

Building respect

FOR
MANAGERS:

ADDRESSING
INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

**A quick overview for managers who are dealing
with inappropriate behaviours in their team**

I'm a manager.

One of my team is involved in inappropriate behaviour

As a manager, hearing someone in the team is involved in inappropriate behaviour can be challenging. You may be concerned that it happened in your team and you didn't see it. You may recognise the behaviour, or feel it is reasonable management. You may feel under pressure to find a resolution or anxious

As a manager your role is:

- To actively build a positive team culture
- To create an environment where people feel safe to talk to each other about issues
- If people raise concerns to respond with discretion and in an impartial, fair and professional way
- To think about the person before the process
- To provide clarity so everyone involved knows what is happening and what to expect

We have a series of guides to help you which you can find on the University website. **Start with the 'Our approach, our options' guide** then work through the steps in our approach to help you resolve things.

1. Creating a positive culture in your team

Your team is encouraged to have a discussion about your team culture, including what inappropriate behaviour is and how to address it. Use this guide to:

- Discuss what our values and behaviours mean to your team
- Introduce and practice the BUILD approach as your standard for feedback and coaching.

If one of your team comes to you about an issue of inappropriate behaviour, use the guides to assist you.

2. Reflect

First get clear about your role, which is to support everyone involved to reach a fair outcome where they can work together effectively (unless this is inappropriate). Prioritise and find time to give this due attention.

Listen separately to everyone's point of view. Stay calm, neutral and open-minded. After you have listened **take some time to build your own objective understanding** of what's happened.

about confrontation. This guide has been developed to help you be prepared and provide you with tools to address this situation.

Our focus is on resolving issues through reflection, feedback and discussion, only moving to a formal process when appropriate.

Talk to someone you trust, or someone on the contact list at the end of this guide.

Use the flowchart in '**Our approach, our options**' to consider the most constructive path forward.

3. Direct Feedback

Check first whether direct feedback has been given.

If you feel the behavior was appropriate in supporting the person to do their job, discuss this with the person. They may agree, but if not, suggest they talk to someone else referred to on the contact list.

If you feel the behaviour is inappropriate you can give BUILD feedback in private. Describe the specific behaviour, and avoid using labels e.g. 'bullying'. Listen to their view.

If they are open to feedback and change their behaviour, tell them you noticed and thank them.

4. Supported resolution

The person may ask you to **facilitate a discussion to de-escalate and resolve** the situation. You may want to ask the Manager of Facilitation and Mediation or HR for support. Be sure everyone gives their view, considers the other person's perspective, and has a chance to give their reflections.

5. Formal complaint

If you've tried all of these options and the inappropriate behaviour continues, any of the parties has the right to **move to a formal process**. There may also be occasions when a referral for a formal process is required earlier.

Contact HR if you need further support or advice.

Your notes to help you consider the options

Detail what has been reported to you:

Options for first steps, in alignment with our shared values:

Discussions with the team members and other parties involved:

Details of your plan to resolve the situation:

Options for ongoing support and monitoring post-resolution:

Further support and guidance

If you feel you need more guidance on what to do next, you can visit the University website where you can download the following tools and resources:

For you

- Information about our approaches, policies and procedures
- Guidance on what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- Who to speak to for support
- Step-by-step guides walking you through all of our options

For your team

- Guides and templates to help you discuss and improve team culture
- Roles and responsibilities
- Guide for managers

This is one in a series of guides to support anyone who is a target of inappropriate behaviour, has witnessed or had an allegation of such behaviour made against them, and for managers dealing with inappropriate behaviour in their teams.



Contact List

For more assistance or if you have any questions, you can get in touch with the people listed below who can advise you on informal and formal procedures, and support you throughout the process:

- [HR team](#)
human.resources@otago.ac.nz
Tel 03 479 8269
- [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#)
- [Ethical Behaviour Network](#)
- [Manager of Facilitation and Mediation](#)
mediation@otago.ac.nz
Tel 03 479 5679
- [Occupational Health](#)
- Or contact your Union rep