

# Student Conduct Annual Report

## 2024/25

## Foreword

### From the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer

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To fulfil the University's commitment to a zero tolerance approach to harassment, discrimination, victimisation and bullying, we must be as transparent as possible with you about the processes and the actions that we take in response to student behaviour that does not meet with our expectations for a safer, inclusive environment at Oxford Brookes.

Our fourth Student Conduct Annual Report covers the 2024/25 academic year and provides an overview of the types of non-academic conduct cases investigated. As we have done in previous versions of the report, we have tried to offer as much detail as we believe is appropriate to show our commitment to transparency and to demonstrate the importance that we place upon taking action.

There have been some consistent themes across all of our annual conduct reports, namely:

- The University considers a notable number of complaints within an academic year, and we now have four full years' worth of data, which demonstrates the volume of cases that are dealt with.
- The cases reported to the University are complex and require a significant level of detailed investigation, with multiple stages of consideration before they can be considered complete. Approximately 20% of cases had varying levels of police involvement, which can impact or cause delays to the University's process, this is a 5% increase from the previous reporting period (2023/24).

We take all cases reported to the University seriously: we investigate diligently and professionally, and in this report we have again demonstrated we will apply some of the most serious penalties available to us in appropriate circumstances. I hope this continues to give those involved, and those who read this fourth report, confidence that the University will take action when reports are made to us.

On 1 August 2025, a new condition of registration (E6) from the Office for Students came into force that addresses harassment and sexual misconduct. It relates to 'incidents of harassment and/or sexual misconduct which affect one or more students (including the conduct of staff towards students, and/or the conduct of students towards students)'.

In July 2024 an Anti-harassment and EDI Advisor was appointed to this new post to support the development of policy and procedures related to harassment and bullying in the lead up to the new OfS Condition E6 coming into force. Throughout the reporting period the University worked to ensure compliance with Condition E6. This included significant developments such as the introduction of a Staff and Student Relationship policy and a **[single-source webpage for students and staff to report harassment](#)**.

We need to remember that behind every case referenced or counted in this report, there will likely be traumatic personal experiences for a number of our students, which is why the dedicated network of support systems that interact with our conduct cases is so important.

We want more people who need support, and/or who experience behaviours that are not acceptable or in line with our Guiding Principles or Condition E6, to use our student conduct processes, so we can offer them the help they need and can take appropriate action against those who disrupt our inclusive community. I hope this report provides you with some additional confidence that those making reports will be offered support, will be believed and will have their cases investigated fully.

I would encourage anyone who feels they may have experienced behaviours by members of our community that do not accord with our Guiding Principles to seek support through any of the three established routes: the University reporting tool, the Student Welfare team or the Student Investigation and Resolution Team, which are all listed below.

**Brendan Casey**  
**REGISTRAR AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER**

[Student Investigation and Resolution Team](#)

[University Reporting Tool](#)

[Student Welfare Team](#)

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# 1. Introduction

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At Oxford Brookes University, staff and students work hard every day to create a community that is safe, friendly, and welcoming for all. This applies to our role as a learning environment, as neighbours in Oxford and Swindon, and as a space where members of our University socialise, grow and work together. This requires a shared commitment from all of us, across both our Oxford and Swindon campuses, to meet the high expectations of our students and their conduct both on and off campus.

Where serious incidents occur that may be a breach of our Student Conduct Procedure, the University's Student Investigation and Resolution Team ("SIRT") will investigate and ensure that appropriate action is taken. These investigations are carried out for, on behalf of, and in cooperation with the student body as a whole. It is therefore important that an annual, transparent report gives an overview of the actions that were taken in an academic year.

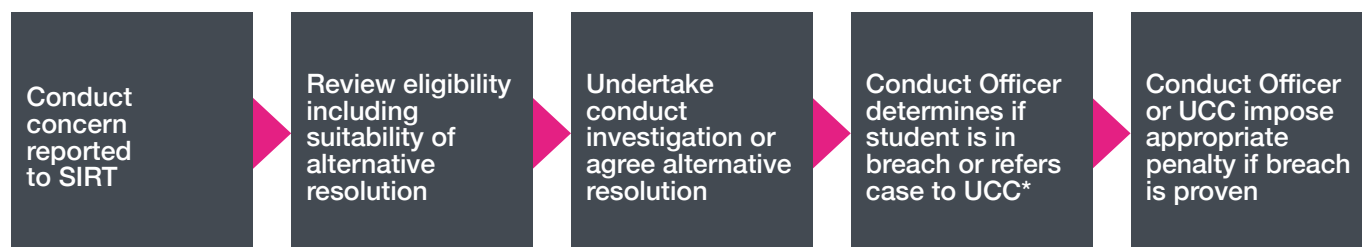
This third annual report gives an insight into how the University dealt with non-academic student conduct when reports were brought to SIRT. This year's report covers the period between 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 (the "reporting period").

Other departments within the University also deal with student conduct, for example, the Community Engagement team and Brookes Accommodation; some headline figures from those departments are contained in this report. This report mainly deals with the most serious reports of misconduct or instances where students have repeatedly breached the regulations.

## 2. Process

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The flowchart below offers a simplified overview of how a case progresses from an initial report. The full process, and associated procedures, can be found in the Appendix.



\*University Conduct Committee (UCC)

- **Reporting to the Student Investigation and Resolution Team (SIRT):** Cases or conduct concerns are usually raised with SIRT through the online Student Conduct Form. Issues may also reach the team via email or through a referral from other departments and colleagues including Student Support Services, faculty staff, Brookes Accommodation and Brookes Sports.
- **Eligibility review:** The SIRT Deputy for Student Conduct will triage the report and consider eligibility, such as whether the report should proceed through the conduct procedures. A report may not be eligible, for example if the matter is about non-payment of rent and therefore a civil dispute outside the remit of the procedures. The SIRT Deputy for Student Conduct may consider that a different process is more suitable, for example a referral to Support to Study.
- **Precautionary measures (PMs):** Where appropriate, the Head of Student Conduct of the Head of SIRT will consider the need to impose precautionary measures to safeguard all parties involved and the wider student body. These measures may remain in place until the University's disciplinary process concludes or the outcome of any ongoing police investigation (see 5.2 for details).
- **Alternative resolution:** If the reported conduct is considered suitable for Alternative Resolution, the Deputy for Student Conduct will follow the process under clause 7.7 of the Student Conduct Procedures and will meet with both the Reporting Party(ies) and Reported Student to mediate an agreed resolution. The report may remain open if the Alternative Resolution agreement includes a prescriptive probationary period. Any breach of the Alternative Resolution agreement may result in initiating or escalating to a conduct investigation.
- **Investigation:** If a case proceeds to investigation, a delegated Conduct Officer will gather the evidence, including statements from both parties and any witnesses.
- **Decision:** After the investigation concludes, the investigating Conduct Officer decides whether or not the Reported Student is in breach of the Student Conduct Procedure and if appropriate, they may impose a penalty. If the severity and or nature of alleged breach may warrant a major penalty, the Conduct Officer will refer the case to be heard before a specially convened University Conduct Committee (UCC).
- **Penalties:** If a breach has occurred, penalties are imposed. These range from a formal warning to permanent expulsion from the University.

### 3 Investigation and outcome numbers

57 reports of misconduct received (51 individual students reported)			
55 'eligible' conduct reports		2 'non-eligible' reports	
		2 reported person(s) not enrolled at Brookes	
18 reports closed without outcome	37 reports resolved		
6 reports withdrawn by reporting party	10 conduct cases investigated by SIRT	8 cases determined by Conduct Officer	7 reported students found in breach
1 no response from reporting party		2 cases referred to UCC	1 reported students not found in breach
7 reported student has withdrawn/exited	24 reports closed via alternative resolution		
4 paused pending criminal proceedings	3 reports referred to other departments	1 case referred to Community Engagement Team	2 reported students found in breach (major)
		2 cases referred to Faculty inc. Fitness to Practice	

Fig.1 Overview of conduct reports 2024-2025

#### 3.1 Overview

In total, 57 non-academic conduct cases were reported to SIRT in the reporting period between 1 August 2024 and 31 August 2025.

