The University of Queensland Union College
Resident Code of Conduct

Our commitment to a safe, inclusive community

At Union College, we are committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive residential environment for every member of our community.

This commitment aligns with the Australian Universities Accord, the National Student Charter, and the Action Plan Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Higher Education.

We place the voices and needs of residents and staff at the centre of our decisions, particularly those of historically underrepresented groups, including First Nations peoples, people from low socio-economic backgrounds, people in regional, rural and remote communities, LGBTIQA+ communities, people with disabilities, international students, and culturally and linguistically diverse cohorts.

We reject all forms of discrimination, racism, bullying, harassment, vilification and gender-based violence, and proactively work to promote equity, wellbeing and a strong sense of belonging.

We embed evidence-informed prevention activities, trauma-informed responses, and continuous consultation with residents and other stakeholders.

We maintain transparent, accessible reporting and complaint processes, prioritise safety and confidentiality, and provide tailored support and reasonable adjustments as needed so all residents can live, learn and thrive.

Introduction

The purpose of the Resident Code of Conduct (Code) is to ensure you understand your rights and responsibilities as a member of the Union College community. The Code explains how you are expected to behave, what you can expect from the College, and what may happen if this standard is not met.

All residents must comply with this Code as a condition of entry to and continued residence at Union College. The Code applies to your behaviour on college premises, during college activities held elsewhere, and in other settings where your actions may reasonably affect the safety, wellbeing or reputation of the Union College community.

The Code sits alongside and is supported by other College policies, including the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy (RES0202), the Gender-Based Violence Prevention Policy (RES0201), and relevant university and legislative requirements. Where there is an apparent conflict, we will interpret and apply this Code in a way that is consistent with our legal obligations, the Australian Universities Accord, and the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence, when those regulatory instruments are in force.

The Code sets out the behaviour and conduct expected of you as a resident and community member. It also outlines the processes that may apply when an alleged breach of the Code is reported, as well as

the possible consequences if we determine that a violation has occurred. We may act on a potential breach, whether or not a complaint has been made.

You are expected to act as a positive role model, treat others with respect, and always comply with the laws of the broader Australian community.

You must sign this Code and return a copy to the College Office. Failure to sign may be treated as a breach of this Code and may affect your eligibility to reside at Union College.

We are committed to regular self-review, transparent reporting, and genuine consultation with students, staff, parents, governing bodies, and regulators to ensure our behaviour, values, and actions meet or exceed national standards for student safety, wellbeing, equity, and inclusion.

Respect for and responsibility to self

We expect you to act in ways that support your physical, mental, social and academic wellbeing.

You are responsible for your choices and conduct at all times, including when consuming alcohol or other substances, using technology or social media, and participating in college events on or off campus.

You are expected to seek help early if you are experiencing health, wellbeing, safety, or academic challenges.

You are expected to:

- Look after your health and wellbeing, including sleep, nutrition and help-seeking
- Engage actively in your studies and make the most of the learning opportunities available to you
- Use alcohol and other drugs, if at all, lawfully, safely, responsibly, and considerately, without placing you or others at risk
- Use technology, including social media, in ways that are respectful, lawful and consistent with this Code.

Respect and empathy for, and responsibility to, others

Union College is a residential learning community where every person has the right to feel safe, respected and included.

You must actively demonstrate respect, empathy and consideration for others, so that all members of the community can live, study and work in an environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment, vilification and gender-based violence. This includes all College residents, guests, staff, contractors, visitors and neighbours.

You must not engage in any conduct that could harm another person, including:

- Discrimination, racism, or other unfair treatment based on a person's attributes or background (including gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, culture, socio-economic status, or other protected characteristics)

- Bullying, which is repeated verbal, physical, social or online behaviour that causes distress, fear or humiliation
- Harassment, including sexual harassment, is conduct of a sexual or other nature that is unwelcome and where it is reasonable to expect that the person would feel offended, humiliated or intimidated
- Vilification, including inciting hatred, profound contempt or severe ridicule, based on race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity
- Hazing, initiation activities or pranks that degrade, humiliate, intimidate or place a person at physical or psychological risk, whether or not they have consented to take part
- Sexual assault or any form of sexual misconduct, including rape, unwanted sexual contact, stealthing, image-based abuse, coerced sexual activity or technology-facilitated sexual abuse.
- Family or domestic violence, threatening behaviour, stalking, or other forms of physical, emotional, psychological, social, or financial abuse.

