

# **UNIVERSITY OF LONDON**

## **GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS ON RESPONDING TO HARASSMENT**

### **1. OUR COMMITMENT**

1.1 The University of London is committed to a safe and secure studying environment in which everyone can effectively contribute to the best of their abilities regardless of their personal characteristics. The University promotes mutual respect, tolerance and understanding across our diverse student body. The intention of this Guidance is to:

- Confirm the University's commitment to a safe and secure studying environment
- Set out the measures the University will seek to prevent harassment
- Clarify the support available and the process for raising a complaint

### **2. SCOPE**

2.1 All students of the central University of London.

2.2 All students living in University of London Halls or Residences or with a complaint about the University of London Housing Services.

2.3 Students who study at member institutions of the University of London federation should seek advice and assistance directly from their institution (unless 2.2 applies).

### **3. LEGISLATION**

3.1 The Equality Act (2010) defines Higher Education Institutions as public authorities and sets out their obligations under Section 149 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). In summary, the University is obliged by the Act to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in respect of nine defined 'Protected Characteristics'. This Policy is one of the ways in which the University seeks to discharge its duties under the Equality Act (2010).

### **4. DEFINITIONS**

4.1 Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or offensive environment. They may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, victimise, denigrate or injure the recipient. Examples of harassment may include:

- Embarrassing, abusive or insulting words or behaviour (this can be on the basis of age, race, sex, gender reassignment, disability, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation, marital status and religion or belief)
- Uninvited physical contact
- Aggressive physical or verbal behaviour
- Persistently demeaning or ridiculing behaviour
- Abuse of power or position
- Cyber bullying (bullying or harassment using electronic means)

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT

The University of London recognises the profound and lasting impact that sexual harassment and assault can have on those targeted and is committed to a 'zero tolerance' approach in the institution.

A student can consider addressing such inappropriate behaviour by submitting a formal complaint under the terms of the appropriate **reporting procedure** as set out in Section 6 below.

The student concerned can seek **support and guidance** from the agencies listed in the appendix on page 5.

### 5. PREVENTION

In order to promote an inclusive and respectful study environment, the University has adopted standards of behaviour and undertaken the following actions:

#### 5.1 Code of Student Discipline

The University of London sets out its rules and expects all staff and students to comply with the requirements of its [Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations](#).

Ordinance 17 sets out the Code of Student Discipline. Section 6.8 of this Ordinance states that "*The following shall constitute misconduct: ... harassment of any student or employee of the University on any grounds, and discrimination on any grounds set out in Ordinance 21 (Equality and Diversity)*"

Students studying programmes that use the University of London VLE should also ensure that they comply the requirements of the VLE Code of Conduct:

[VLE Terms Conditions final.html](#)

#### 5.2 Relationships Code of conduct for University Staff

The University has introduced a Relationships Code of Conduct for staff that defines appropriate and professional behaviour in respect of students. This Code of Conduct discourages staff from entering into a physical or emotional relationship with any student for whom they have any responsibility. However, if this is the case, staff must declare this relationship immediately in order that other arrangements can be made in order to avoid any potential conflict of interest.

Disciplinary action may be taken against a member of staff who is found to have harassed a student or who has failed to comply with the staff Relationships Code of Conduct.

#### 5.3 Academic staff contract of appointment

The University requires all academic staff contracted to teach or assess our courses and programmes to act in a professional and respectful manner. Any person not adhering to these standards may be subject to the termination of their contract.

## **5.4 Training for staff**

The University's approach to raising awareness of and responding to incidents of harassment is referenced in the Diversity and Inclusion training delivered on a mandatory basis as part of induction for all staff. In addition, key staff such as Academic Advisors and Dignity & Respect Contacts receive training on the best way to support students and staff in this situation. This will include training for staff on conducting investigations in a sensitive manner.

## **5.5 Raising awareness**

The University highlights the issue of harassment in our mandatory training materials for staff and encourages colleagues to consider how they can embed it in school activities. Internal publicity will help to ensure that all existing staff are aware of the University's approach as set out in this Guidance and the Dignity and Respect Policy.

## **5.6 Promoting an inclusive culture**

The University is committed to promoting a representative workforce and a culture of dignity and respect. This will help to address the notions of entitlement that can lead to abusive behaviour. Such measures include addressing the under-representation of women and Black and Minority Ethnic staff at senior levels by a variety of measures as set out in the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (2016) and associated action plan.

## **6. REPORTING AN INCIDENT**

6.1 Students who are in the position of reporting an incident of harassment should be assured that they will be taken seriously and will receive a sympathetic response. Additionally, submitting a complaint of harassment will not negatively impact on a student's studies. Details of a complaint will be treated in accordance with the University's approach to [Data Protection](#). However complainants should be aware that the University is obliged to alert the police if there is an imminent risk of harm to the reporting student or anyone else.