Of the 55 eligible reports:

- ten cases were concluded following an investigation.
- 24 cases were closed via the pathway of Alternative Resolution.
- three cases were referred to other departments.

Of the three cases referred to other departments; two reports were referred back to the faculty and one report made by a member of the public alleging disruptive behaviour the community was referred to the Community Engagement Team.

Of the ten reports which progressed to investigation by SIRT, two cases were referred to a University Conduct Committee (“UCC”) and in the other eight cases, the outcome was determined by the investigating Conduct Officer.

In the eight cases where liability was determined by a Conduct Officer:

- seven Reported Students were found to be in breach.
- one Reported Students were found not to be in breach.

As expected, the two cases referred to a UCC all involved allegations, which if proven, may amount to major breaches. In both cases referred to UCC the Reported Student was found liable for a ‘major’ breach.

Of the total number of students reported (51)\*, only nine students (17.5%) were found in breach, including minor breaches. The total number of eligible reports is 55 but the number of individual students reported is 51 because four students were reported twice for separate, unrelated incidents.

If a reported student is unhappy with the outcome of an investigation, they are entitled to appeal the decision (taking the case to Level 2 of the procedure). Appeals are considered by a University Appeal Committee (“APC”).

During the reporting period one Appeal Committee was held:

- the APC was held within one month of the UCC. The APC upheld the decision of the UCC with regard to finding the Reported Student in breach. The Appeal varied the penalty awarded by the UCC panel.

### 3.1.1 Cases closed without a determinative outcome

Eighteen conduct reports were closed without a determinative outcome; meaning the case was not investigated, referred to another department or resolved through Alternative Resolution.

Of these cases closed without a determinative outcome:

- six reports were withdrawn by the Reporting Party (11%)
- one report did not proceed for lack of response from the Reporting Party (2%)
- seven reports closed due to Reported Student withdrawing or otherwise exiting (13%)
- four reports were paused pending ongoing criminal justice proceedings (7%)
- three reports were dealt with by other teams (5.5%)

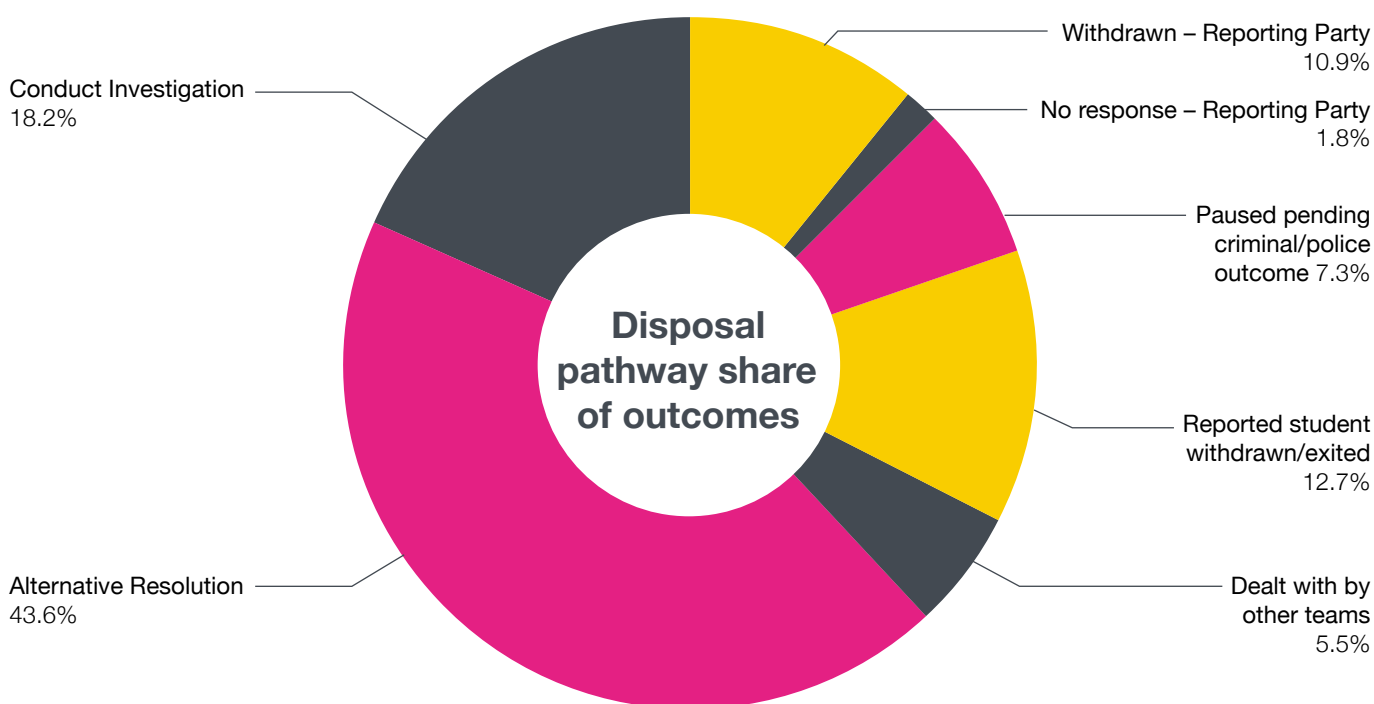


Fig. 2 Outcomes and disposal methods for conduct reports (2024-2025)

### 3.1.2 Alternative resolution

Of the 55 eligible conduct reports, 24 reports were closed via ‘Alternative Resolution’. This means that almost half of reports (43.6%) were closed in accordance with the Student Conduct Procedures but without investigation; more importantly, those reports were not dismissed, instead they were resolved to the satisfaction of the Reporting Party.

Reports resolved via Alternative Resolution most commonly involved allegations and disputes occurring within accommodation; this is supported by the fact that most outcomes involved a student moving to different accommodation. SIRT’s success in implementing Alternative Resolution through collaboration with the Accommodation Bureau and Brookes Lettings has reduced the number of reports referred back to the Residences Conduct Officer to undertake an investigation. In the previous reporting period (2023/24) three cases were referred back to the Residences Conduct Team; in this reporting period, zero cases were referred back.

Allegations of behaviour which, if proven, may amount to a breach ‘5.7 (x) sexual harassment, violence or abuse’ covers a broad spectrum of sexually motivated behaviour, both physical and non-physical, ranging in severity and harm caused. This means that some reports of low-level, unwanted attention, communication or inappropriate language may be appropriately resolved without investigation. All reports are assessed by the Head of Student Conduct or other appropriately trained staff member. Where the report does not progress to a full investigation, the Head of Student Conduct should meet with the Reporting Party to make further enquiries and ensure safeguarding measures and support are in place.

The table below shows the various combinations of measures used to resolve reports of disputes. Changing accommodation and undertaking a no-contact agreement are the most popular, this supports the assertion above that students view Alternative Resolution as an effective and immediate way to stop ongoing unwanted or disruptive behaviour.

Combined measures for alternative resolution	Reports resolved
Accommodation move	4
Words of advice	4
No contact agreement	3
Accommodation move + no contact	2
No contact agreement + words of advice	2
No contact agreement + mediation	1
Apology + words of advice	2
No contact agreement + apology	1
No contact + words of advice + apology	1
Training + words of advice	1
Mediation + words of advice	1
No contact + apology	1
Referral to welfare	1
<b>Total reports resolved via alternative resolution</b>	<b>24</b>

Fig. 3 Frequency of measures used to reach alternative resolution

If a student breaches the terms of the Alternative Resolution agreement or the behaviour escalates, the Reporting Student has the option to return to SIRT and the matter will be reopened. In the current reporting period, zero cases resolved by Alternative Resolution have been re-reported or escalated to conduct cases.

### 3.1.3 Comparison with previous reporting period

For the third year in a row, the number of conduct reports has increased from 44 in 2022/23 to 51 in 2023/24 to 55 in the current reporting period (2024/25).

