

STEPS Centre statement on harassment and discrimination

The annual STEPS Summer School brings together people from around the world with diverse backgrounds and institutional cultures with a variety of lived and professional experiences and identities. This makes Summer School an amazing and rich opportunity to share, explore, learn and debate. The STEPS Centre strives to create an environment in which all Summer School participants feel comfortable, supported and secure, in which everyone's dignity is respected. To this end, we want to make sure that everybody who is invited to participate in the Summer School has a clear understanding of expectations for behaviour, in organised activities, during social outings and after-hours. This includes making clear from the outset our zero-tolerance policy on harassment and what constitutes it, and making sure that participants have the information that they need to be safe and, if necessary, to confidentially report and discuss problems at all times during their stay in Brighton.

Our zero-tolerance policy

The STEPS Centre and IDS have a zero-tolerance stance against all forms of harassment, bullying and discrimination, abuse, intimidation or exploitation on the basis of, but not limited to, age, race/ethnicity, gender, gender self-identity and gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, class/caste, disability, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief. This means that any form of harassment or discrimination, including sexual harassment, in word or deed, is unacceptable and will be addressed.

Many forms of harassment and discrimination are illegal in the United Kingdom. Any observed incident or allegation of harassment or discrimination, or other inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously and addressed. This could include informal actions by STEPS Centre management or more formal processes, following the relevant IDS procedures. Consequences for participating in harassment or discriminatory behaviour during the STEPS Summer School may include immediate expulsion from the Summer School. IDS will report inappropriate conduct to the relevant authorities where required, such as the police, Charity Commission, funding bodies or sponsoring institutions.

What does this mean in terms of behaviour?

Avoiding misconduct is easy. It involves treating others in a collegial and professional manner that respects their dignity, identity, privacy and personal space and autonomy. Expectations for professionalism and respect do not end with the workday; they apply in all interactions and communications, from email and social media to social events to shared living spaces.

What can I do if I experience harassment or feel unsafe?

If at any time you feel unsafe during your time in Brighton or find yourself in an emergency situation you should take immediate steps to address this, including contacting the police. If you are staying on campus you can also contact campus security on 01273 873333 24 hours 7 days a week.

We would also urge you to report the situation to STEPS Centre staff. Female and male members of staff will be available for contact at all times, day or night, during your stay should something arise that you need to discuss or report. There will be a telephone number for after-hours contact. They have been provided training to support students, and they can be approached or contacted, formally or informally, at any time with any concerns participants might have.

We will also have paper and a ‘drop box’ for people to leave feedback, anonymously if they wish, at any time during the Summer School, to be checked daily. The location of this drop box will be pointed out during the introductory session of the Summer School. If there’s a concern, we want to make sure that everybody understands that there are different options to approach us in person or in writing as soon as possible, so we can help or intervene as needed.

If you do not wish to contact a member of the STEPS centre, you can use the IDS complaints procedure.

We want to reiterate our dedication to ensuring that, together with participants, we want to create an environment in which all are comfortable, respected and cared for should issues arise. The measures set out above will enable us to offer participants at STEPS Summer School reassurance that they will be treated with dignity and respect.