

Video Transcription

Kindness at the OIA

Link: <https://youtu.be/rrU22Ea9KKY>

Duration: 0:01:55

Speakers: Stephanie Talliss-Foster, Assistant Adjudicator – OIA (Steph)
Becca Shipperley, Assistant Adjudicator – OIA (Becca)

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Steph: I'm Steph Talliss-Foster, Senior Assistant Adjudicator at the OIA.

Becca: And I'm Becca Shipperley, Assistant Adjudicator at the OIA.

Steph: Becca, you have been at the OIA for longer than me, do you think our more recent focus on kindness has changed the way we communicate with students? Are we more human now?

Becca: We've always been a learning organisation, but I think we've definitely increased our focus on being more human. We've moved towards using students' first names to make us more approachable. We personalise standard emails to make them easy to understand for everyone. And we make it clear that we're always available to speak on the phone or by email. We also think carefully and have more exploratory discussions with students about the adjustments we can make to our process to

make it more comfortable for them. And for students who haven't yet complained to us but are thinking about it, they now have an opportunity to speak to a case-handler on the phone about our process and our general approach to similar cases to help them decide what to do next.

Steph, how do you think our more recent focus on kindness has changed the way we approach and produce our decisions?

Steph: I think we've taken big steps to show kindness and empathy in our decision-making. We know that our decisions can be upsetting for students. Now, kindness often features in our case discussions with colleagues. We talk about how we can deliver disappointing news, while acknowledging the experience a student has had in a way that shows we have understood them. We use more straightforward, personalised language and a less formal tone when writing our decisions. And we take time to offer students phone conversations about their complaint before coming to a decision. To allow them to tell their story, express their frustration and be heard.

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