Despite the increase in reports, the number of reports progressing to investigation under the Procedures has decreased. This year, fewer reports have progressed to the investigation stage from 16 in 2023/24 to ten in the current reporting period. The number of students found in breach has also decreased from 13 in 2023/24 to nine in 2024/25.

The increase in the number of reports is likely because the criteria for recording reports has expanded since the implementation of Alternative Resolution to record all reports received including low-level concerns whether via the reporting form or via other more informal means. This is supported by the decrease in the number of reports progressing to investigation; reports progressing to resource intensive investigation should involve allegations of a serious nature.

In the current reporting period, SIRT investigated ten (18%) of the 55 eligible reports, which is fewer investigations compared with the previous year (31%). Reports may not proceed to investigation for several factors:

- In the current reporting period, 24 reports (44%) were managed through Alternative Resolution thereby not requiring investigation. Reports managed through Alternative Resolution have increased from 29% in the previous reporting period (2023/24).
- Reports with some element of police involvement may require us to pause our investigation, thereby potentially creating a delay.
- The Reporting Student may withdraw their report before formal action is taken by the University (11% in the reporting period).
- Some reports may be appropriately resolved under different procedures or by other teams.
- The Reported Student withdrew from their programme of study before we could investigate.

In this reporting period, two conduct cases progressed to a UCC (4% of overall reports). This is a decrease from the previous reporting period (2023/24) where 12% of reports progressed to UCC. Despite a smaller share of cases progressing to UCC, the percentage of students found in breach at UCC in the current reporting period and the previous reporting period remains at 100% suggesting that cases presented at UCC are thoroughly investigated and well presented and we avoid subjecting students to the stress of proceedings only to be found not liable.

This context reveals that a lack of investigation does not mean a lack of resolution. Close cooperation with other stakeholders means that reports are dealt with appropriately and the success of Alternative Resolution suggests that a formal investigation by SIRT is not always the most appropriate action in the interest of the parties involved or the wider student body. Informal concerns raised by students and staff are not captured in these numbers; for example, a faculty staff member seeking advice on dealing with disruptive behaviour or bullying without disclosing names or details of the circumstances.

### 3.1.4 Cases by type of breach

The Student Conduct Procedure lists 27 different types of breaches. The overlap in the wording of the breaches means that many reports allege multiple breaches in relation to the same incident or behaviour. The definition of the breaches are very broad to cover a wide spectrum of behaviour which ranges in severity, impact and harm.

For reporting purposes, the individual breaches in the Student Conduct Procedure have been categorised into six areas, under which the breaches fall:

- Sexual violence or harassment
- Interference with University process
- Discrimination/harassment/bullying
- Health and safety
- Drugs/criminal activity
- Other unwanted behaviour towards others.

The numbers presented in this report reflect the ‘primary’ alleged breach, meaning the breach that best characterizes the reported behaviour.

Previously breach ‘5.7 (w) Threatening, indecent, offensive or violent behaviour directed towards any member of the University community or member of the public’ was included under the category of ‘Other unwanted behaviour’; however this breach is commonly reported with ‘5.7 (v) Physical, written, or verbal abuse or intimidation against another person, including communications via social media’ to report the same behaviour. It is therefore more reasonable for breaches 5.7 (w) and 5.7 (v) to be included under the same category, particularly as a breach of 5.7 (w) may include acts of violence of more serious harm than behaviour included in the category of ‘Other unwanted behaviour’.

When comparing data on reported breaches with the preceding reporting period, it should be noted that the Procedures have been revised in the interim with some small revisions to the wording of the breaches and the lettering.

#### Breaches reported to SIRT by category (2023 to 2024)

Category of breach	Number of allegations reported	% of total allegations (99)
Interference with University processes	9	9%
Discrimination, harassment, bullying & violence	57	58%
Sexual misconduct	8	8%
Health and safety	1	1%
Drugs or criminal offences	11	11%
Other unwanted or disruptive behaviour	13	13%

Fig. 4 Number of times the reporting party has alleged a breach within the respective category and % of total allegations

The chart below compares the current data on reported breaches by category with the preceding reporting periods, 2022/23 and 2023/24. The total number of reports has increased 8% between the previous reporting period (2023/24) and the current reporting period (2024/25). There is a dramatic increase in total reports (25%) when comparing the current reporting period with the total number of reports in 2022/23.

The number of reports involving allegations of sexual misconduct has remained relatively stable in the past three reporting periods; nine in 2022/23, increasing to 13 in 2023/24 and decreasing to the fewest number of reports, eight, in the current reporting period (2024/25).

### Year on year comparison of reported breaches by category

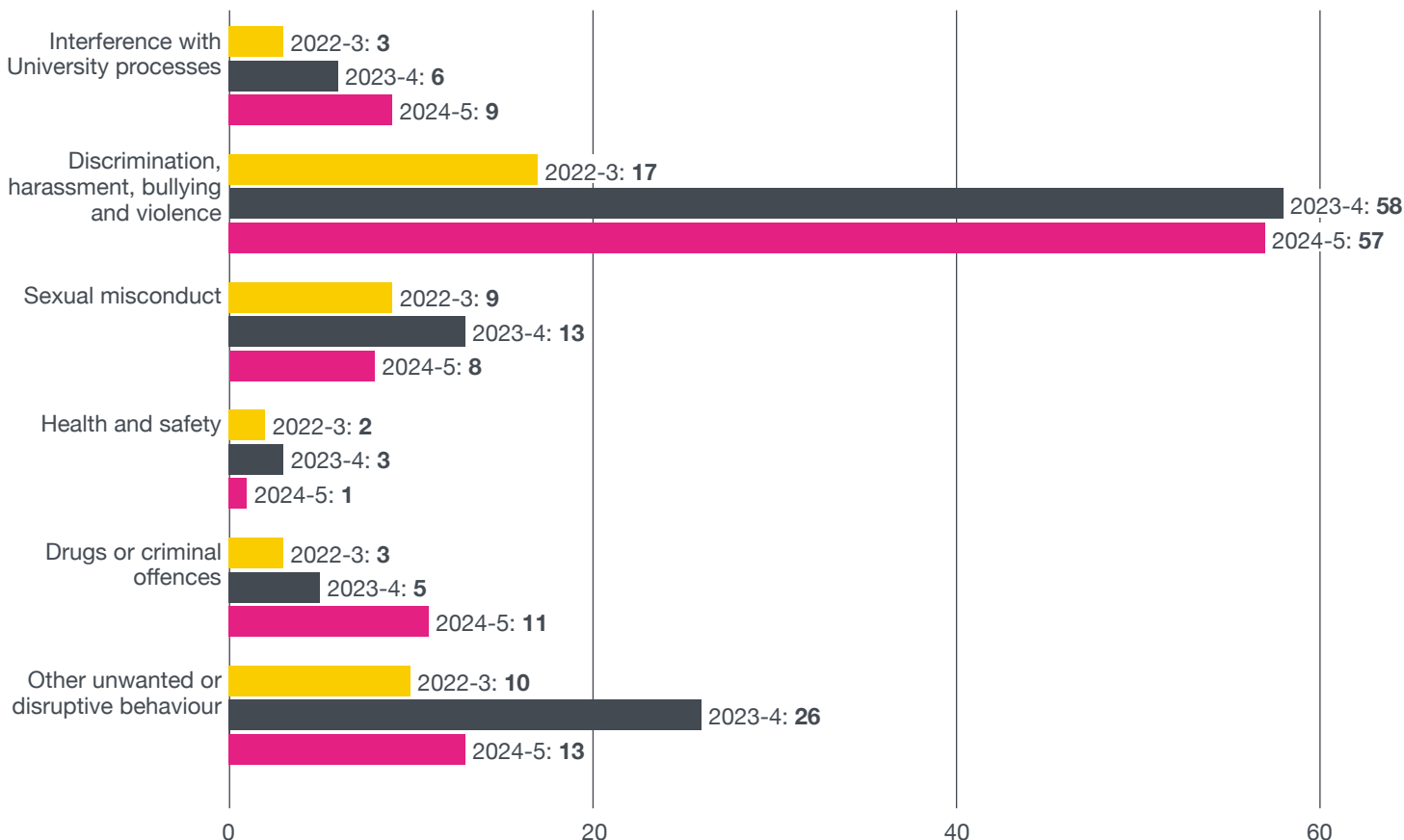


Fig. 5 Year-on-year comparison of reported breaches by category

### 3.1.5 Sexual misconduct

There were eight reports of sexual violence or harassment made to the SIRT team in the reporting period. 'Sexual harassment, violence or abuse' describes a broad spectrum of sexually motivated behaviour, both physical and non-physical, ranging in severity and harm caused.

