



Peer Ombuds Information Guide

What is a Peer Ombuds?

A peer ombuds is available to students in the Nalanda Institute community who feel they have experienced or witnessed people who infringe on our community agreements, while engaged in Nalanda Institute's programs. The peer ombuds is an informal, neutral, independent, and in most cases, confidential resource for new and continuing Nalanda Institute students to raise questions or concerns about any aspect of their training experiences. The peer ombuds serves as a sounding board who also connects students to resources within the program and if applicable, provides support through the decision-making process. The peer ombuds does not file formal complaints and is unable to formally advocate for students in program matters. To maintain confidentiality, the peer ombuds does not keep official records of visits, other than tracking the number and general type of complaints. However, a peer ombuds must report situations in which students and others are in imminent risk of harm.

2020 Peer Ombuds

Email: peerombuds@nalandainstitute.org

If you wish to schedule a meeting, please send a brief email to the address above. The peer ombuds will schedule an individual appointment to speak in person, by phone, or by video conferencing. To preserve confidentiality, any face-to-face meetings will be held in a public place outside of the Nalanda Institute teaching space.

Limits of Confidentiality

Information shared with the peer ombuds will remain confidential with specific limitations.

1. Peer ombuds are required to break confidentiality and take appropriate steps if it is believed that the student or others are in imminent risk of harm.
2. Peer ombuds will take highly brief and general notes of each encounter, only including a categorical description of the topic discussed and the action taken. The

notes will be used to write an end of year report highlighting concerning patterns of student experiences found in the program. Identifying information about students will not be recorded or included in the report. The end of the year report will be submitted to the Inclusion Committee. The peer ombuds will not provide any other information to the faculty or program staff.

What kind of assistance can I expect to receive?

1. The peer ombuds will listen and respond to your concerns empathetically and without judgment. In connection with these two primary roles, the peer ombuds may assist you in a variety of ways:

a. The peer ombuds may inform you about program policies and provide contact information to appropriate resources:

- i. An Inclusion Committee member/s
- ii. A faculty of Color, LGBTQ, or disability
- iii. A faculty from another program

b. The peer ombuds may also engage in other activities including:

- i. Providing a supportive space for you to process your reactions to a troubling incident and reflect on how you may wish to respond
- ii. Role-playing or practicing effective communication in preparation for difficult conversations
- iii. Exploring strategies for managing conflicts with peers, faculty, staff, or administrators
- iv. Facilitating brainstorming of possible options and strategies for dealing with difficult situations, whether you wish to remain anonymous, or seek restoration and repair
- v. Directing you to further steps if necessary, including the help of a facilitator to guide a restorative and repairing process

2. The peer ombuds' role is to offer a listening space and to help you navigate the resources available, and to support and facilitate your choices. This is not the same as therapy. The peer ombuds will respect your decision for how you wish to respond to the problem.