The College adopts a whole-of-organisation, zero-tolerance approach to sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence, as required by the national Action Plan and National Code.

“Zero tolerance” means that all concerns are taken seriously, investigated appropriately, and addressed promptly with proportionate consequences and support, not that every incident will result in the same outcome.

You must recognise that staff, including academic tutors, hold positions of authority and responsibility. The same applies to Resident Mentors, who are not employees of the College. It is never acceptable to pursue or engage in a sexual or other intimate relationship where there is a conflict of interest or a power imbalance, including when the other person has responsibility for your welfare, assessment or supervision.

You must be mindful that your words and actions, including in digital spaces, affect others and Union College's reputation. You must not use social media, messaging platforms or any publication to bully, harass, shame, threaten, spread rumours, share pornography, or otherwise harm or demean members of the College or the broader community.

Ethical and honest behaviour

You are expected to act with integrity and honesty in all aspects of college life. This includes being truthful in your interactions, taking responsibility for your actions and decisions, and complying with reasonable directions from college staff.

You must:

- Provide us with accurate information when requested and do not deliberately mislead or withhold material information

- Respect our property and the property of others, and do not engage in theft, vandalism or misuse of facilities
- Comply with safety instructions, emergency procedures, and lawful directions from staff
- Acknowledge and, where appropriate, apologise for the impact of your actions, and work constructively towards repair and change.

You must not use the College's name, coat of arms, logo or other branding without the prior written permission of the Head of College or an authorised representative. This includes online profiles, events, publications and merchandise.

Breaches of the Code

A breach of this Code occurs when a resident's behaviour fails to meet the standards set out above or in related College policies.

A breach of this Code is also a breach of clause 13.1 of The University of Queensland Union College Residential Contract.

Breaches of the Code can range from minor to extremely serious. We will consider each matter in context, taking into account the nature and impact of the conduct, any history of prior concerns, and any relevant mitigating or aggravating factors. We reserve the right to decide how alleged breaches are handled, including whether they are addressed informally through education and behaviour management, or formally through investigation and consequences.

Examples of conduct that may breach the Code include (but are not limited to):

- Spreading gossip or rumours that harm another person's reputation or wellbeing
- Displaying, sharing or forwarding pornography in inappropriate or unwelcome ways
- Receiving pornography or photographs of others where you suspect that their consent has not been given
- Bullying, verbal abuse, hazing, or group behaviours that isolate or intimidate others
- Any form of assault, including sexual assault, physical violence, or inappropriate touching
- Urinating in public, public nudity, or other offensive behaviour on or off college grounds
- Collecting body fluids, such as urine, in containers and not disposing of them via the sewerage system
- Use, possession or sale of illicit drugs
- Public drunkenness or dangerous alcohol-related behaviour, including underage drinking
- Theft or property damage
- Misuse of information technology, including social media, that causes harm, breaks the law or breaches this Code

- Using cameras (including mobile phones) in ways that breach privacy or consent, such as recording or sharing images without permission
- Publishing content (in print or online) that is disparaging, disrespectful, misleading or untrue about individuals or the College
- Repeated or serious disruption to others' learning or participation in college activities
- Stalking or monitoring another person without their consent, including online.

Conduct that could result in serious harm to self or others, or that involves abuse of power, serious dishonesty, or repeated breaches, may be treated as serious misconduct.

Serious misconduct may result in non-admission, conditional admission, suspension, exclusion or expulsion from Union College, consistent with the Residential Contract and applicable laws.

Process

General Guidelines

The College aims to respond to potential breaches of the Code in a way that is fair, timely, trauma-informed, victim-survivor-focused, and consistent with procedural fairness, while also considering the safety of the wider community.

Information about a potential breach may come from a complaint, a disclosure, a staff member, another resident, a guest, or an external body. When the College becomes aware of a possible breach, it may act, including by initiating an investigation, even if no formal complaint has been made.

Key principles include:

- Safety first: The immediate and ongoing safety and wellbeing of residents, staff, and others will be prioritised, including interim safety measures where appropriate.
- Respect and support: Everyone involved will be treated with respect and provided with information about support services, including internal and external options.
- Trauma-informed practice: Responses to disclosures and complaints about gender-based violence are designed to minimise re-traumatisation, maximise victim-survivors' voice and choice, and recognise the impact of trauma.
- Procedural fairness: Before decisions with significant consequences are made, the resident whose conduct is under consideration will usually be informed of the concern and given a reasonable opportunity to respond.
- Confidentiality and privacy: Information will be handled as confidentially as is appropriate in the circumstances and in line with legal obligations, while recognising that absolute confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed.

