

I feel that I have been bullied. What should I do?

The Centre for Environmental Policy (CEP) at Imperial College London is committed to championing a university environment where all students, staff and visitors are treated with respect, consideration and courtesy and feel safe and supported.

CEP has a zero-tolerance stance towards bullying and will take action to ensure such reported behaviour is addressed and eliminated. CEP constantly strives to ensure that its community of staff and students enjoy a culture that is happy, rewarding, safe, inclusive and productive.

CEP has a responsibility to deal with all reported incidents of bullying appropriately, to investigate and address the behaviour of the alleged perpetrator and to provide support for those affected. If you feel that you have been bullied in any way, we are here to support you through this.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is a repeated aggressive behaviour where one person (or group of people) in a position of power deliberately intimidates, humiliates, abuses or coerces an individual with the intention to hurt that person physically, emotionally or professionally.

Bullying is a sensitive subject. You may find it hard to talk about it and ask for support, especially if you do not know what will happen. This leaflet aims to help answer questions you might have and to outline how you can find help and support.

Bullying can be a very devastating and distressing issue, with many feeling that there is no escape. Bullying can detract from a productive working or learning environment and can lead to physical and mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety and sleep disturbances. It can also affect self-confidence, morale and performance, leading someone to become withdrawn and isolated. It might affect their personal life too.

It is important to remember that bullying in any form is wrong. If this is happening to you, this is not your fault.

We recognise that you may be reluctant to seek help, fearing repercussions. You will not be victimised, ignored or dismissed for seeking help and speaking out. CEP is here to support you: we have a dedicated team of Advisors to assist you. You will be treated with the utmost care and respect, under strict confidentiality rules.

Our advisors will be empathetic, impartial, non-judgemental and discreet: we will provide a completely safe environment for you to share your concerns. Complaints will be taken very seriously, treated with sensitivity and investigated thoroughly.

If you feel you are being bullied, the bully is to blame and is abusing their position of trust and power. This is not your fault. You may not be the only person they are bullying. Some may be unaware of the affect that their behaviour is having on others. Advice or a training course for them may be appropriate. In other instances, a formal investigation and actions may be warranted. Our aim is to achieve a managed and positive outcome. It is important that the perpetrator is identified and dealt with in an appropriate manner, but we will not take action without your consent. You will remain in control.

Bullying can come in one of the following forms:

Physical bullying

Unwanted physical contact ranging from invasion of personal space to assault and damaging possessions.

Verbal bullying

Offensive comments and threats. This can include jokes, sarcasm, insults, malicious rumours, constant criticism, shouting, patronising, disparaging, humiliating or insulting comments and the use of passive-aggressive language in verbal or written communication.

Relational bullying

The intent to hurt someone's reputation or social standing. Includes isolation from normal work or study place or social events, persistently overloading an individual with an unreasonable workload. Threatening to disclose a person's sexuality or disability to others. Deliberately using the wrong name or pronoun in relation to a transgender person. Denying training or promotional opportunities. Taking credit for someone else's work.

Cyber Bullying

The use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass or target another person. This includes email, instant messaging, text messaging, social networking sites and mobile phones.

What you should do

1. Keep a diary of events. This should include the date, time, place, who was involved, what happened, and the names of any witnesses.
2. It might be helpful in the first instance to confide confidentially in a friend.
3. If you feel you can, talk to the individual and ask them to stop. In some instances, they might not realise that their behaviour is upsetting you or others.
4. Contact one of the CEP Advisors or one of the College's support staff (see below). In many instances, advice on a sound strategy for you to handle bullying is enough to resolve the situation.

Support at Imperial College

- ▶ Imperial College's Policy on Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation [LINK ↗](#)
- ▶ Respect for others: A guide for staff at Imperial [LINK ↗](#)

Both staff and students can contact CEP's Anti-Bullying Advisors

Trained Advisors are available at CEP to help support and guide you through the experience under strict confidentiality. They can help clarify your options with the aim of resolution of your concerns.

Dr Tilly Collins t.collins@imperial.ac.uk

Dr Yiannis Kountouris i.kountouris@imperial.ac.uk

Additional Support

National Bullying Helpline 0845 22 55 787

Students can:

- ▶ Talk to their personal tutor or supervisor
- ▶ Contact the student counselling service on 020 7594 9637
- ▶ Contact Imperial's Student Advisors at the Students Union on 020 7594 8060 or advice@imperial.ac.uk

Staff can contact:

- ▶ Human Resources Advisor: r.nyarko@imperial.ac.uk
- ▶ Imperial's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre (EDIC)
for support equality@imperial.ac.uk
- ▶ Occupational Health [LINK ↗](#)
- ▶ Contact Confidential Care Assistance Provider
on 0800 085 4764
- ▶ FoNS Health and Wellbeing [LINK ↗](#)
- ▶ Contact one of the Imperial Staff Networks
[Able@Imperial LINK ↗](#)
[Imperial600 LINK ↗](#)
[Imperial as One LINK ↗](#)

Common questions and misconceptions

Does bullying need to be face-to-face?

No. Other communication mechanisms can be involved, such as the internet, email, phone and social networking sites.

Will my complaint be confidential?

Absolutely. Complaints, both formal and informal, will be dealt with by a small number of trusted people and in the strictest confidence.

If I have witnessed bullying of others,
can I report it?

Yes. You can report any behaviour that you find
troubling, even if it is not directed at you.

If I am being bullied by someone junior to me,
can I still report it?

Yes. Bullying can apply to all relationships and
is wrong in any direction.

Will I be treated differently if I support someone who has complained of bullying?

Absolutely not. If you were to be treated differently for supporting someone, this would be victimisation, which is an offence.

Remember, all members of the CEP community have a right to work or study in an environment that is safe, respectful, rewarding and free from inappropriate behaviour. No one should have to experience bullying at CEP.