



# Code of Conduct for Those Living and Working in the Polar Regions

## 1. Introduction

Living and working in the Polar Regions is a unique experience and one which brings its own special demands for all involved. Every year the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) provides logistical and professional supports to a wide range of people from the wider community (e.g. universities, scientific institutes, industries etc.) working and journeying to or from the Polar Regions.

We work hard to safeguard and promote safe responsible working and living on our vessel and polar stations by ensuring that our staff, and those who are under our temporary care receive the necessary training and personal and professional support they need. In return we expect the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct from them.

Sections 2 and 3 of this document set out the expected standards of conduct towards others, the environment and the use of resources, and the actions that will be undertaken by BAS where behaviour falls below them.

The Code is a statement of our shared commitment and responsibility to uphold the ethical, professional and legal standards incorporated within UKRI (UK Research and Innovation), NERC (Natural Environment Research Council) and BAS policy frameworks in compliance with The Government of British Antarctic Territory (FCDO) regulations and our obligations under the International Antarctic Treaty and the Antarctic Act (2013).

All British Antarctic Survey employees and others under our care, (e.g. research associates, scientists, students, collaborators and visitors), must be familiar with and adhere to the provisions of this Code of Conduct, the UKRI Policy Framework, BAS Protocols and Procedures, and BAS cultural values and behaviours, which underpin it.

A breach of this Code, and by definition related policies, may, depending on the severity and nature of the breach, result in your withdrawal from the programme and disciplinary action, up to, and including, dismissal and further legal action.

A copy of the reporting procedure is included in Appendix 2. 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.

## 2. Expected standards of professional and ethical conduct

2.1 You are **expected to act and behave responsibly** with integrity, objectivity and honesty at all times, even when off duty. It is everyone's responsibility to provide a safe living and working environment that is based on trust, co-operation and mutual respect. Failure to do so will be regarded as a breach of the UKRI Code of Conduct.

2.2 You are required to **respect the authority** of the Station Leader and/or ship's Master or Captain when at a polar research station or on board a BAS vessel or aircraft. When working outside of bases and ships, you are similarly required to **respect the prevailing established chain of command**.





2.3 You must **comply with UKRI's Equality & Diversity policy** and, in particular, you have a personal responsibility to prevent your behaviour having an unfair or discriminatory effect on others. This means that any form of harassment (including related to a protected characteristic such as gender, race, age, disability, or sexual harassment) will be considered a disciplinary offence and addressed appropriately under the UKRI Performance and Conduct policy. Additionally, the use of hate speech directed at a minority group including comments about a person's gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, or national origin, will be considered a disciplinary offense and addressed appropriately under the UKRI Performance and Conduct policy.

2.6 **Disruptive, unethical, or illegal conduct will not be tolerated.** Allegations of such conduct will represent a potential breach of the UKRI Code of Conduct and be investigated thoroughly and addressed appropriately under the UKRI Performance and Conduct policy.

2.7 If **consuming alcohol**, you are required to do so **responsibly** and with due consideration to others. You are responsible for your behaviour at all times. You must be able to respond in the event of an emergency, work effectively and muster as required. You must also be in a fit state to do your job as and when called upon to do so, as per the BAS Policy on Drug and Alcohol.

2.8 You should work to **protect the Polar Regions** by minimising pollution, preventing disturbance to flora & fauna and other **environmental risks and impacts** in compliance with national and international environmental legislation, as per the BAS Environmental Policy. There is a process in place to regard animal welfare within research projects.

2.9 You should respect the confidentiality of personal and privileged information and do not pass information to the media, post on social media, or pass to other external parties, unless within the scope of employment duties or otherwise authorised to do so, as per the UKRI Personal Use of Social Media Policy.

2.10 You should **comply with** the obligations set under the Data Protection Act and in line with the UKRI Data Protection Policy.

2.11 **Resources on BAS facilities should be used responsibly** with appropriate authorisation and following local rules. The unauthorised taking, possession, modification, destruction or use of BAS property or the property of others will be addressed in line with the UKRI Performance and Conduct policy.

2.12 **Unauthorised entry, use, or occupancy of BAS facilities or misuse of IT and Communications systems** will be regarded as a breach of this Code of Conduct and the UKRI Code of Conduct.

2.13 **You are expected to work collaboratively** with us and act in a way that supports our values and not to bring BAS into disrepute by your actions (or inactions), statements, or neglect of your responsibilities. Depending on your role, you are expected to **follow the professional codes of conduct** set in the Universal Ethical Code for Scientist and the UKRI Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct.





