

Protocol to support a member of staff who finds their professional or personal integrity challenged

Scope

This protocol is designed to support a member of staff who feels that their personal integrity has been criticised unfairly in the public domain as a result of the pursuance of their academic work. The university has a duty of care for its employees' wellbeing and the protocols are designed to support staff who find themselves in this situation.

The protocols **do not** cover the situation in which the academic work of a member of staff is criticised publicly and this falls within the purview of an honest difference of opinion and academic debate

Protocol

1. A meeting will take place as soon as possible between the employee, their Head of Department, the Press Officer and the Director of Human Resources to clarify the steps to be taken within an agreed timescale. This meeting will be initiated when the Head of Department notifies the Director of Human Resources of the occurrence. Trade union members may also wish to have their union represented at the meeting, in view of any possible role the union might play in providing support for the member.
2. The Press Officer will deal directly with the media.
3. The Vice-Chancellor, when notified of the occurrence by the Director of Human Resources, will consider issuing a statement of support.
4. The member of staff may have access to the University solicitors who will provide advice in respect of clarification of the defamation of character laws. The Director of Human Resources will make the necessary arrangements, if required.
5. If a Trade Union member, the employee may choose to notify and seek advice from their Trade Union.
6. The Head of Department, in consultation with the Health, Safety and Environment Adviser, will carry out a risk assessment in respect of the employee's well-being, and appropriate support for the employee put in place if required.