Cases of this kind range in severity and type of conduct, but frequently require a complex response that can involve police, welfare and the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) at Oxford Brookes. Every case is considered on its own merit by the conduct investigators, supervised by a senior member of the team in addition to a senior member of staff who carries out the assessment for precautionary measures, where required.

SIRT staff actively keep up with developments on best practice and case law in the higher education sector, and receive training such as interviewing skills and trauma-focused approaches to investigations. Several members of the team come from an investigative or criminal justice background.

During the reporting period, SIRT made significant contributions to the University's cross-departmental readiness effort to comply with the Office for Students Condition E6: Harassment and sexual misconduct by the August 2025 deadline. The University's policies and processes in relation to misconduct perpetrated by students (excluding misconduct by staff) were largely already compliant with the principles of Condition E6 and did not require significant change. SIRT's main contribution was to provide content and collaborate on the required 'comprehensive single source of information'.

The nature of some cases of sexual violence or harassment make it more likely for police to be involved. When this is the case, the University pauses its own investigations until an appropriate point, in line with current **Universities UK guidelines**.

As per the Universities guidelines and legal rulings, institutions of higher education do not investigate 'rape' or other criminal offences as defined in law. Allegations of unwanted, physical contact of a sexual nature are investigated under the broad terms of 'sexual harassment, violence or abuse', and if the Reported Student is found in breach, the penalty imposed should be proportionate to reflect the severity of the conduct. The other five reports, which did not include unwanted physical contact, were reported and recorded as a breach of 5.7 (x) because the inappropriate or unwanted behaviour has been interpreted as sexual in nature falling under the broad definition of sexual harassment. Of the eight reports of 'sexual harassment, violence or abuse', three reports alleged physical sexual assault of varying degrees. Two of the allegations involve unwanted touching over clothing whilst intoxicated, in both cases the Reporting Parties did not wish to pursue a conduct investigation.

The eight reports of sexual misconduct had the following outcomes:

- Five reports were considered appropriate to be resolved via Alternative Resolution. Measures included 'no-contact' agreements and a change in accommodation.

- Three reports were closed without investigation or outcome.
  - Two of those reports were submitted by separate Reporting Parties, accusing the same student of unwanted communication of a sexual nature. This student was enrolled on a professionally regulated course, and within a few days of being informed of the concerns raised, the Reported Student withdrew from the University.
  - The third report of inappropriate behaviour that was closed without investigation or outcome was 'withdrawn by the Reporting Parties'. The Reported Student was instead referred to Student Welfare for support and referred to the faculty to consider the student's situation under the Fitness to Practise procedures.
- Zero reports progressed to a conduct investigation; a decrease from the three cases investigated in the preceding reporting period. No students were investigated or found in breach of 5.7 (x).
- Of the seven students reported for this breach, none were subject to further allegations or reports. Of the eight reports, the police were only involved in one report. The police involvement in that report was limited to a welfare check and not related to the allegation of sexual misconduct.
- One report of sexual misconduct also included allegations of racist language as part of the same incident. In this instance, Precautionary Measures were immediately imposed and the Reported Student was required to move to other accommodation. Thereafter the Reporting Party stopped responding to communication and the case did not proceed to investigation albeit the no-contact measures remained in place without any further reports from either person involved. As the report did not proceed to investigation therefore the allegations were not proven.

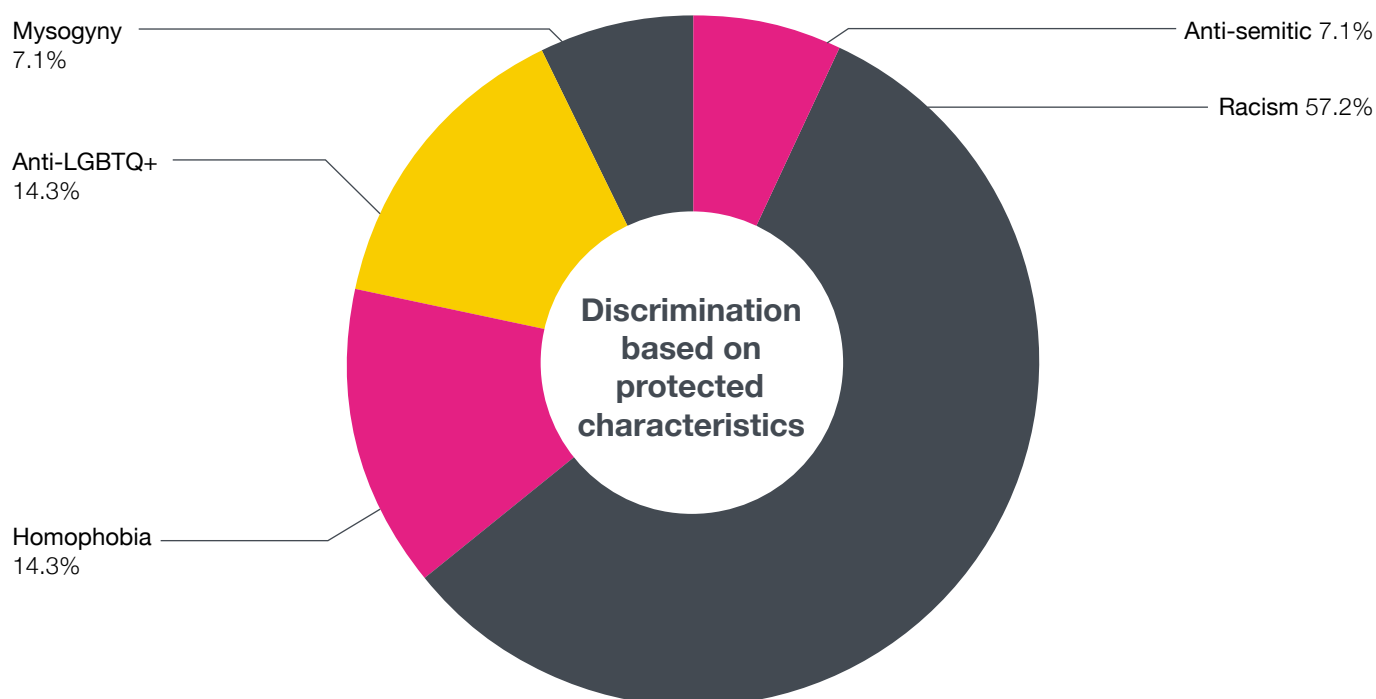
### **3.1.6 Discrimination, harassment and bullying**

In the reporting period, SIRT received 31 reports alleging breaches that fall into the category of discrimination, harassment, bullying and violence. This covers matters such as bullying but also includes cases of harassment and stalking, and discrimination based on protected characteristics, such as racism and ableism.

Of the 31 reports alleging 'discrimination, harassment, bullying and violence', five incidents had some police involvement. 35% of the total reports (55), included allegations of sexual harassment or unwanted contact that did not include physical contact. The 19 reports alleging harassment or unwanted contact without physical contact range from offensive or unwanted online communication, unwanted actions (such as staring or following) and unwanted advances. Most of the reports were resolved successfully through Alternative Resolution, meaning that when notified of the concerns raised the Reported Student agreed and ceased the behaviour.

