



# **Code of Conduct for BSA Events and Meetings**

*Supporting a Respectful and Inclusive Community*

Version 1

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## Introduction

The Code applies to all guests and staff ("**Attendees**") of events and meetings held and organised by The British Sociological Association ("**BSA Events**").

This Code of Conduct ("**the Code**") applies to both online and in-person BSA Events.

This Code of Conduct applies to all forms of communication, including electronic, in-person, verbal, and non-verbal.

## Guiding Principles

BSA Events are intended to be a space that allows our guests to flourish through respectful, inclusive and equitable treatment of others sharing professional information, knowledge and ideas.

The British Sociological Association ("**the BSA**") want to promote a positive sense of academic community by asking all Attendees of BSA Events to:

- respect all staff and attendees;
- behave professionally;
- be committed to helping each other and to be kind;
- allow all members to have an equal opportunity to speak;
- be conscientious with their language;
- follow BSA procedures and terms of reference;
- model respectful engagement;
- ensure that status and credentials are left at the door so that there is no perceived hierarchy and a sense of equality; and
- listen to and promote productive discussions.

By following these Guiding Principles, the BSA aims to ensure that BSA Events provide an inclusive experience for everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship, or language, political or other opinion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, age, religion, or economic class ("**the BSA's Aim**").

Before attending a BSA Event, you agree that you have read the BSA's [Equal Opportunities Policy](#), [Anti-Harassment Policy](#), and [Disciplinary Procedure](#).

## Health and Safety

To help ensure a safe and supportive environment at all BSA Events, we ask that attendees observe the following practical considerations:

- Attendees have a duty to take reasonable care for their own safety when attending BSA Events and have a responsibility to ensure the safety of others if affected by their own activities.
- Attendees are not permitted to tamper or adjust any equipment, fixture or furnishing without express permission from the organisers.

- Attendees are not permitted to enter any restricted area.
- Attendees are responsible for their own belongings.
- Where alcohol is available at in-person events, we ask that it is consumed responsibly and with consideration for others.
- Attendees are not permitted to take any drugs at BSA Events.
- Attendees are not permitted to bring in any food or alcohol from outside the premises to any in-person BSA Event unless they have permission from the organisers.
- The BSA accepts no responsibility for any injury or for the death of any person whilst attending a BSA Event, unless such injury or death was occasioned by the negligence of the BSA.

# 1 Unacceptable Behaviours

1.1 To ensure that the BSA's Aim is achieved, Attendees are prohibited from conducting the following behaviours ("**Unacceptable Behaviours**"):

- **Violence or unwanted physical / non-physical contact.** This includes:
  - physical or psychological threats;
  - intimidation;
  - physical or sexual assault; and/or
  - unsolicited or unwelcome touching, staring, or invasion of personal space.
  
- **Harassment.** This includes:
  - unsolicited or unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour, whether or not the behaviour is intended as harmless;
  - comments of a sexual nature about an individual's appearance or dress;
  - stalking; and/or
  - inappropriate jokes and gestures, whether or not these are aimed at any specific individuals.
  
- **Discrimination.** This includes:
  - treating an individual differently due to their cultural or religious identity, gender, gender identity, sex or sexual orientation, or disability;
  - ridiculing or excluding an individual, for example, for cultural or religious identity, on the grounds of gender, gender identity, sex or sexual orientation, or on the grounds of disability; and/or
  - the display or circulation of sexually suggestive or racially abusive material (including e-mails, text messages, videos and images sent by mobile phone or posted on the internet).
  
- **The use of inappropriate language.** This includes:

- the use of expletives and swearing;
- sarcastic or patronising comments which are not appropriate at a professional forum; and/or
- inappropriate jokes or comments.

- **Bullying.** This includes:

- shouting at, being sarcastic towards, ridiculing or demeaning others;
- insulting others;
- insensitive or intimidating behaviours, such as commenting on an individual's sexual orientation or physical or mental attributes; and/or
- behaving in a way which excludes others.

- **Condescending, disrupting, and interfering behaviour.** This includes:

- not allowing others to speak;
- marginalisation on the basis of status;
- overly strong, lengthy or loud interventions; and/or
- noises of disagreement.

1.2 The BSA will assess any reports of Unacceptable Behaviour carefully and fairly, with a commitment to protecting the wellbeing of our community. In the first instance, we will listen to and believe individuals who come forward to report behaviour that they feel is inappropriate, intimidating, or otherwise makes them uncomfortable.

1.3 While ensuring fairness to all parties involved, we aim to create an environment where individuals feel confident in raising concerns, knowing they will be supported, and their voices will be heard. Any reports of misconduct will be handled with sensitivity, discretion and a commitment to a thorough and impartial process.



## 2 Reporting and Confidentiality

### Reporting

- 2.1 If anyone believes that a person has conducted any of the Unacceptable Behaviours, a complaint should be submitted to:
- the BSA event officer who is supporting the BSA Event;
  - [enquiries@britsoc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@britsoc.org.uk);
  - the BSA's membership services team by telephone on 0191 383 0839; or
  - by post to The British Sociological Association, Chancery Court, Belmont Business Park, Durham, DH1 1TW.
- 2.2 Any allegation of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation will be treated seriously, regardless of the seniority of those involved.
- 2.3 The BSA will follow up on reported incidents in line with the BSA's [Disciplinary Procedure](#).
- 2.4 For the avoidance of doubt, the Trustees (as defined in the BSA's articles of association from time to time) or BSA staff are able to submit a complaint in line with the above.

### Confidentiality

- 2.5 It is our intention that all allegations will be investigated in confidence. All those who are involved in the investigation of an allegation, including witnesses, representatives and persons providing the information, have a duty to maintain confidentiality.
- 2.6 If you are the subject of a complaint, you will be given such details as the Trustees of the BSA (the "**Board**") decide you need in order to respond. You are expected to keep such information in confidence and not talk to, or approach, those who have complained about you.
- 2.7 If the process proceeds to a full investigation, the Board may deem it necessary to disclose the identity of the complainant as well as other relevant information to the respondent and others who will be involved in the investigation.

### 3 Sanctions

- 3.1 If the BSA determines that an Attendee has breached this Code, the BSA, in its entire discretion, may:
- immediately remove the Attendee from the BSA Event and investigate the breach, or alleged breach, after the BSA Event in accordance with the BSA's [Disciplinary Procedure](#);
  - where an allegation is made after the BSA Event, investigate the alleged breach in accordance with BSA's [Disciplinary Procedure](#); or
  - bar the Attendee from attending future BSA Events.
- 3.2 Attendees who are issued a warning at the BSA Event are expected to comply immediately and failure to do so will result in removal from the BSA Event.
- 3.3 Knowingly false, vexatious, or malicious complaints may themselves be considered a breach of this Code.
- 3.4 Legal action may be considered if a criminal offence is suspected and, if appropriate, the matter may be reported to the police or other relevant authorities.