managers so that breaches of the Code of Conduct are dealt with immediately.

Project Directors' and Managers' Action

- UCL Project Directors shall have to sign up to this Code of Conduct for Fieldwork, and to agree that all project staff and students, including fieldwork supervisors are made aware of the Code.
- Non UCL Project Directors and Managers shall also be asked to sign up to this Code of Conduct for Fieldwork **or** to provide a copy of their own institutional Code of Conduct, which is expected to reflect the intentions, implications and implementation of the UCL code.
- Non UCL Project Directors and Managers must disseminate this or similar, agreed, Code of Conduct to their project staff and fieldwork supervisors.
- All Project Directors should understand and make clear to their staff and other students that all UCL students on their projects have been made familiar with and have signed up to, the Code of Conduct.
- UCL and non UCL staff must include the contents of the UCL or their agreed code in student inductions to the projects they will be working on
- Directors/managers must deal with contraventions of the Code of Conduct, rapidly, fairly, and firmly.
- Directors/managers must deal with those who have been subject to a contravention of the code in a sympathetic and caring manner and facilitate contact with the parent-university, friends and family.
- Directors/managers must ensure that alleged perpetrator and subject of any transgression of the Code of Conduct are, as far as is possible without bringing further danger to either party, kept apart until the situation is resolved or one of the parties has departed the fieldwork.

Complaints should be taken seriously and action taken immediately to remove the possibility of any further breaches of the Code of Conduct and the matter reported to UCL as a matter of priority (see below). The initial report may be by telephone or other form of electronic communication but should be followed up as soon as possible by a detailed written report.

Caveats

Non uptake of the Code of Conduct

It might not prove possible for other institutions or individuals to sign up to, or provide a document similar to, the UCL Code of Conduct for Earth Sciences Fieldwork. In these cases it will require discussion between the student and the Fieldwork Tutor, Fieldwork Administrator, and student's Personal Tutor, as to whether it is safe to proceed with the fieldwork, and to emphasise that it would not be covered by the code. Depending on circumstances and decisions reached, such fieldwork might be unfunded but allowed to count towards the seventy day requirement. The participant would still fall within UCL's duty of care to students.

Working overseas

Many students will conduct fieldwork or study trips overseas as part of their degree. Working and travelling overseas normally provides highly rewarding opportunities to learn about new cultures and explore the world. It also requires careful consideration and respect towards aspects of personal identity (religion, sexual identity, race and gender) which may vary greatly from your own expectations and norms. Some of the expectations relating to dress, inclusion, sexual orientation and freedom of expression prevalent in other cultures might be construed as a breach of the Code of Conduct if applied to the visiting student/fieldworker but are in fact the norm or prevailing ideology in the country or region of work. Staff and students should not feel any obligation to attend fieldwork in countries where the legal practices and cultural norms conflict with their own moral and ethical values. Equally, staff and students should consider their own faith needs with regard to the culture and laws of the destination country for fieldwork and plan for any reasonable adjustments ahead of the trip.

Accordingly, students are encouraged to:-

- Research the laws and cultural norms of another country before deciding whether to visit (the Foreign and Commonwealth Office fco.gov.uk website has country by country guides which detail laws and norms, as well as visa requirements and security information). Decide for yourself before you accept a placement whether you can abide by those laws and cultural norms.
- Having accepted a placement for fieldwork, follow the laws and cultural norms and practices of the nations in which the fieldwork takes place. Respect and do not interfere with the properties of others.
- Be considerate and courteous to local people, and anyone you encounter during the course of the project or trip.
- Ensure that you are never working alone. Ensure you always have means of contact with others in your group or team. Remember that telephone and satellite coverage can be extremely variable depending on location.

What to do in cases of breaches of conduct

If staff or students experience bullying, harassment, or sexual misconduct during the course of fieldwork, they are advised to:-

- Inform the project director or a supervisor as soon as possible.
- If this is not possible, through involvement of individuals at the levels indicated above, then the next tier of authority should be consulted, for example the host institution of the fieldwork. [The identity and affiliation of those persons mentioned above must be on record with the Fieldwork Administrator before the student goes into the field].
- Inform relevant local contacts
- Keep a detailed record of the events that took place, including dates and times, witnesses etc.
- In cases of harassment, bullying and intimidation, and sexual misconduct, Project Directors/staff or their line managers are expected to be the first point for resolving issues. **In cases of assault (including sexual assault), the police should be contacted (provided the student agrees and, in doing so, this action will not detrimentally affect the student given the country/region in which they are working).** In all cases, UCL Earth Sciences Department should be kept informed so that appropriate support can be offered.
- Notify the student or staff member they can report and contact an advisor through Report + Support.

Please note that support and advice is available at UCL for staff and students experiencing or witnessing bullying, harassment or discrimination. The key recent initiatives are UCL's **Report and Support** and **Full Stop** programmes, which are vehicles for reporting and receiving assistance on matters concerning bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct.

It has been recommended that translated versions of this document are prepared for countries within which our staff and students undertake fieldwork.

Useful links

UCL's Full Stop Campaign - Report and Support:-

<https://report-support.ucl.ac.uk/>

UCL's Code of Conduct for Students:-

https://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/sites/academic-manual/files/section_1_code_of_conduct_for_students_2018-19.pdf

UCL Dignity at Work Statement:-

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/equality-diversity-inclusion/dignity-work/ucl-dignity-work-statement>

UCL's Zero Tolerance to Sexual Misconduct:-

<https://studentsunionucl.org/sexualmisconduct>

Clancy, K.B.H. *et al.*, 2014. Survey of Academic Field Experiences (SAFE): Trainees Report Harassment and Assault. *PLoS One* 9(7): e102172. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0102172>.

Flaherty, C., 2017. Harassment in the Field. *Inside Higher ED*. October Edition.

Nelson, R.G. *et al.*, 2017. Signaling Safety: Characterizing Fieldwork Experiences and Their Implications for Career Trajectories. *American Anthropologist* 119 (4), 710–722. ISSN 0002-7294, online ISSN 1548-1433.