Of the 55 reports in total, 18 reports (33%) include discrimination based on a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 or behaviour targeted towards an under-represented group of the student population. Some reports included a combination of allegations but for the purposes of reporting the allegations have been recorded separately per group/characteristic.

## Discrimination based on protected characteristics



Protected characteristic/minority group	Number of allegations
Anti-semitic	2
Racism	16
Homophobia	4
Anti-LGBTQ+	4
Misogyny	2

**Fig. 6** Number of allegations of discrimination based on protected characteristic or minority group

There were zero reports of ableist discrimination and zero reports of Islamophobia. Allegations of anti-trans discrimination have been captured within anti-LGBTQ+, whereas homophobia has been recorded separately. Post the implementation of the new OBU Anti-Harassment policy and introduction of OfS Condition E6, next year anti-trans discrimination will be recorded separately.

Some reports include a combination of protected characteristics, for example one report included allegations of misogyny, anti-LGBTQ+, racism and anti-semitism. The Reported Student accused of this combination of discriminatory language was at the time experiencing ongoing mental health and substance abuse issues which may have contributed to this behaviour towards students sharing the same accommodation.

Two reports relating to the same incident, included allegations of racism. Both students accused the other party of racism making counter-allegations against each other. Both students in the case are non-white. The University's disciplinary procedure was paused pending the outcome of a related police investigation which was delivered after both students graduated.

Of the 31 reports which fall into the category of 'discrimination, harassment, bullying and violence', less than a quarter of reports (six) progressed to investigation by a Conduct Officer including two which were referred to UCC. Of those six students investigated, four students were

accused together by one Reporting Party alleging discriminatory language online relating to a Brookes Student Union society. The Conduct Officer found all four Reported Students in breach, imposing a formal warning and a personal conduct order as an appropriate penalty.

Of the two other separate cases referred to UCC, alleging violence and/or discrimination, both students were found in breach. Both students received a temporary or permanent exclusion from one or more of the University's associated organisations (such as sport, accommodation or Brookes Student Union) as an outcome. One student appealed, the breach was upheld but the permanent exclusion from an associated organisation was suspended with conditions.

Of the 18 reported students accused\* of discrimination, 56% are male and 44% are female. With regard to the ethnicity of students accused of discrimination; five students are Asian, two are Black and 11 are White.

### **3.1.7 Drugs and other criminal offences**

In the relevant reporting period, the University received eleven reports of drug misuse or other criminal offences.

Seven students were reported for the minor breaches of '5.6 (g) Possession, storage, use or misuse of a controlled drug or psychoactive substance'. These reports were resolved via Alternative Resolution, with two of the seven reports referred back to the faculty to consider Fitness to Practise and to provide 'words of advice' due to both Reported Students being on a professionally regulated course.

All seven students were reported either out of concern for the Reported Student's wellbeing or because the misuse of drugs was causing disruption within accommodation. One Reporting Student submitted a report against a group of three female students for drug misuse; upon closer scrutiny the report was made with malicious intent. No reports were made for Major breaches (such as supply or production of drugs); no penalties were imposed for drug-related offences.

Two students were reported for the major breach of '5.7 (m) Keeping any offensive weapons within the premises or grounds of OBU or any University residences'. Both incidents were subject to police action. One report involved an incident unrelated to the University and did not occur on campus or in University associated premises; the Reported Student was excluded for academic failure before the matter could be investigated by SIRT. The other reported incident is subject to an ongoing police investigation; given the serious nature of the breach and the health and safety risks the student was temporarily suspended under Precautionary Measures pending the outcome of the police investigation.

One student was reported for '5.7 (s) Failure to declare any relevant criminal offence for which a conviction has occurred after enrolling', this student withdrew from the University when informed of the report.

One student was accused of damage to property (5.7 (o) Damage to or taking property from University staff or the University without permission); however this report proceeded to investigation and the student was not in breach by the Conduct Officer.

### **3.1.8 Health and safety related reports**

Health and safety related cases mostly occur in accommodation, and are frequently about tampering with equipment such as smoke detectors or fire doors. These breaches are dealt with by the Accommodation team and the Residences Conduct Officer. These matters would typically only come to the attention of SIRT if the student is appealing the outcome of the Residences Conduct Officer.

SIRT received two reports by faculty staff relating to the same incident. Faculty staff alleged that amongst other breaches, the conduct amounted to '5.6 (e) Negligent behaviour that presents a risk to health'. Both students were investigated; one student was not found liable for any breaches, the other student was found in minor breach of '5.6 (d) Disorderly or disruptive, behaviour' and major breach of '5.7 (j) Provision of false or misleading information, or withholding relevant information from any staff member or agent of the University'.

### **3.1.9 Interference with University processes**

In the reporting period, SIRT received seven reports alleging nine breaches constituting forms of interference with University processes.

Four reports were investigated by SIRT. The Conduct Officer found three of the students in breach and one student not in breach. Two of the cases related to the same report by faculty staff alleging that a group of students damaged new equipment and provided false information about the incident when questioned. The other two cases investigated involved allegations involving falsified documents or behaviour relating to breaching the working hours conditions of the student's VISA.

One report involved falsification of an exam timetable, the report was not investigated because the student was excluded for academic failure.

Two reports of dishonesty and deceit were resolved by Alternative Resolution as the deceit was coupled with other breaches including bullying and related to a breakdown of relationships within accommodation.

### **3.1.10 Other unwanted behaviour towards others**

Compared with the preceding reporting period, there is a marked decrease in the number of allegations that fall within the category of 'unwanted behaviour towards others' which includes, '5.6 (d) Disorderly or disruptive, behaviour', '5.7 (k) Vexatious, reckless or malicious allegations', '5.7 (n) Any act which damages the University's reputation' and 5.7 (u) Victimisation. This has halved from 25 in the previous reporting period (2023/24) to 13 in the current reporting period.

The breaches within this category are most commonly 'additional breaches', for example 'damage to the University's reputation' was alleged in both cases that proceeded to UCC. If a student's behaviour amounts to another major breach committed in some association with the activities or spaces owned by the University, it is more than likely that the actions are or would be damaging to its reputation.

The most prevalent breach in this category is '5.6 (d) Disorderly or disruptive, behaviour directed towards, or affecting, OBU community or visitors' which was alleged in nine reports.

## 4. Penalties

Penalties can be applied either by the investigating Conduct Officer or by the relevant UCC. It is common that an outcome may involve a combination of several penalties. All the reports closed without investigation (45), including those resolved by Alternative Resolution, will not attract a penalty.

In the reporting period, nine reported students received a penalty or combination of penalties either imposed by the investigating Conduct Officer or imposed by the UCC. That is an increase of four students compared with the previous reporting period.

It is important to note that some students receive measures, such as suspension, as part of the precautionary measures process. Some students then leave of their own volition before an investigation and a penalty can be applied. When this occurs, the University records this and would not allow the student to re-enrol in future without going through the Student Conduct procedures.

### 4.1 Breakdown of penalties

Summary of penalties:

- The most severe penalty imposed during the reporting period was penalty 6. 5 (e) Temporary or permanent exclusion from one or more of the University’s associated organisations, premises, grounds, facilities or services.
- Most penalties imposed by the Conduct Officer and UCC are a combination of the following minor penalties: a formal warning, a Personal Conduct Order and a formal apology. Various combinations of the penalties were imposed by the Conduct Officer in seven cases and by UCC in two cases.

