

What is bullying?

Any repeated behaviour that is unreasonable and inappropriate and which is unwanted by the victim. The behaviour may be deliberate or unconscious but causes humiliation, offence and distress, and may interfere with ability to work / study and create an unpleasant work / study environment.

RMIT has its own policies which prohibit bullying as well as complaints policies and procedures for people to use if they experience bullying at RMIT. We hope that you will never be in this situation but it is important to know what to do if you are.

What can I do?

What do you do if you are being bullied or you see someone being bullied at RMIT?

1. Speak up

Don't wait for it to get better or go away. You should tell someone you trust, like a friend or family member, but you should also tell somebody at RMIT. You could tell your teacher, your Program Manager or the Head of your School. Once they are aware of the situation, RMIT staff are obliged to act to stop the bullying. The counselling service might also be useful to talk to. Remember - you are not alone, millions of people experience bullying.

2. Get help

You don't have to handle it alone. There are also other people at RMIT outside of your School who can help you deal with bullying. Student Rights Officers can give you advice on making a complaint about bullying and will support you throughout the complaint process. They can refer you to other services you might need such as: RMIT Counsellors, the Health Service and RMIT Student Legal services. If bullying behaviours are impacting on your ability to study, you may wish to

apply for special consideration. See a Student Rights Officer for assistance and information. Any staff member you talk to at RMIT about bullying is obliged to do something to address the problem.

3. Keep a record

Keep a record of what's happening. Bullying is an OH&S issue. Fill in an OH&S form when you make a complaint.

It can be useful to write down what's happened to you just to organise your thoughts and to keep a record of the events, how you felt and what you did in response to them. This information will also help you to make a complaint and get something done about it.

4. Make a complaint

You have the right to study in a comfortable and safe environment. RMIT has a Student Complaints Policy and Procedure. You have the right to make a complaint about bullying and to have your complaint taken seriously. You also have the right to be supported through the complaints process and involved in how your complaint is resolved. Complaints can be made verbally, by talking to a staff member, or in writing.

How will your complaint be dealt with?

The person you make a complaint about will be informed and asked to respond. The complaint handler will investigate the events and will attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution. Some examples of resolutions reached in bullying cases are: verbal and written apologies; counselling and supervision; students moved from a class; teachers removed from class duties.

If you are not happy with the way your complaint is resolved you can refer it to the RMIT Ombuds or the State Ombudsman.

Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is a general guide only. RMIT is a very complex environment, and there are often a number of different rules which apply.

For more student rights information visit our website: www.su.rmit.edu.au/student-rights

For additional assistance drop into a Student Union Front Office to speak with a Student Liaison Officer.

City Higher Ed: Building 8, Level 3

Tivoli (Business): Building 108, Level 3

Carlton Campus: Building 57, Level 4

Brunswick: Building 514, Level 2

Bundoora: Building 204, Level 1

Or, send detailed information regarding your case to student.rights@rmit.edu.au

For enquiries call 9925 5004

If required, an appointment will be made for you with a Student Rights Officer.

Has this leaflet been helpful? Join the Student Union and join the fight to improve your rights!

Student Rights Officers from the Student Union can help you to lodge your complaints with RMIT or state Ombuds.

What happens if you bully others?

If you bully others you may have a complaint made against you and you may be subject to disciplinary action. RMIT has a Student Discipline Policy which sets out the procedure for dealing with students found to be bullying. Depending on the seriousness of the behaviour, students found guilty of bullying can be warned or suspended from RMIT. If staff are found guilty of bullying they can be similarly disciplined. If the behaviour is criminal and a complaint is made to the police the consequences could be much more serious.

If a bullying complaint or discipline procedures have been initiated against you, a Student Rights Officer can give you information about the procedures and can assist you.

Useful contacts

Student Complaints Liaison Officers (SCLO's)

Located in all academic portfolios, departments, schools and groups.

www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=vdwjga6ug28q

Student Complaints Unit

Academic Registrar's Group

T/ 9925 8863

E/ complaints@rmit.edu.au

RMIT Ombuds

T/ 9925 2930

E/ ombuds@rmit.edu.au

RMIT Counselling Service

City, Brunswick and Bundoora west

T/ 9925 4365 (BH) 99253999 (AH)

www.rmit.edu.au/counselling

Other resources

Victorian Ombudsman

T/ 9613 6222

Freecall/ 1800 806 314 (Regional Only)

www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission

Information Line/ 1300 292 153

www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/

CASA (Centre Against Sexual Assault)

Counselling line/ 9635 3610

www.casa.org.au

Gay & Lesbian Switchboard

CT/ 9663 2939

Or regional VIC and TAS 1800 184 527

www.switchboard.org.au/

WIRE

(Women's Information Referral and Exchange)

T/ 1300 134 130

www.wire.org.au/

Job Watch

T/ 9662 1933 (Melbourne)

T/ 1800 331 617 (rural Victoria)

www.jobwatch.org.au/

Apprenticeship Field Officers

Apprenticeship Admin Info Line/ 1300 722 603

www.skills.vic.gov.au/apprentices/apprenticeship-field-officers

RMIT policies and procedures

RMIT has a legal obligation to provide safe study and work environments for all students and staff, free from all forms of harassment, discrimination and victimisation. RMIT must take action if violence and bullying are happening on campus. The policies below provide explanations and information about how to make a complaint.

Student Complaints Policy

www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=tk82eodesmot1

Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures

www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=ph2ap3exl3xez

Anti-Racism and religious tolerance policy

www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=cyf7oe1urh25

Health, Safety and Security Policy

www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=qx0rqp36sskr1

Staff Code of Ethics

www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=u3ig0t9zfqln

Electronic Communications Policy

www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=7nyerdgqotsu

Student Discipline Procedures

www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=1db54sd7vspz

Other useful student rights leaflets

- Making a complaint
- Special consideration
- Student discipline
- Cultural diversity
- Sexual harassment