Any College staff member or Resident Mentor, who becomes aware of a possible serious breach of the Code must promptly report it to the Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO, subject to any overriding professional ethical obligations.

The College may share information or report serious matters with external organisations, such as the relevant university, the police, professional regulators, or the National Student Ombudsman, where required or permitted by law, or where necessary to protect safety or address systemic risk.

Complaint-based or individual-initiated processes

Residents can seek help and raise concerns in several ways. It is important to distinguish between:

- Seeking support or advice
- Making a disclosure
- Making a formal complaint to the College
- Making a report to an external body (for example, police).

You are encouraged to speak with a Relevant Staff Member in the first instance. This could be the Resident Wellbeing Lead or the Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO.

Doing so does not automatically mean a complaint has been made. Together, you can explore options for support, informal resolution, making a complaint, or taking no further action at this time.

If you decide to make a complaint:

1. Step 1 – Speak with a Relevant Staff Member
    - You can speak confidentially with a Relevant Staff Member to discuss what has happened, what you need and the options available. They will explain the difference between a disclosure, a complaint and a report to an external body, and provide information about support services.
2. Step 2 – Decide whether the behaviour may breach the Code
    - With support from the relevant staff member, you will consider whether the behaviour appears to breach this Code. If it does not, you may still explore other ways to address your concerns (for example, a facilitated conversation, mediation, or a referral to another service).
3. Step 3 – Decide whether to lodge a complaint
    - If you wish to make a complaint, you will be asked to provide it in writing, including who is involved, what occurred, when and where it occurred, and the names of any witnesses, if known. Complaints should be as specific as possible. Written complaints are usually submitted via the RespectX database or by email to the Deputy Head of College.
4. Step 4 – Conciliation (where appropriate)

- In some cases, we may consider that a conciliation process is appropriate, with the consent of all parties. Conciliation focuses on resolving the matter, agreeing on future behaviour, and repairing relationships. It is not a disciplinary process. Outcomes may include an apology, agreements about future contact, or other restorative actions.
- The outcome of conciliation does not prevent us from investigating or taking further action where necessary, particularly in cases of serious misconduct or safety concerns.

5. Step 5 – Investigation
    - If conciliation is not suitable, not agreed to, or unsuccessful, anyone involved may request an investigation, or the College may decide to investigate on its own initiative.
    - For all possible breaches, including serious misconduct, we will decide on a case-by-case basis how to investigate. This may include interviews, review of documents or digital information, and consultation with relevant experts. Residents alleged to have engaged in serious misconduct will usually be invited to an interview and given the opportunity to respond to the allegations.
    - The College may implement interim safety measures at any stage, such as changes to room allocation, restrictions on access to areas or activities, or temporary exclusion from college premises or events, where necessary to protect any person from harm.

Outcome of Investigations

After an investigation, the Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO or an authorised representative will decide whether there has been a breach of the Code, how serious it is, and what consequences, if any, should follow.

If the Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO considers the breach may constitute serious misconduct, the matter will be referred to the Head of College/CEO, who will determine the appropriate consequences. The Head of College/CEO will usually consider any investigation report and may seek further information if required.

The decision-maker will not be bound by formal rules of evidence and may inform themselves as they consider appropriate. However, decisions must not be arbitrary, erratic or unreasonable. They should be broadly consistent with the principles of fairness and the College's obligations under relevant laws, the Accord and the National Code.

Possible consequences include, but are not limited to:

- No further action
- Educational or restorative actions (for example, reflective tasks, training or counselling)
- Formal warning or behaviour agreement
- Conditions on continued residence or participation in college activities

- Restrictions on access to specific spaces, events or roles
- Restitution or compensation for property damage
- Suspension or exclusion from activities or facilities
- Suspension or expulsion from Union College.

Review of Decision

If you are the Respondent and you disagree with a decision made by the Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO or authorised representative under this Code, you may request a review.

To request a review:

- You must write to the Head of College/CEO within seven (7) days of being notified of the decision, clearly stating the decision you are requesting be reviewed and the reasons for your request
- The Head of College/CEO (or delegate) will consider the request, the original decision, and the material before the original decision-maker. They may confirm, modify, or set aside the decision, but will usually not conduct a full reinvestigation, take new evidence, or hold meetings unless they consider it necessary.