### Penalties imposed by Conduct Officer

4 Students found in breach by Conduct Officer	Penalties imposed by Conduct Officer	Appeal outcome
5.7 (t) Bullying, harassment or discrimination against another person, including the use of discriminatory language. 5.7 (v) Physical, written, or verbal abuse or intimidation against another person, including communications via social media.	6.4 (b) A formal warning about future behaviour 6.4 (d) Personal conduct order	No appeal
Individual students found in breach by Conduct Officer	Penalties imposed by Conduct Officer	Appeal outcome
5.6 (h) Breach of one or more of the University Policies listed in 5.3.	6.4 (b) A formal warning about future behaviour	No appeal
5.6 (d) Disorderly or disruptive, behaviour [...] 5.7 (j) Provision of false or misleading information, or withholding relevant information [...]	6.4 (b) A formal warning about future behaviour, 6.4 (c) Formal apology	No appeal

Individual students found in breach by Conduct Officer	Penalties imposed by Conduct Officer	Appeal outcome
<p>5.6 (a) Dishonesty and deceit [...]</p> <p>5.6 (b) Disruption of or improper interference with the academic, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the University [...]</p> <p>5.6 (d) Disorderly or disruptive, behaviour [...]</p> <p>5.6 (f) Misuse or interference with any equipment provided in the interests of health and safety.</p> <p>5.7 (o) Damage to or taking property without permission [...]</p> <p>5.7 (j) Provision of false or misleading information, or withholding relevant information [...]</p>	<p>No breach found</p> <p>6.4 (a) An absolute discharge</p>	<p>No appeal</p>

## Penalties imposed by University Conduct Committee (UCC)

1 Student found in breach by UCC	Penalties imposed by UCC	Appeal outcome
<p>5.7 (w) Threatening, indecent, offensive or violent behaviour directed towards any member of the University community or member of the public.</p> <p>5.7 (n) Any act which damages the University's reputation</p>	<p>6.4 (b) A formal warning about future behaviour</p> <p>6.4 (d) Personal conduct order</p> <p>6.5 (e) Temporary or permanent exclusion from one or more of the University's associated organisations, premises, grounds, facilities or services.</p>	<p>Breaches upheld.</p> <p>Penalties upheld:</p> <p>6.4 (b) A formal warning about future behaviour</p> <p>6.4 (d) Personal conduct order</p> <p>Penalties varied/overturned:</p> <p>Conditional lifting of the suspension under 6.5 (e)</p>

1 Student found in breach by UCC	Penalties imposed by UCC	Appeal outcome
<p>5.7 (t) Bullying, harassment or discrimination against another person, including the use of discriminatory language.</p> <p>5.7 (z) Any threatening, violent or discriminatory act that is motivated by prejudice based on any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>5.7 (v) Physical, written, or verbal abuse or intimidation against another person, including communications via social media.</p> <p>5.7 (n) Any act which damages the University's reputation</p>	<p>6.4 (f) Community service, training, workshops or restorative meetings</p> <p>6.5 (e) Temporary or permanent exclusion from one or more of the University's associated organisations, premises, grounds, facilities or services.</p> <p>6.5 (h) The required temporary withdrawal of the student from the University.</p>	<p>No appeal</p>

Fig. 7 Breakdown of penalties imposed by Conduct Officer or UCC

## 5. Interaction with external actors and Oxford Brookes University processes

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### 5.1 Police

In the last year, there has been increasing cooperation between the University and the police regarding matters of conduct. Some of the cases that are brought to the attention of SIRT may also constitute a criminal matter, and we advise students reporting these cases that they are free to go to the police if they wish to do so. When this occurs, we will normally put the University investigation on hold until the police have concluded their procedures, or it is agreed that the University can proceed.

In most cases where the police are involved, the University will apply precautionary measures (details on this below). When the matter has been concluded by the police or the courts, and we are informed of this by the responsible police force or the student, the University's investigation will usually resume.

More cases are now being reported to both the police and SIRT, and this has led to more cooperation. As such, there has been work around data requests from the police, and a visit to the team from Thames Valley Police to clarify processes and learn more about each other's investigation procedures.

In this reporting period, 11 out of 57 cases had some involvement with the police. 'Police involvement' is broadly defined to include everything from an online report, police contact, arrest through to criminal investigation. During the reporting period, one case was paused pending criminal justice proceedings.

### 5.2 Support to study and fitness to practise

When a conduct concern is raised, all parties involved including indirect participants like witnesses will be sign-posted to Student Support Services for wellbeing support. Reporting Parties and Reported Students will be given dedicated welfare support who may attend conduct interviews, meetings and UCCs as standard.

If there is a serious welfare concern about a student involved in a conduct report, SIRT may make a referral to Student Support Services on behalf of the student. Where the reported conduct may be as a consequence or caused by a student's mental health or other underlying condition, SIRT will consider whether the matter may be more appropriately dealt with by referring the matter to Student Support Services to consider the **Support to Study** procedure (formerly known as Fitness to Study). During the reporting period, four reported students were referred to welfare as part of the outcome.

If a student is enrolled on a programme where expectations are set out by a regulatory or professional body, such as teaching or nursing, and may be attending a placement, the relevant Fitness to Practise procedure will normally be applied.

Of the 51 students reported for misconduct, ten were enrolled on professionally regulated courses. Where appropriate, based on the nature and credibility of the report, the matter may

be referred to the **Fitness to Practise** process. In two of the cases involving students on a professionally regulated course, the sole outcome was a referral to the course leader for consideration of Fitness to Practise or words of advice.

### **5.3 Accommodation investigation**

Some conduct issues that occur in accommodation owned by the University are initially considered by the Residences Conduct Officer(s), who are not part of SIRT. This frequently includes disputes between housemates or issues such as tampering with health and safety equipment. A common outcome for these cases is the issuing of fixed penalties, for example a fixed penalty of £50 for a first breach of smoking in accommodation. Regular meetings between the Accommodation Team and SIRT have led to steps being taken to ensure that the appropriate team is managing the reports and that concerns are flagged up to SIRT as necessary.

During the reporting period, the Residences Conduct Team awarded a total of 188 Fixed Penalties. This is a 7% decrease from the previous reporting period (201 in the academic year 2023/24). These are fines given to students where there is no need for an investigation.

- 54 of these were for smoking inside University-owned accommodation.
- 130 of these were for health and safety breaches, for example covered safety detectors, interfering with or damaging fire or safety equipment.
- 4 of these were for non-completion of the Fire Safety Awareness Moodle course.

The team also dealt with reports of excessive noise, drug use, unauthorised vehicles on residential sites and general behavioural issues. Warnings and penalties were applied accordingly.

In serious cases involving multiple breaches, 'Notice To Quit' letters will be issued, meaning the student is required to leave the accommodation. In the reporting period, no Notice to Quit letters were issued.

### **5.4 Community Engagement Team**

The Community Engagement team works to develop positive relationships with the local community. As part of this work, it provides a complaints process to allow local residents to raise concerns about the behaviour of Oxford Brookes students.

During the reporting period, the Community Engagement team held conduct interviews related to 2 separate houses (a 50% decrease on the previous reporting period 2023/24), in which reports were made relating to the following regulations:

- Disorderly or disruptive, behaviour directed towards, or affecting, any member of the University community or visitors; and
- Any act which damages the University's reputation or the relationship with its local communities, as demonstrated by substantiated complaints from residents, local authority representatives, the media or a police dispute.

These interviews results in the following as penalties:

- one formal warning about future behaviour, which indicates the error or omissions.
- no cases in which there was a requirement that the student make an oral or written apology to one or more individuals.

- one Personal Conduct Order imposed.
- no community service, training, workshops or restorative meetings, which normally take the form of specified unpaid activities, for which no expenses shall be paid.

The team also carried out 25 advisory meetings for households that addressed noise disturbance and/or anti-social behaviour in private housing, resulting in written apologies delivered to the complainants.

## **5.5 The University's sexual violence, hate crime and harassment reporting tool**

The reporting tool allows students to flag up issues such as bullying, harassment, stalking, hate incidents and sexual violence, or other unwanted conduct. It is possible for students to submit reports either anonymously or with contact details. If details of the reporting party are provided, the Student Welfare team will be in touch within three working days to offer support and consider possible next steps with the student.

Typically the University cannot investigate anonymous reports. However, there may be other actions that can be taken, for example reporting to the police, triangulating information, communicating about acceptable behaviour and other remedial action.

The Student Welfare team will encourage students reporting issues that may constitute a student conduct matter to take the case to SIRT, and they will support students throughout the investigation if they wish. The two teams cooperate closely and Student Welfare will provide support to all students engaging with SIRT processes if required.

