

How to Report Sexual Misconduct, Harassment or Bullying

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1. Do you feel bullied or harassed, or have you experienced sexual misconduct?

1.1 Bullying and harassment can be conducted face-to-face, via the telephone, in written communications, e-mail, text messages or through social media. It can be directly targeted at an individual or indirectly by creating an offensive environment. Individuals or groups can be responsible for bullying and harassment.

1.2 Because bullying, sexual harassment and harassment can take many forms, it is not always easy to know if you are or have been subject to such conduct. If you feel unsure and wish to discuss potential bullying, sexual harassment, or other forms of harassment in confidence, you should:

- Meet with the Student Welfare Officer or another senior member of staff (students).
- Meet with a senior manager of your choice (staff and governors).

2: What to do if you are being bullied, harassed, or experiencing sexual misconduct

2.1 If you are being bullied or harassed or experiencing sexual misconduct, you can discuss your situation in confidence as identified in 1.2 to obtain another perspective or seek support and guidance on the options available to you. Your concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially throughout this procedure, and you will be supported by the Student Welfare Officer who will adopt a trauma-informed approach. If it is deemed necessary, the College will arrange interim measures to protect the interests of all parties involved and which will consider the academic, welfare and support needs of the parties. These may include alternative working arrangements, support, or the suspension of an employee or student during the investigation of the complaint.

2.2 Those being bullied, harassed, or experiencing sexual misconduct are advised to keep notes of the details of the alleged incident(s) as soon after the event as possible. Details kept should be:

- Date(s), time(s) and place(s) of incident(s)
- Name of any witnesses
- What actually happened
- How it made them feel
- Any action taken e.g., reported to Student Welfare Officer or line manager
- Original copies of any correspondence received

2.3 Where it is safe and/or appropriate, the College will first attempt to resolve the issue informally, by making it clear to the individual(s) responsible that their conduct is considered unacceptable and that it has been considered as bullying and/or harassment, or sexual misconduct, and that the person who has reported this behaviour would like it to stop immediately.

2.4 Alternatively, if the person experiencing the bullying/harassment or sexual misconduct is unwilling to report the incident themselves, they can do so anonymously. Should an individual witness an act of bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct, they can report this, either in person to the Student Welfare Officer, or line manager, or anonymously. A box is available in Reception, where such reports can be made. The College website includes a document detailing, 'How to Report Sexual-Misconduct, Harassment or Bullying' along with a 'Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Reporting Form' and a 'Sexual Misconduct, Anti-Bullying and Harassment Anonymous Reporting Form.' A paper copy of the Reporting Forms (including Anonymous Reporting) is also available at Reception. In addition, posters on college notice boards around the college, contain QR codes which enable easy access to online forms.

2.5 If an anonymous allegation of bullying/harassment or sexual misconduct is made, this will be investigated by the Student Welfare Officer and/or Director, who will set in motion the processes listed below. Should reports be found to be malicious (knowingly false or malicious allegations made in bad faith), this will be investigated and the claimant (if known) may face disciplinary action.

Please note that the College will take any anonymous report seriously and carry out an investigation but the outcome and decision will remain an internal matter unless it is considered so serious that outside agencies, such as the police, are involved.

2.6 If a report is made, the College will consider the most appropriate way to address the concerns raised. Where appropriate, and taking account of the wishes of those involved, the seriousness of the allegations, and any safeguarding concerns, the College may seek to resolve the matter informally.

The expectation at this stage is that the person to whom the report is made will listen to the concerns raised, make discreet enquiries where appropriate, and seek to resolve the matter fairly and promptly. This may include communicating with those involved, facilitating discussions where appropriate, providing support, or proposing other informal measures intended to resolve the issue.

A face-to-face meeting between the parties will only take place where this is considered appropriate and where all parties are willing to participate.

2.7 The person against whom the complaint has been made will be informed of the nature of the allegations. Information identifying the reporting party will only be disclosed where necessary to ensure a fair process, to meet safeguarding requirements, or to comply with legal obligations.

Although every effort will be made to ensure that information is shared only with those who need to know, additional individuals may be informed where there are concerns relating to safety, safeguarding, or legal obligations. Any disclosure will be handled sensitively and appropriately, taking account of the specific circumstances of the case.

If it is deemed necessary, the College will arrange interim measures to protect the interests of all parties involved, taking account of their academic, welfare and support needs. These measures may include alternative working arrangements, additional support, or the suspension of an employee or student during the investigation.

2.8 If all informal efforts to resolve the issue have been unsuccessful or, in extreme circumstances, where the issue warrants an immediate formal approach, the final option is to raise a formal complaint through the:

- Non-Academic Misconduct Procedure (students)
- Grievance Procedure (staff and governors)

2.9 Students can find the Non-Academic Misconduct Procedure on SharePoint ('Policies and Procedures' page) or the college website ('Policies, Procedures and Quality' page under the 'About Us' drop-down menu). Students are advised to report the matter using the Non-Academic Misconduct Procedure form. A hard copy can be printed out by a member of the admin staff if the student prefers. This should be submitted to the Student Welfare Officer or the College's general enquiries email address.

Staff and governors can find the Grievance Procedure in the Staff Handbook. Staff are advised to report the matter using the college grievance form which should be submitted to your line manager or the line manager's manager.

If a student raises a complaint of misconduct and is dissatisfied with the internal complaint procedure, they are able to follow the policy instructions on complaining externally to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

To request an external review by the OIA, students must complete all three internal complaint stages. If unsatisfied with the result, and having exhausted all the internal processes, students will be issued with a Completion of Procedures (COP) Letter. This can then be taken to the OIA within 12 months of the date of the COP letter.

3 Protection and Support for All Parties Involved

3.1 Students, staff or governors who make complaints, who have had complaints made against them, or anyone who participates in good faith in any investigation (including external parties) can expect to be treated with respect throughout and must not suffer any form of retaliation and/ or victimisation as a result. Any person found to have retaliated against or victimised someone in this way will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary process.

During the process of the complaints process, support will be given by the Student Welfare Officer, external support will be signposted where appropriate, and interim measures put in place where deemed necessary. In August 2025 the Office for Students introduced the E6 Condition to help tackle sexual harassment and abuse in Higher Education. This condition requires staff be appropriately trained and respond effectively to disclosures and carry out investigations in a trauma-informed way. This is to ensure those disclosing feel safe, ensuring there is reasonable freedom from threat and harm, attempting to avoid re-traumatisation and putting policies, practices and safeguarding arrangements in place. Trauma-informed practice includes 6 principles: safety, trust, choice, collaboration, empowerment and cultural consideration.