

Code of Conduct for Enquirers

We are committed to providing a high quality Enquiries Service to applicants, prospective applicants and their parents, teachers, agents and other supporters. However, we also recognise our duty to ensure the safety and welfare of our staff. Therefore this Code of Practice sets out the University's expectation of those using our Enquiries Service.

A. Enquiries about Applications Made To Us

1. We cannot disclose any information to anyone who is not the applicant themselves unless we have received prior, written permission, directly from the applicant. This can be submitted via our [Ask Us](#) form or for UG applicants, we will accept the nominated contact on their UCAS application as written permission. We can however, provide more general information about the University and our admissions process to any enquirer, regardless of permissions.
2. Whilst the University understands that applying to university can be a stressful experience, we do not expect Durham University staff to be subjected to, or tolerate, unacceptable behaviour.
3. The University reserves the right to reject an applicant or withdraw any offer made based on an applicant's behaviour, if such behaviour is deemed to be unacceptable by the University (acting reasonably) in accordance with the University's relevant policies.

B. Unacceptable Behaviour

4. The University has zero tolerance towards enquirers whose behaviour is deemed to be unacceptable or unreasonable and we will take action to protect our staff as required.
5. The University's definition of "unacceptable or unreasonable behaviour" might include but is not necessarily restricted to enquirers behaving in the following ways:
 - (a) communicating with the University or its staff in an abusive, offensive, defamatory, distressing, aggressive, threatening, coercive or intimidating manner;
 - (b) making personal comments and judgements on a member of the Enquiry Team including derogatory comments about accent or background;
 - (c) engaging in communication which is unreasonably persistent or demanding in terms of its frequency or volume;

(d) providing information containing materially inaccurate or false information or evidence;

(e) knowingly making clearly unfounded allegations against a member of the University's staff.

C. Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour

6. When we consider that the behaviour of an enquirer is unacceptable, as a first step, the member of the Enquiry Team will tell the enquirer why we find their behaviour unacceptable and we will ask them to change it.

7. Should the unacceptable behaviour occur during a telephone call, the enquirer will be told that a continuation of the behaviour will result in the phone call being terminated by the member of the Enquiry Team and that they will need to read the Code of Conduct for Enquirers before re-contacting the University.

8. The decision to terminate a call will be recorded by the individual member of staff and will be communicated to the Head of Admissions and the Head of Student Recruitment and Conversion. A note of the incident will be placed on the applicant's record.

9. If the unacceptable behaviour continues, we will take action to restrict the enquirer's contact with the University. In the instance of someone who has permission to discuss an application on behalf of an applicant displaying unacceptable behaviour, this permission may be removed.

10. The decision to restrict contact with the University can be taken by one of the following members of staff or their nominees: the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), the Chief Operating Officer (Registrar), Academic Registrar.

10. Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate. The options we are most likely to consider are:

(a) requesting contact in a particular form (for example, through our web-form only);

(b) restricting contact to specified days and times;

(c) asking the enquirer to enter into an agreement about their conduct.

11. Normally we write to tell the enquirer why we believe their behaviour is unacceptable, what action we are taking and the duration of that action.

13. Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of the University's staff, we will consider other options, for example reporting the matter to the Police or taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give the enquirer prior warning of that action.

14. This Code of Practice and its use will be reviewed at least every three years.



(Last updated: 27/02/2025)