During the reporting period, 70 reports were made via the tool; 30 anonymous reports and 40 reports made by people who identified themselves. Of the 40 non-anonymous reports, six of these reports were also reported to SIRT and dealt with under the Student Conduct Procedures (therefore included in the overall figures for reports to SIRT). The total number of reports has increased significantly from the previous reporting period, from 49 in 2023/24 to 70 in 2024/25.

Of the 40 non-anonymous reports:

- 33 reporting parties were offered advice and signposting (including offer of an appointment),
- 17 reporting parties attended an initial meeting; and
- Two reported students were referred to the Support to Study procedure for ongoing concerns.

In addition to this data, due to changes in the regulatory landscape on 1 August 2025 the University implemented a renewed online anonymous reporting tool which was active for the final month of this reporting period. The renewed online tool received 2 reports from students. The remainder of this data will be published in our 2025-2026 Student Conduct Report.

## **5.6 Precautionary measures**

When a conduct concern is reported, trained staff will carry out a precautionary measures assessment if there is reason to believe that the reported student may:

- interfere with the investigation,
- repeat the alleged breach,

- pose a danger to themselves or others; or
- the nature of the breach makes it not reasonable for staff and/or other students to associate with the reported student while the matter is investigated.

Measures such as a suspension, a no-contact agreement, or a move to alternative accommodation may be put in place during the period of investigation as a safeguarding measure.

In the reporting period 2022/23 which preceded the introduction of Alternative Resolution, precautionary measures were used in 19 cases. In the reporting periods following the introduction of Alternative Resolution, the use of precautionary measures has seen a significant decline in use to five cases in 2023/24 then to three in the current reporting period 2024/25.

A no-contact agreement requires no direct contact between the parties and may involve other specific extra measures, such as moving seminar groups, or one party having specific days to attend the library or the gym. These measures are designed to minimise contact as much as possible. A no-contact agreement or an agreement to move to alternative accommodation is a common provision of Alternative Resolution. If both parties accept the terms of Alternative Resolution and there are no wider safeguarding concerns, a mediated resolution means the case will not progress to an investigation negating the need for precautionary measures.

It is also possible for the member of staff carrying out the assessment to suspend the reported student (either from campus, or entirely) until a case has been concluded, as has happened in two cases in the reporting period. The decision to suspend a student is never taken lightly, and will usually involve a discussion with the Academic Registrar. The impact on all students involved needs to be carefully considered as are other factors, including any information given by third parties such as the police. During the reporting period, precautionary measures were applied in three cases, where restrictions or limitations were placed on the Reported Student pending the outcome of the conduct process. One student was suspended from the University for an alleged major breach pending the outcome of a police investigation.

## **5.7 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)**

If a student has exhausted the appeal stages within the University's procedures and they are not satisfied with the outcome, they are entitled to take their case to the **Office of the Independent Adjudicator** (OIA). This independent body is set up to review student complaints about higher education providers in England and Wales and is a free service for students.

The OIA usually accepts cases up to a year after the student has received the final relevant procedural letter from the University. The adjudication process generally takes several months to reach an outcome and, due to these timelines, it is very difficult to directly link the number of cases that we have in the reporting period to OIA outcomes. Conduct cases are rarely taken to the OIA: in the reporting period, zero conduct cases were considered by the OIA.

In its outcome letters, the OIA finds a student's complaint either Justified, Partly Justified or Not Justified, and may make recommendations to the University such as a change in general approach or a change in the relevant case outcome.

## 6. University response

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### 6.1 Action taken in the last year

The total number of eligible Student Conduct reports has increased by 7.8% from the preceding report period (2023/24). The number of reports resolved via Alternative Resolution has increased by 60% from the preceding reporting period, from 15 reports in 2023/24 to 24 reports in the current period. The number of cases investigated by SIRT has decreased 37.5% from the previous reporting period; however, of the ten students investigated, 90% were found in breach (only one student investigated was found not in breach). This supports the aim of providing students with pragmatic, fair and swift resolutions to common disputes and to concentrate SIRT's limited resources to dealing with the most serious allegations of misconduct which pose the greatest risk of harm to the student body or to the University's reputation.

The numbers of students reporting conduct or accused of misconduct is negligible in the context of the student body population. 51 reported students represents less than 0.36% of the total student body (14265). It is positive that so few students are subjected to conduct which falls below the standard expected of Brookes students, and it is positive that so few students are accused of serious misconduct.

In the last year, SIRT achieved the following:

- Managed an increased number of conduct reports with fewer staff and reduced capacity.
- Collaborated with the People Directorate to launch the University's new Anti-Harassment policy.
- Supported and collaborated with OBU's People Directorate to reach compliance with the Office for Students Condition E6, including contributing the single source requirement for reporting.
- Continued to provide internal training to SIRT staff investigating conduct and provided separate training to Chairs and Student Representatives participating in University Conduct Committees in relation to allegations of sexual misconduct.
- Worked closely with the Accommodation team, the Residences Conduct Officer and Brookes Sport to improve understanding of Student Conduct; provided support for managing risk and training on first disclosure of a serious conduct report.
- Continued engagement with the Academic Registrars Council's nationwide network of conduct investigators, including attending an in-person training day.
- Developed and delivered a training session for Brookes Union societies in September 2025 as a response to the spate of reports in the reporting period involving conduct associated with Brookes Union societies' activities.

## 6.2 Future outlook

In the year ahead we plan to:

- Improve data collection on reports closed via Alternative Resolution including better data to accurately report timescales at all stages of the process.
- Deliver training to enable more staff members to manage Alternative Resolution.
- Revise the wording of the breaches to reduce overlap. Making the breaches more specific should reduce multiple selections; this will improve the accuracy and quality of data reported about categories of breaches. Pilot removing the ability of Reporting Parties to select allegations at the initial reporting stage.
- Introduce a new breach so that allegations of sexual misconduct can be more accurately categorised based on the severity of conduct and harm.

## **7. Useful links (resources, guidance and regulation)**

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**Office for Students Condition E6: Harassment and sexual misconduct**