The Head of College/CEO may alter or set aside the original decision only if it is inconsistent with this Code or is otherwise arbitrary, erratic or unreasonable. The Head of College/CEO will notify you in writing of the outcome of the review. They are not required to provide detailed reasons beyond confirming that procedural fairness and consistency with this Code have been considered.

If you wish to raise concerns about the Head of College/CEO's decision or systemic issues, you may contact the Union College Board Chair at BoardChair@unioncollegeuq.com.au

You may also have the option of raising certain matters with external bodies, including the National Student Ombudsman once it is established, in line with the Australian Universities Accord and the national Action Plan.

Union College Relevant Members of Staff

Relevant Staff Members are available to provide information, guidance and support regarding this Code and to help you understand your options if you are affected by a possible breach.

Relevant Staff Members have received training in harassment, gender-based violence, discrimination and trauma-informed practice. They can listen, provide information, coordinate support and explain processes, including how to make a disclosure or a complaint. Speaking with a Relevant Staff Member does not, by itself, constitute a formal complaint.

If there appears to be an immediate or significant risk to the safety or wellbeing of residents or staff, a Relevant Staff Member may need to act, including by informing a Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO or

external services, even if you do not wish to proceed with a complaint. They will discuss this with you wherever possible.

Relevant Staff Members are the Resident Wellbeing Lead and the Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO.

Role of staff in respect of the Resident Code of Conduct

The Head of College/CEO

The Head of College/CEO is responsible for the College's overall governance and leadership, including fostering a culture of safety, respect, equity, and inclusion, and ensuring the College meets its legal obligations and those under the Universities Accord and related national frameworks.

The Head of College/CEO may:

- Oversee and, where appropriate, participate in processes under this Code.
- Decide on consequences in cases of serious or material breaches.
- Lead regular self-reviews, reporting and improvement of the College's approach to student safety, gender-based violence prevention and response, and equity.
- Inform the Board Chair when a matter may require legal advice, police involvement or other significant action.

Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO

The Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO will usually be appointed to manage matters arising under this Code. They are responsible for:

- Receiving and considering complaints and information about possible breaches.
- Deciding whether to attempt conciliation, refer for investigation, implement interim safety measures or take other action.
- Making findings and decisions in relation to most breaches, except where the matter is referred to the Head of College/CEO as serious misconduct.
- Providing advice and support to residents and staff about this Code.

Relevant Staff Members

Relevant Staff Members include the Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO and the Resident Wellbeing Lead.

Their role is to:

- Provide information about the Code and options for support and resolution.
- Help residents to clarify their concerns and consider possible next steps.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality and identify any conflicts of interest.

- The Resident Wellbeing Lead will refer matters to a Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO when there is a possible serious breach or where a complaint is made.

External Advisors/Conciliators

External Advisors or Conciliators may be engaged when:

- There is a conflict of interest for internal staff.
- Specialist expertise or independence is needed (for example, in complex gender-based violence matters).
- Conciliation or restorative processes are considered appropriate and safe.

The Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO, or an authorised representative, will coordinate contact with External Advisors and manage their roles in any process under this Code.

Other staff members

All staff share responsibility for supporting a safe, respectful environment and for reporting serious concerns. Staff who are not identified as Relevant Staff Members should encourage residents to speak with a Relevant Staff Member if they raise concerns about possible breaches of the Code.

Other residents

All residents have a shared responsibility to uphold this Code, support each other and seek help when they are concerned about their own safety or the safety of others.

Residents are encouraged to:

- Seek advice from a Relevant Staff Member if they experience or witness behaviour that may breach the Code.
- Support peers to access help, while respecting their privacy and choices.
- Maintain confidentiality as directed in any process under this Code and avoid informal investigations, gossip or online commentary that may harm others or undermine fair processes.

Definitions

For this Code:

- Authorised representative means a member of Union College staff or the Union College Board, delegated to act under this Code.
- Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed at an individual or group that creates a risk to health and safety, including behaviour that causes distress, embarrassment, anxiety or fear. It can occur in person or online.
- College (we) means Union College and, where relevant, senior members of the administration team acting under this Code.

