



Advice for students intending to protest

The University has legal obligations, which include protecting freedom of speech for all. Students are encouraged to express their views and contribute to debate and change at every level, but the University also has a duty to maintain a welcoming and respectful environment for everyone. Students, staff, alumni and visitors are equally entitled to study, work and go about their business without obstruction or intimidation. As well as University rules, actions must also comply with criminal and civil law.

Some dos and some donts:

Physical activities

- ✓ Attend events and engage, but respect others and the normal rules for good order at meetings, debates etc.
- ✓ Speak outside an event, leaflet, or use placards/banners in support or opposition, but avoid disrespectful or intimidating language including the chanting of baseless allegations, blocking access to the event, obstructing passers-by, damage, or littering
- ✓ Hold a booked event in a University or College building
- ✓ Follow instructions given by University or College staff, who are primarily concerned with safety
- ✗ Disrupt authorised University or College events; e.g. preventing speakers from talking, others from attending, or doing anything designed to stop the event continuing
- ✗ Occupy University or College buildings or sites without permission
- ✗ Act against the law

Communications

- ✓ Send appropriate communications by permitted means, including use of media and social media to explain messages or campaigns
- ✓ Ensure that any communications are not threatening or disrespectful
- ✓ Remember that harm or damage caused is likely to have a negative impact
- ✗ Intimidate or disrespect others, ignoring their freedoms or making baseless allegations against them
- ✗ Use fireworks or smoke canisters, or spray/paint on messages
- ✗ Intentionally or carelessly damage property

The University can take [disciplinary action](#) where students breach the [disciplinary regulations](#). You are responsible for being aware of these and they include:

- Not obstructing lawful free speech or assembly in the Precincts of the University (i.e. anywhere within 3 miles of Great St Mary's Church and around certain other places)
- Not occupying or using University or College property without permission
- Not endangering the safety, health, or property of others
- Not engaging in harassment of others
- Complying with University Officers and others authorized to act for the University when doing their duty, e.g. by showing your University card when asked

Conduct such as that marked in red above may cause the University to start disciplinary proceedings, or in some cases involve the use of bailiffs or require referral to the police. The University's Discipline Committee can impose significant penalties, for example by suspending a student from study for interfering with others' lawful freedom of speech.