

SOULS Code of Conduct

July 2025

As law students, we represent not only the University of Otago Law Faculty, but the broader legal profession. We are held to a high standard of integrity, and our behaviour contributes to the trust placed in us by the public. Poor conduct not only undermines that trust, but can also affect the ability of future SOULS committees to hold events and represent our community positively.

By attending any event hosted by SOULS, you agree to uphold the values of respect, inclusivity, cultural safety, and responsibility that define our community. SOULS is committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment for all students, and your conduct plays a vital role in making that possible.

This Code of Conduct exists alongside the *University of Otago Student Conduct Statute* and the *Ethical Behaviour Policy*, which set out the university's expectations for respectful, responsible, and lawful behaviour by all students. These policies apply at all times and provide a framework for dealing with misconduct, discrimination, and breaches of ethical standards. SOULS is committed to aligning with these principles to ensure our events are safe, inclusive, and reflective of the values of our legal community.

1. Respect and Inclusivity

- Treat all attendees, organisers, and staff with dignity and respect. Be mindful of how your words and actions affect others, and actively foster a culture that supports equity and belonging.
- This includes showing care and respect for Māori, Pasifika, and other Indigenous peoples, as well as people of colour, women, disabled students, and rainbow communities.
- Discrimination, harassment, or inappropriate behaviour of any kind - whether verbal, physical, or online - will not be tolerated.

2. Cultural Safety and Partnership

- SOULS acknowledges te Tiriti o Waitangi as a foundational document of Aotearoa and affirms its commitment to cultural safety and partnership.
- As a society that encompasses Whai Pūtake, PILSA, and OALSA, SOULS recognises our responsibility to uphold these values in everything we do.
- This includes showing deep respect for Māori, Pasifika, and other Indigenous peoples, and ensuring that our spaces are culturally safe and responsive.

3. Responsible Behaviour

- Demonstrate a duty of care for yourself and others. If someone appears unwell, unsafe, or in distress, seek help or alert a SOULS executive member.
- If consuming alcohol, do so in moderation and with consideration for others.
- Intoxication will not be accepted as a justification for misconduct.
- Respect the venues we use and the people who work there.

4. Accountability

- SOULS reserves the right to take appropriate action in response to misconduct at our events. The type of response will depend on the nature and severity of the behaviour. Possible outcomes include, but are not limited to:
 - Removal from the event
 - A verbal or written warning
 - Suspension from future SOULS events
 - Referral to the University for formal disciplinary processes.
- In determining an appropriate response, SOULS will consider the impact of the behaviour, any prior incidents, and the wishes of those affected.
- Our society takes all concerns seriously and is here to ensure that everyone can enjoy SOULS spaces safely.

5. Reporting and Support

If you experience or witness inappropriate behaviour at a SOULS event, you are encouraged to report it. You may choose to:

- Speak to any member of the SOULS Executive
- Report anonymously to our Welfare Team via feedback forms after the events
- Contact affiliated groups such as Whai Pūtake, PILSA, OALSA, and PILO
- Report directly to the Law Faculty, if preferred.

All reports will be received in confidence and handled with sensitivity and care. SOULS recognises that in some cases the concern may involve a member of the Executive; you are encouraged to report to whichever channel feels safest to you.

6. Online and Digital Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to behaviour in person, in writing, and online, including but not limited to:

- Social media posts
- Group chats and messaging platforms
- Emails and other forms of digital communication.

Online conduct that breaches this Code will be treated with the same seriousness as in-person misconduct.