

Code of Conduct and Harassment Policy *Adopted May 2020*

This code applies to participants at workshops, conferences and other formally organised activities, and administrative meetings (e.g. Committee and Working Groups) as well as informal social gatherings around our more formally organised activity. In addition, we expect our members – and non-members accessing our services – to conduct themselves within the spirit of this policy at all times, including outside of NatSCA activities.

NatSCA aims to organise activities at which an open, friendly and fun atmosphere is paramount. We know from our evaluation that delegates find networking and talking over shared challenges informally with colleagues is at least as important as the content of the presentations.

We wish to be proactive in ensuring that we make sure that we provide a welcoming environment for all, and if any problems occur that participants are supported appropriately. Behaviour and language that are acceptable to one person may be unwelcome and/or offensive to another. It is important to remember that a community where people feel uncomfortable or threatened is neither healthy nor productive. We have decided to extend interpretation of this policy beyond instances that take place during NatSCA activities, because we feel that as a sector-level organisation, which provides platforms to facilitate connections between individuals, we have a responsibility to ensure that we are not enabling incidents where members of our community are made to feel unsafe or distressed.

We will not tolerate harassment in any form. We follow the Equality and Human Rights Commission's definitions of Harassment¹. Sexist language and potentially offensive human sexual imagery are not appropriate in professional contexts, including talks and posters, or indeed during any work-related interactions including those outside of NatSCA-led activities. Any unwelcome conduct, verbal or physical, including when based on an individual's race, colour, gender, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, status as a parent, gender identity, or physical appearance, should be reported as soon as possible. Any sexual harassment, including unwelcomed verbal comments or physical actions, should be reported as soon as possible. Reports do not have to be made by the recipient of the harassment. Please report any such behaviour that you encounter.

Reporting process and what happens next

Please make reports either in person or by email to any two members of the NatSCA Committee at the same time. A list of current Committee Members is found [on the NatSCA website](#). Committee are likely to advise those making reports that they approach the police (when the harassment or discrimination is unlawful); the alleged perpetrator's employer; and/or any professional accreditation body to which the alleged perpetrator belongs (particularly if the alleged perpetrator is self-employed).

Details of all reports will be recorded, and a wider group of Committee members will determine any action that needs to be taken. NatSCA Committee is not equipped to be an investigative body, and as such it will not always be possible to establish the veracity of any reports. However, in line with NatSCA's Constitution, the Committee reserves the right to take actions that it judges to be in the best interest of the safety and dignity of its membership and activity participants. This includes the termination of membership for perceived breaches of policy, or for any non-prejudicial reason. In such cases the steps for the Termination of Membership outlined in the Constitution will be followed, including allowing the right of the alleged perpetrator to make representations as to why their membership should not be removed.

If membership is terminated as a result of breaches of this policy, then all access to NatSCA's services and activities are withdrawn. This includes the right to take part in any organised activities (such as workshops and conferences) and digital communication platforms (e.g. jiscmail), even when those services are normally open to non-members.

NatSCA reserves the right to immediately eject people (members or non-members) from events for perceived breaches of this policy, or for any non-prejudicial reason.

¹ For example see: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/what-harassment-and-victimisation>

Elements of this document were adapted from the policies of the Systematics Association and SPNHC, to whom we are grateful.