6.2 All reports of harassment by either a student or a member of University staff should be made in accordance with the appropriate policy:

- Students of the School of Advanced Study and distance learning programmes offered through the University of London can report harassment under the formal 'stage 2' of the [Procedure for Student Complaints and Academic Appeals](#)
- Complaints regarding harassment in University of London Halls of Residence should refer to the [Residential Accommodation Complaints Procedure](#)
- Complaints regarding harassment in the process of booking Halls of Residences should e-mail the Accommodation and Hospitality team for the relevant complaints procedure: [info.halls@london.ac.uk](mailto:info.halls@london.ac.uk)
- Complaints regarding harassment in University of London Student Homes properties should refer to [The Student Homes Complaints Procedure](#)

- Harassment complaints regarding University of London Private Housing and Advice Team should be directed to the [Private Housing and Advice Team Complaints Procedure](#)
- Harassment complaints, regarding the Senate House Library [should be made under the formal 'stage 2' of the Senate House Library Complaints policy.](#)

6.3 If it is unclear which policy applies, questions can be directed in the first instance to [Diversity@london.ac.uk](mailto:Diversity@london.ac.uk)

6.5 The University commits to considering all complaints of harassment within twenty working days, unless exceptional circumstances require further investigation.

6.6 The fact that the allegation is or has been the subject of criminal proceedings or a police investigation shall not prevent the University from conducting its own investigation. However, any internal action may be deferred pending police investigation or prosecution.

#### **Emergency assistance for students living in the UK**

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If you have just been assaulted and there is an immediate risk of further incidents you should call the Police on 999 (emergency) or 101 (non-emergency). You can also seek assistance from the main Senate House reception desk. If University staff believe that there is an immediate risk to you or another person, they will contact the Police.

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## **7. SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS**

7.1 The support options available to students are set out in the appendix on page 5 below.

7.2 Support will be available for students who report incidents of harassment and those who have had allegations made against them.

## **8. MONITORING AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

8.1 The University will record reported incidents on a confidential and anonymous basis. We will analyse this data as part of the annual equality and diversity report to the Board of Trustees and use it to monitor the effectiveness of our procedures and practices.

## **9. POLICY OWNERSHIP & REVIEW**

9.1 This Student Guidance is part of the University's commitment to diversity and inclusion and was developed by the Head of Inclusion.

9.2 This policy will be reviewed in December 2019, unless external events or legislation necessitate an earlier date.

9.3 This policy was developed in accordance with the UoL Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (2016/19) and in recognition of the University's obligations under the terms of the Equality Act (2010).

9.4 An Equality Impact Assessment was completed in July 2018 and the identified actions assigned to responsible officers for completion.

## **APPENDIX:**

### **SUPPORT FOR LONDON BASED STUDENTS**

**Camden Safety Net: Call 020 7974 2526 (office hours)**

CSN provide support to the victims of sexual and domestic abuse who live work and study on the London Borough of Camden. This includes all UoL students regardless of where they live.

**Equality Focus: <http://www.equalityfocus.co.uk/>**

Equality Focus work with the University to provide high-quality specialist Non-Medical Help (NMH) support staff to enable students with a diverse range of needs to fulfil their academic potential.

**GALOP: <http://www.galop.org.uk/>** (London's LGBT anti-violence & abuse charity)

**The Gender Trust: [www.gendertrust.org.uk](http://www.gendertrust.org.uk)**

The Gender Trust provides support and an information centre for anyone with any question or problem concerning their gender identity, or whose loved one is struggling with gender identity issues.

**National stalking helpline: <http://www.stalkinghelpline.org/> or 0808 802 0300**

**Police: Dial 999** in an emergency or 101 to connect to your local police station

**British Transport Police: Text 61016** to report non-emergency incidents on trains

**Rape Crisis: 0808 802 9999** 12pm-2.30pm, 7pm -9.30pm week days

**The Rights of Women Helpline: 020 7490 2562**

**The Samaritans: 08457 909090**

Available 24 hours a day providing support through trauma.

**Survivors UK** (male survivor organisation): <https://www.survivorsuk.org/>

**Women's Aid** (domestic violence support): <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/> or call **0808 2000 247**

### **SUPPORT FOR DISTANCE LEARNING STUDENTS**

**Nightline confidential listening service for students: <http://nightline.org.uk>**

**If you need this document in an alternative format please  
contact: [diversity@london.ac.uk](mailto:diversity@london.ac.uk)**