

Discipline and Dismissal Policy

Author:	Policy Team		
Contact:	policy@nightline.ac.uk		
Created:	August 2022	Next review:	August 2025
Version:	1.0		
Related documents:	Template dismissal and discipline policy Template dismissal and discipline procedure		

Contents

[Guidance](#)

[Dismissal and Discipline Policy](#)

[Dismissal and Discipline Procedure](#)

Guidance

Defining Policy, Process and Procedure

	Definition	Purpose
Policy	An overall approach or principle of action in relation to a specific issue	Describes <i>why</i> this document is required
Process	Provides a high-level view of how the policy is implemented	Outlines <i>what</i> tasks should be performed, <i>when</i> , and <i>by whom</i>
Procedure	Detailed step-by-step instructions on how to do parts of that process or specific tasks	Details <i>how</i> the steps of each task need to be performed

Background

Good Practice Guidelines

The latest version of the GPGs state that:

GPGs relating to policy

Nightlines should:

- Set out their misconduct and dismissal procedures clearly.
- Define acceptable levels of attendance for the service.
- Suspend a volunteer from taking calls whilst any complaint about their call handling is investigated.
- Communicate that volunteers can be stopped from taking calls if they are found to have committed misconduct.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Volunteer	The person being disciplined.
Discipliner	The person providing the discipline.
New recruits	A person who has never joined [X] Nightline and is receiving training to become part of this Nightline.

Purpose

Whilst most listening volunteers in Nightlines will abide by the respective Nightline's and governing body's rules, there will be times where some volunteers do not do this. In these instances, it is important that these volunteers are disciplined so they are aware of their misconduct and can also learn from it. If the volunteer is believed to continue to misbehave, then they may be dismissed from the Nightline.

The template policy and procedure outlined below can be adapted and does not supersede any dismissal or disciplinary policy your Nightline's stakeholder may have.

Scope

This policy applies to Nightline volunteers responsible for escalating disciplinary action, and those being disciplined. It is recommended the person who leads the Nightline (ie Coordinator) is the one to escalate disciplinary issues relating to volunteers. In most instances, this responsibility will mean reporting the issue to the Nightline's governing body. However, if this person is being disciplined, then there should be a clear procedure to handle this conflict of interest.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of examples of positions who may discipline volunteers:

- The lead of the Nightline (ie coordinator/director).
- The lead of training.
- The lead of the Nightline volunteer wellbeing.

Research

The disciplinary policies from the University of York Nightline, University of Bath Nightline and London Nightline were used to help draft this template policy and procedure [accessed August 2022].

Policy Considerations

When drafting your Nightlines Discipline and Dismissal policy, it is important to consider certain factors, such as:

- How long this policy is valid for.
- How much responsibility the Nightline will take when disciplining a volunteer and when disciplinary responsibilities should be handed over to the Nightline's parenting body (eg students' union).
- Who will deliver the discipline and what to do if there is a conflict of interest.
- What the disciplines should be.

Roles and Responsibilities

This policy should be reviewed yearly to ensure it remains up to date. The person or people who review this policy should be named by their title. For example, Coordinator or Wellbeing Officer.

Contact

Query	NLA Contact	E-Mail Address
Any questions relating to this policy	Policy Team	policy@nightline.ac.uk
Stakeholder issues	Sustainability Team	sustainability@nightline.ac.uk
Service Level Agreement (SLA) advice	SLA Sub-Team	sla@nightline.ac.uk
IT questions and issues	IT Department	it@nightline.ac.uk
Welfare support	Welfare Team	welfare@nightline.ac.uk
Training advice	Training Team	training@nightline.ac.uk
Research carried out for this policy	Impact Team	impact@nightline.ac.uk

Dismissal and Discipline Policy

Policy approved	Month YYYY <i>[add details of relevant committee members, etc. if required]</i>
Policy review due	Month YYYY
Any other info?	

