

Media Engagement Policy

- 1 Nightline operates as a confidential, anonymous, non-aligned, non-judgemental and non-directive organisation. These principles define the approach that Nightline takes to its relationship with external bodies.
- 2 It is recognised that the work of Nightline may attract interest from media bodies, both within the University community, the local area and nationally. This policy aims to outline Nightline's strategy for responding to media requests and engaging with media.
- 3 All media requests received by Nightline are to be brought to the attention of the Co-ordinators, who will have overall responsibility for submitting a response. The Co-ordinators will consult Publicity Officer in the first instance and may also raise the issue at the next meeting of the Executive Committee where this is appropriate and possible within the timescale of the request.
- 4 **Non-Alignment**
 - 4.1 Nightline is a non-aligned organisation and will therefore under no circumstances engage with media requests that are associated with a campaign or agenda that is political, religious or otherwise aligned to a particular viewpoint.
 - 4.2 As an independent organisation, Nightline will also not agree to media requests that involve a 'partnership', 'affiliation' or 'endorsement' with an external body.
 - 4.3 Where the compatibility of a media request with the principle of non-alignment is unclear, the Co-ordinators must raise the issue at the next meeting of the Executive Committee, where a vote will decide the organisation's response.
- 5 **Confidentiality**
 - 5.1 Nightline will never compromise the confidentiality of its callers in its response to a media request. The organisation will make no comment in relation to a specific contact, event or issue relating to the operation of the service.
 - 5.2 In accordance with the Confidentiality Policy and the Data Protection Policy, Nightline may share anonymous call statistics in response to media requests.
 - 5.3 Where the compatibility of a media request with the principle of confidentiality is unclear, the Co-ordinators must raise the issue at the next meeting of the Executive Committee, where a vote will decide the organisation's response.
- 6 **Reputational Protection**
 - 6.1 Where Nightline is implicated in a published report, article or other medium and is portrayed or represented in a negative light, it is recognised that the organisation will have an interest in protecting its public reputation.

- 6.2 The Co-ordinators will respond to such an incident by first raising the issue with the Executive Committee, either at its next scheduled meeting or, if the incident is serious, at an emergency meeting. The Co-ordinators will also inform the Durham Students' Union Nightline Steering Group of the incident.
- 6.3 At the meeting, the Executive Committee will discuss the response of Nightline to the incident, and create a proposal for the next steps, which will be voted on at the meeting. The Co-ordinators will share any advice or instruction received from the Students' Union at this meeting. If the incident is not deemed serious by the Executive Committee at this point, the Committee will put into action its proposal and inform all volunteers of its decision by email.
- 6.4 If the incident is deemed serious, the Executive Committee will instead bring its proposal to an Emergency General Meeting which all volunteers are expected to attend. The proposal will be discussed and voted upon at this meeting and will only be actioned where it commands a majority in the vote.