### 3. BAS culture

As an organisation, one of our aims is to embrace diversity and foster an inclusive culture where different views are respected. We have a culture of openness and encourage the sharing of different views and perspectives: we are a learning organisation that prioritises creating a safe environment. This includes an approach to safety that takes into account physical safety, mental health and social wellbeing.

#### 3.1 A tool for collective learning

Individuals may experience situations differently and be affected in different ways based on their past experiences. As a community we have the responsibility to create safer spaces which value listening and honest feedback, but equally we must take responsibility for our individual learning.

The BAS EDI Network has developed a [Community Guide Booklet](#) whose aim is to enhance collective learning about what constitutes bullying and harassment, racial discrimination, ableism and differences in sexual and gender identities. Copies of the booklet will be available for you across the Cambridge site, our stations or the vessel.

#### 3.2 What to do if you experience or witness inappropriate behaviour?

If you experience, or witness inappropriate behaviour, you may find it helpful to talk to someone about how the event affected you and seek advice and support. BAS offers a wide range of welfare resources which include support from Mental Health First Aiders, Welfare officers, EDI and Wellbeing managers and a confidential Employee Assistance Programme (please see Appendix 1 for a list of available contacts).

The HR Team at BAS remains at your disposal throughout your time with us to discuss any concerns or query you may have and advice accordingly.

All team members have the responsibility to report instances of unacceptable conduct, as defined throughout this document, to the appropriate party. All instances of misconduct require reporting no matter the level of severity.

In Appendix 1 to the Code you will find the main points of contact for your time in the Polar regions. The list will include individuals who can maintain communications throughout the field season based in Cambridge, onboard the vessel, in the field and at the relevant research station. Your contacts include people of multiple genders. Please ensure that you have these numbers and email addresses before you travel.

#### 3.3 Reporting an incident of inappropriate behaviour

Sometimes it may be possible, safe and appropriate to resolve the issue promptly locally. This may either include discussing your concerns directly with the people involved or requesting the intervention of a senior colleague or manager. Different people communicate in different ways. Some may choose to use [Vault](#), our online tool that offers an anonymous way to come forward and get support from BAS HR.





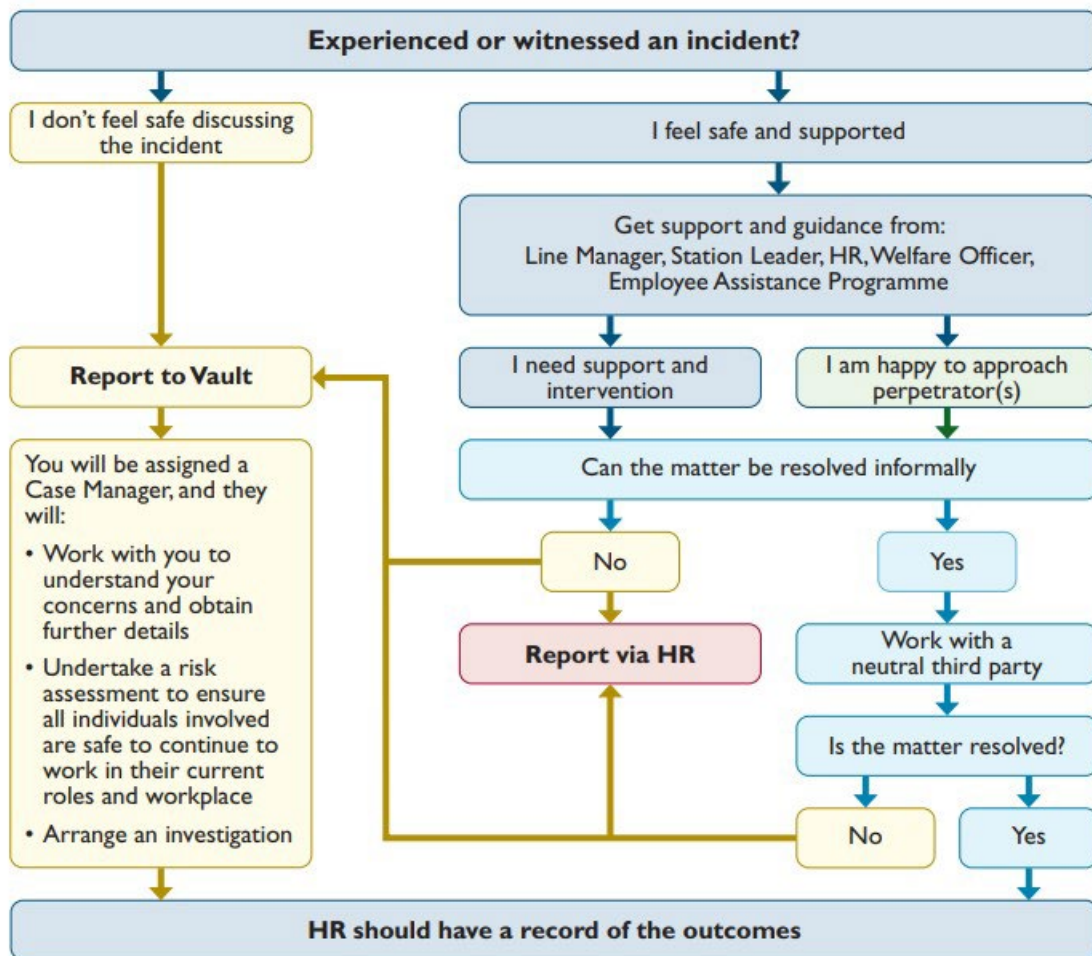
Where these approaches are unsuccessful, or the behaviours are serious and/or persistent, you can formally raise a complaint with the Master, the Station Leader or Head of HR as detailed in the [UKRI Grievance, Bullying and Harassment policy](#) or on your behalf via other contacts in your list.

