

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201501395, University of Edinburgh  
**Sector:** further and higher education  
**Subject:** student discipline  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Ms C, who had Asperger's syndrome, was a student at the university. Complaints by staff and students about her behaviour were brought to her attention, and she was advised that the matter would be brought to a discipline committee if the situation continued. Subsequently, the matter was brought to the committee and, after hearing from Ms C, a decision was taken to expel her. However, the expulsion was suspended to allow Ms C to change her behaviour. Nonetheless, the unacceptable behaviour continued and Ms C's case progressed through the university's discipline process. She later appealed the expulsion decision to the university court.

Ms C's unacceptable actions towards other students and staff continued, and a final decision was taken to expel her with immediate effect. Ms C considered that the university had dealt with her unfairly and that she had not been fully informed of the process. She said that the penalty of expulsion was totally disproportionate and was unreasonable because it would affect the rest of her life.

We investigated Ms C's complaint and found that, as required, the university had made reasonable adjustments for Ms C's disability. They had provided her with advice and information about the discipline process. We found that the process had followed the university's own guidance, about which Ms C had been made aware. Ms C had been given advice and a number of chances to change her behaviour, but she did not do so. We did not uphold the complaint.