

Building respect

**Step 4.
Supported resolution**

**Continuing to de-escalate to find a
resolution that works for everyone**

4. Supported resolution

An informal approach is designed to resolve concerns through dialogue and without a formal complaint. The informal process isn't disciplinary and doesn't disadvantage anyone involved.



If you feel uncomfortable giving feedback, or you or someone else gave feedback and it didn't resolve the situation, here are some **other informal options you may wish to consider**:

- reporting it to your manager but doing nothing else.
- reporting it to your manager and agreeing to a facilitated discussion.
- > seeking advice and support from someone on the contact list at the end of this guide.

Options for supported resolution

The aim of the informal process is to stop the inappropriate behaviour and restore a productive working relationship, Steps could include:

- > Reporting it to your manager and asking for nothing further to happen
- > Your line manager or a trusted and impartial third party **talks to the person** whose behaviour is inappropriate:
 - To give BUILD feedback, which always includes hearing their perspective
 - To agree to actions, changes or next steps
 - Then to tell you what has been agreed to
- The line manager organises **a facilitated meeting or early mediation*** resulting in an agreement understood by all parties.

To help decide the best informal approach for your staff:

1. Get the facts.

- > Get clear descriptions of the behaviour, what happened, and be able to describe it
- > Listen and gather the information in an unbiased, empathetic and respectful way
- > Understand the issues and what is needed to resolve them for the different parties involved.

2. **Define the behaviour.** Use our guides to be clear if it is inappropriate behaviour, bullying or

something else.

3. **Decide on an effective course of action**, tailoring your response to the seriousness of the issue and the people involved.
4. **Help the parties to agree** to resolve the issues.

If an employee takes an informal approach to dealing with inappropriate behaviour, it doesn't absolve our organisation from our duty to deal with the behaviour.

Recognising and promoting diversity

Sometimes cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings or different ideas about what behaviour is 'appropriate' such as style of communication or body language. Recognising diversity and creating an environment where people are aware of cultural differences and different communication styles can reduce misunderstandings.

Recognising diversity means understanding how people's differences can bring different strengths. An inclusive workplace creates a stronger and more focused team. Informal resolution approaches support people to value, understand and appreciate diversity.

If you need further support with this, please refer to the contact list at the end of this guide.

* Facilitated discussion / mediation

A facilitated discussion may take place at any stage. Early intervention and resolution is encouraged. It is voluntary so both parties must agree to participate.

This could be facilitated by the University's Manager of Facilitation and Mediation, your manager, another leader or HR. The discussion takes place in a safe and informal environment where everyone works together to reach agreement on a constructive way forward.

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