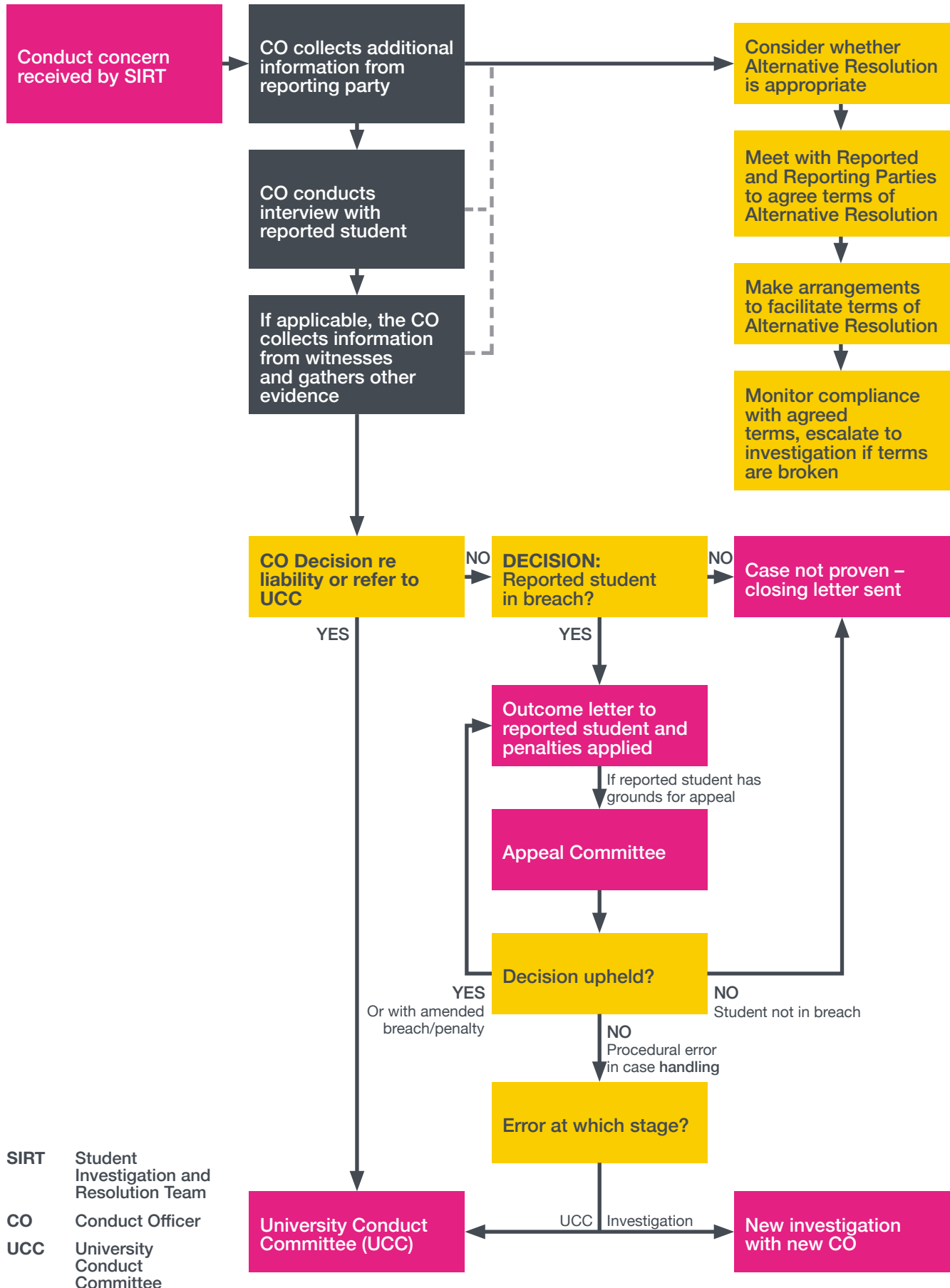
**Universities UK: How to handle alleged student misconduct: case studies  
Supplemental note to UUK–Pinsent Masons guidance**

**The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education – The good  
practice framework: Disciplinary procedures**

**Universities UK: Tackling harassment**

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Conduct procedures flowchart



## Appendix 2: Categorisation of breaches and number of reported breaches

\*Column C is the number of reports alleging the corresponding breach

Category of breach	Individual breaches as listed in the procedures	*C
Interference with OBU processes	5.6 (a) Dishonesty and deceit, in relation to the University, its staff, students, visitors, or procedures.	5
	5.6 (b) Disruption of or improper interference with the academic, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the University.	1
	5.6 (c) Failure to disclose names, relevant details, or documentation to any employee or agent of the University who reasonably requires it.	0
	5.6 (h) Breach of one or more of the University Policies listed in 5.3.	1
	5.7 (i) Persistent failure to comply with reasonable requests from staff, or failing to respond to or to comply with any disciplinary sanction imposed under the Student Conduct procedures.	0
	5.7 (j) Provision of false or misleading information, or withholding relevant information from OBU staff	2
	5.7 (l) Unauthorised accessing or amendment to, or interfering in any way with the security, integrity or privacy of any files or confidential material	0
Discrimination, harassment, bullying or violence	5.7 (q) Coercing, pressuring or forcing others into taking part in any ceremonies or activities that could be demeaning or dangerous.	0
	5.7 (t) Bullying, harassment or discrimination against another person, including the use of discriminatory language.	23
	5.7 (w) Threatening, indecent, offensive or violent behaviour directed towards any member of the University community or member of the public.	7
	5.7 (z) Any threatening, violent or discriminatory act that is motivated by prejudice based on any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.	6
	5.7 (v) Physical, written, or verbal abuse or intimidation against another person, including via social media.	21
Sexual misconduct	5.7 (x) Sexual harassment, violence or abuse.	8
Health and safety	5.6 (e) Negligent behaviour that presents a risk to health and safety for any member of the University community.	0
	5.6 (f) Misuse or interference with any equipment provided in the interests of health and safety.	1
	5.7 (r) A third breach under the fixed penalty policy.	0
Drugs or criminal offences	5.6 (g) Possession, storage, use or misuse of a controlled drug or psychoactive substance	7
	5.7 (p) Production of, and/or supply or offer to supply, a controlled drug or psychoactive substance	0
	5.7 (aa) The supply of drugs, or possession with intent to supply drugs prohibited by the University or illegal	0
	5.7 (y) Any criminal activity	0
	5.7 (s) Failure to declare any relevant criminal offence for which a conviction has occurred after enrolling.	1
	5.7 (o) Damage to or taking property from University staff or the University without permission.	1
	5.7 (m) Keeping any offensive weapons within the premises or grounds of OBU or any University residences.	2

Category of breach	Individual breaches as listed in the procedures	*C
Other unwanted or disruptive behaviour	5.6 (d) Disorderly or disruptive, behaviour directed towards, or affecting, any member of OBU community or visitors.	9
	5.7 (k) Vexatious, reckless or malicious allegations, complaints, or reports against members of OBU community or visitors.	1
	5.7 (n) Any act which damages the University's reputation or the relationship with its local communities, e.g substantiated complaints from residents, local authority representatives, the media or a police dispute.	3
	5.7 (u) Victimization of anyone because they have raised a complaint or exercised any other right under a University or other procedure.	0

## Appendix 3: Student Conduct Penalties Tariff

Who imposed the penalty	Student conduct penalty tariff
Conduct Officer or University Conduct Committee imposed sanctions	<p><b>6.4 Penalties for a minor breach (one or more of the following):</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An absolute discharge. This means that the student technically breached these procedures but no blame should be attached to them.</li> <li>A formal warning about future behaviour, which shall indicate the errors or omissions.</li> <li>A requirement that the student make an oral or written apology to one or more in individuals.</li> <li>The imposition of a personal conduct order.</li> <li>A fixed penalty.</li> <li>Community service, training, workshops or restorative meetings, which shall normally take the form of specified unpaid activities, for which no expenses shall be paid</li> </ol>
University Conduct Committee only imposed sanctions	<p><b>6.5 Penalties for a major breach (one or more of the following):</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any penalty available for a minor breach, as listed above.</li> <li>The temporary or permanent confiscation, without compensation, of any object or material prohibited by, or which was involved in a breach of these procedures.</li> <li>A fine*</li> <li>Full or partial restitution of the cost of the damage or loss suffered by the University or any associated organisation or person, or by a member of the public.</li> <li>The temporary or permanent exclusion of the student from one or more of the University's, or an associated organisation's, premises, grounds, facilities or services.</li> <li>A requirement that the student relocate within or between residences associated with the University.</li> <li>Expulsion from University owned or managed accommodation.</li> <li><b>The required temporary withdrawal of the student from the University.</b></li> <li><b>The permanent expulsion of the student from the University.</b></li> </ol>

## Appendix 4: Disposal pathways comparison with preceding reporting period

Disposal pathway	2022-2023 Previous reporting period	2023-2024 Previous reporting period	2024-2025 Current reporting period	% change between 2023/24 and current reporting period
Total eligible conduct reports	44	51	55	7.8%
Referred to accommodation	1	3	0	-100.0%
Referred to Community Engagement Team	1	0	1	N/A
Referred to Faculty	0	3	2	-33.3%
Reports dealt with by SIRT	42	51	52	2.0%
Reports closed without investigation*	19	11	18	63.6%
Alternative Resolution	0	15	24	60.0%
Ongoing Reports	0	2	0	-100.0%
Report paused pending criminal justice proceedings	4	1	4	300.0%
Cases investigated by SIRT	19	16	10	-37.5%
Cases found in breach	10	7	9	28.6%
Cases found not in breach	8	3	1	-66.7%
Cases with outcome pending	1	0	0	0.0%
Of total cases investigated, number referred to UCC	7	6	2	-66.7%