Purpose

This policy outlines what [X] Nightline needs to do when someone in the organisation breaches a policy, behaves in a concerning manner or receives a complaint about them. This policy ensures this Nightline follows the disciplinary procedures of [University] Students' Union and maintains a high standard of performance and conduct.

Scope

This policy applies to all listening volunteers and members of the committee.

When a Students' Union can Discipline a Volunteer

A volunteer must be referred to the Students' Union if *[amend as deemed necessary]*:

- They have breached the volunteer's confidentiality and commitment agreement.
- They have compromised the service [X] Nightline offers.
- They have breached any of the organisation's policies.
- Their actions have a negative effect on either volunteer or caller wellbeing, or the reputation of [X] Nightline.
- Breached any other rules or conduct expectations of Student members as defined by the code of conduct and other applicable policies of [University] Students' Union.
- They acted against the law.

When a volunteer is being investigated by the Students' Union, they should stop taking shifts until the Students' Union says they can return.

When a Nightline can Discipline a Volunteer

A volunteer may be disciplined by [X] Nightline Coordinator via a warning if they:

- Do not fulfil their shift commitments.
- Turn up late to shift.
- Do not fulfil their training commitments.
- Cancel a shift with less than *[48 hours]* notice.

However, if this escalates to suspending or terminating their membership of Nightline, it must be referred to the Students' Union.

Roles and Responsibilities

In this policy, the responsibilities of each committee member are outlined in the table below. **[Below is an example. Amend as necessary]** It's important to assign additional roles in case the person responsible for escalating disciplinary action cannot do so, for example, because of a conflict of interest. Disciplinary action and dismissals must be kept confidential between members of the committee and the individual being disciplined.

Committee member	Responsibilities
Coordinator	They will refer disciplinary matters to the Students' Union for all volunteers unless there is a conflict of interest or if the volunteer can be disciplined via a warning as stated under the ' When a Nightline can Discipline a Volunteer ' section.
Designated Disciplinary Member	If the Coordinator cannot discipline the volunteer, responsibility falls to the Designated Disciplinary Member.
Other committee member	Where there is a conflict of interest from both the Coordinator and Designated Disciplinary Member, another committee member must escalate the issue.

Reviews and amendments

List any changes to this policy that need to be recorded for historical purposes.

E.g. May 2021: changed wording on ____, updated definitions

Discipline and Dismissal Procedure

Procedural Steps for Escalating to the Students' Union

[X] Nightline has a set procedure for disciplines and dismissals. The procedure on how to escalate to the Students' Union is outlined below [amend as necessary].

- If a member of [X] Nightline has committed any of the acts outlined in the 'Scope' underneath the 'When a Students' Union can Discipline a Volunteer' section, the Coordinator must escalate the issue to the Student's Union via email and follow the Students' Union instructions.
- If there is a conflict of interest with the Coordinator raising the issue, the Designated Disciplinary Member must escalate the issue to the Student's Union via email and follow the Students' Union instructions.
- If there is a conflict of interest with the Coordinator and Designated Disciplinary Member raising the issue, another member of the committee must escalate the issue.

Procedural Steps for the Discipline Occurring via the Nightline

The procedure for discipline performed by the Nightline is outlined below.

- If a member of [X] Nightline has committed any of the acts outlined in the 'Scope' underneath the 'When a Nightline can Discipline a Volunteer' section, the Coordinator must be informed via email as soon as possible.
- Once the Coordinator is informed, they will meet with the volunteer and issue a warning. If after [three] warnings the volunteer is still misbehaving, then escalate to the Students' Union via email.
- If there is a conflict of interest with the Coordinator raising the issue, the Designated Disciplinary Member must escalate the issue to the Student's Union via email and follow the Students' Union instructions.
- If there is a conflict of interest with the Coordinator and Designated Disciplinary Member raising the issue, another member of the committee must escalate the issue.



Discipline and Dismissal Policy

Process

Insert a flowchart here if necessary!



Appendix 1

Add further information here as necessary.