- Complaint means a written complaint about a possible breach of this Code. A complaint about gender-based violence is a formal grievance that may be escalated to the National Student Ombudsman if it is not satisfactorily resolved.
- Complainant means the person alleging a breach of the Code. When a third-party lodge a complaint, they may be referred to as a Reporter.
- Contract means The University of Queensland Union College Residential Contract.
- Disclosure is the sharing of information about an experience of gender-based violence or other harm to seek support, information or options. A disclosure does not automatically initiate a formal complaint or investigation.
- Discrimination is conduct that treats a person less favourably than others in the same or similar circumstances because of a protected attribute or status (for example, gender, race, disability, age, physical characteristics, religious belief, sexual orientation or political opinion).
- Gender-based violence is violence or abuse directed at someone because of their gender, gender identity or sexual orientation, or that disproportionately affects people of a particular gender. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, social, cultural, spiritual, financial, and technology-facilitated abuse (including image-based abuse) and stalking.
- Harassment is behaviour that makes a person feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated, in circumstances where it is reasonable to expect that the behaviour would have that impact. Sexual harassment is a form of harassment involving unwelcome sexual conduct.
- Hazing means subjecting a person to a situation or behaviour that is likely to cause embarrassment, ridicule, humiliation, degradation, abuse, intimidation or harassment, or that risks their mental or physical wellbeing, regardless of whether they appear to consent.
- Head of College/CEO means the most senior member of the College administration, responsible for governance and operations.
- Relevant Staff Member means staff who have received appropriate training and can provide advice and guidance on this Code, including, but not limited to, the Head of College/CEO, Deputy Head of College/Deputy CEO, Resident Engagement and Programs Manager, Business Manager and Resident Wellbeing Lead.
- In the gender-based violence context, a report is a formal account or statement about an incident made to a person or body authorised to take action, such as the College or the police. Reports may be progressed through complaint management frameworks.
- Respondent means the person responding to an allegation of a breach of the Code.
- Serious misconduct means conduct that may cause significant harm to self or others, or that involves serious breaches of trust or law. This may include sexual assault, certain forms of inappropriate touching, physical violence, blackmail, psychological abuse, victimisation, severe harassment, use or sale of illicit drugs, abuse of a position of power or responsibility, serious

dishonesty or fraud, repeated breaches of this Code, or serious verbal abuse or vilification. This list is not exhaustive, and the College will determine, in each case, whether the conduct amounts to serious misconduct.

- Sexual assault means any sexual act committed without free and informed consent, including rape, stealthing, unwanted oral sex, indecent assault, and acts of indecency, as defined in the College's Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy (RES0202).
- Sexual harassment means any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours, or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, in circumstances where a reasonable person would expect the person to feel offended, humiliated or intimidated.
- Union College Community comprises all residents (current and former, where applicable), non-residential students participating in College activities, staff, Board members, alumni, and guests participating in College programs and events.
- Union College Guests means people invited onto college premises by a resident. Residents are responsible for their guests' behaviour and may be held accountable for their guests' breaches of this Code.
- Victimisation means any unfavourable treatment of a person because they have made, supported, or are believed to have made, a complaint or allegation about a possible breach of this Code, whether written or verbal, and whether or not they have asked for the complaint to be investigated.
- Vilification means conduct (other than in genuine academic, artistic or public discussion carried out reasonably and in good faith) that incites hatred, serious contempt or severe ridicule of a person or group because of their race, religious beliefs or practices, sexual orientation or gender identity, or that is reasonably likely to offend, insult or humiliate another person on those grounds.

This Code applies together with the following related policies, which address specific conduct areas in detail:

- Gender Based Violence and Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy (POL005) - where conduct amounts to sexual misconduct, and for a comprehensive framework on preventing and responding to gender-based violence
- Addressing Concerns and Complaints Policy (POL006) - for investigation and complaint procedures
- Responsible Consumption of Alcohol Policy and Procedure (POL004) - for alcohol-related conduct
- Drugs Other Than Alcohol Policy and Procedure (POL002) - for drug-related conduct and a comparison with lawful medicinal cannabis

- Acceptable use of ICT & Social Media Policy (POL003) - for conduct relating to social media and digital resources

Each of these policies should be read in conjunction with this Code to understand the full framework governing resident conduct at Union College.

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DISCLAIMER: Union College's policies and procedures for the prevention of and response to gender-based violence, including sexual misconduct, are designed to be consistent with and aligned with The University of Queensland's Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy and associated procedures, as well as UQ's broader frameworks and commitments relating to gender equality, respect, and safe, inclusive campus communities.