The procedures detailed in the UKRI Grievance, Bullying and Harassment Policy will be used to investigate your concern.

Guidance for line managers and senior colleagues on how to manage a disclosure is available [here](#).

Below is a flowchart of potential routes to share your concern or formal reporting, and what to expect from the organisation:

## Reporting an incident



You have the power to pause or withdraw from the process at any point

### 3.4 BAS response to reporting Code of Conduct violation(s)

Concerns and reports will be addressed promptly in line with [UKRI policies](#) by the HR team and, where appropriate, those colleagues who have been involved in supporting the individual.





- **Step 1:** The BAS team will meet with you to understand your concerns, discuss the event and how it affected you and obtain further details e.g. statements or notes, as required by the policy to understand the occurrence
- **Step2:** The BAS team will assess the circumstances to ensure all individuals involved are safe to continue to work in their current roles and workplace
- **Step3:** Internal mediation will be considered, but if a matter cannot be resolved informally, the BAS team will arrange an investigation to determine further actions

Throughout the process they will ensure that you are informed of any progress and the next steps.

If the complaint is upheld, appropriate action will be taken. Some kinds of harassment are criminal offences. Any case of physical assault, including sexual assault, should be reported to the relevant authorities. If following investigation, a complaint is found to be malicious or vexatious, disciplinary action may be taken against the complainant.

**Declaration of personal commitment**

I declare that I have read the Code of Conduct and I am committed to supporting its principles and values and comply with the policies underpinning it.

<b>SIGNATURE</b>	
<b>DATE</b>	

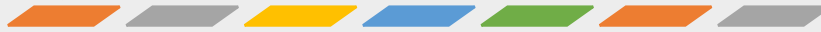
**Appendix 1: List of main contacts across BAS**

Below is a list of existing up-to-date points of contact within BAS and its wider organisation. Changing work arrangements may lead to changes in your specific points of contact. Your contact in the HR team will be able to advise for information that is most relevant for you. Remember to check this information before setting off on remote working assignments.





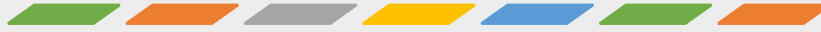
**Captain:** SDAMaster@bas.ac.uk



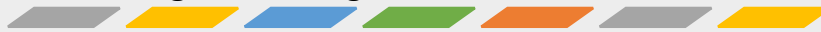
**Station Leader:** Use station specific email addresses



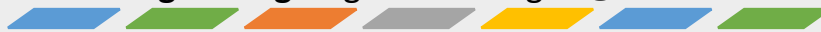
**HR Team:** HR@bas.ac.uk, 07711018239



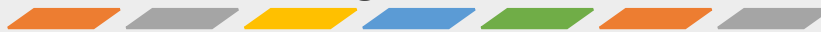
**EDI Manager:** anette.grindsted@bas.ac.uk



**Wellbeing Manager:** gemma.douglas@bas.ac.uk



**BAS EDI Network:** edi@bas.ac.uk



**Available for UKRI Staff: Employee Assistance programme (EAP)**

EAP is a confidential 24hr 365 day offering for employees providing a range of wellbeing services to support employees in any mental, physical, emotional, health or financial difficulties. The EAP helpline is available 24/7 365 days a year via telephone: 0800 783 2808. Read more about the EAP on the [IceFlow](#).

