



UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

Intercollegiate Halls

**Reporting & Investigating
Harassment or Abuse**

[london.ac.uk](https://www.london.ac.uk)

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Version: 1.0
Revised: June 2022
Next review: June 2024
Contact: Adrian Clark, Student Health & Wellbeing Manager
Email: adrian.clark@london.ac.uk

Introduction

All students have the right to be treated with consideration, dignity and respect.

The University of London was founded upon the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. We have an ongoing commitment to provide residents in our Intercollegiate Halls with a safe place to be heard, as well as offering support and advice. A wide range of support measures are in place – including Wardens and Resident Advisors. In addition, details of specific support services at the University's Member Institutions can be found here: <https://london.ac.uk/current-students/support-wellbeing#you-are-a-student-at-one-of-our-member-institutions-29532>.

If you tell us about abuse, bullying, discrimination, or harassment – including sexual assault – we will take you seriously and offer a private, confidential space in which to report your concerns. We will help you to find the right professional help (if this is relevant) and support you to make decisions about what to do next. This might include making a formal complaint about someone else within the intercollegiate halls, or it might involve making a report to the police.

If you speak with a Resident Advisor, they will always need to discuss your concerns with the Hall Warden. Staff will respect your autonomy and confidentiality. We will only share your information or take further action with your explicit consent, unless there is a clear and immediate risk to the safety of others which means we must act to protect them.

Staff are expected to support students in a person-centred, respectful manner. They must take into consideration and seek to minimise the stress and anxiety that engagement in any formal process may cause students.

Definitions

Throughout this procedure, we use the definitions set out below.

Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

Discrimination is unfair treatment on the basis of gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, caring responsibilities, age, social origins, political opinion or association, trade union membership and activities, religious or similar philosophical beliefs, or other beliefs/lawful preferences privately held on any matter.

Harassment is any unwanted conduct which is intended to or which creates the effect of violating the dignity of the student or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the student.

Reporting Party: A person making a formal complaint or report about alleged abuse, bullying, discrimination, or harassment.

Responding Party: A person who is alleged in a formal complaint to be responsible for abuse, bullying, discrimination, or harassment.

Anonymous reporting

Monitoring cases of abuse, bullying, discrimination, and harassment allows us to identify any possible patterns of incidents, understand how prevalent different kinds of incident are, and improve our procedures for preventing and responding to these incidents. For this reason, we provide a channel through which you can anonymously report any concerns: <https://forms.office.com/r/QyvWFQudnc>

It is important to understand that whilst anonymous collection of this data is very useful, it does not enable us to provide you with support for what has happened, and it cannot normally provide a basis for disciplinary action against students or staff. So we encourage you to access the support that is available by following the guidance below, *Taking action and getting support*.

Taking action and getting support

If you are concerned about an incident of abuse, bullying, discrimination, or harassment, do not hesitate to take action, however large or small it was and even if it has occurred only once.

Immediate help

If you have been attacked or are the victim of a sexual or racial assault, seek help immediately. For your protection and the protection of others it is important that offenders are dealt with: you should report the incident to the police. If you decide to go to the police and would like someone to accompany you, you can contact the member of staff or Resident Advisor on duty in your hall via reception.

If you have been sexually assaulted or raped seek medical advice and help immediately. Information on locally available advice and help for victims of sexual assault or rape is available here: <https://campuslife.london.ac.uk/tag/harassment+and+abuse>.

You should keep a note of the details and dates of any relevant incidents.

Informal action

If you think you are being subjected to abuse, bullying, discrimination, or harassment in any form by a fellow student or a member of staff, you do not have to tolerate it. If you feel able to make it clear to the person causing you offence that such behaviour on that person's part is unacceptable to you this may in some circumstances be sufficient to stop it. You may wish to send the person a "Stop" Notice as outlined below.

If you are not able to tackle the person concerned this does not constitute consent to the treatment, nor will it prejudice any complaint you may wish to bring. You may instead seek help and advice via one or more of the sources suggested below.

1. Talk about the problem with friends: they may be able to suggest a way of resolving the problem.
2. Seek advice from the Hall Warden. Discussions will be confidential and further action involving you will not normally be taken without your express permission. In particular, the person about whom you are complaining will not be given your name as a complainant without your express permission, unless there are overriding reasons for disclosure which will be explained to you because it may not be possible to deal with the matter adequately if permission is withheld.
3. Seek advice from the student support service at your university.

Sending a “Stop” Notice

If you consider the behaviour of a fellow student or a member of staff to be inappropriate, you may wish to consider sending them a “Stop” Notice. The aim of a “Stop” Notice is to alert a person of the impact of their inappropriate behaviour, in the hope that this will prompt a change in that behaviour.

You do not have to send a “Stop” Notice: not sending one will not prejudice any future complaint you may bring. A “Stop” Notice would also not be appropriate if the offending behaviour is very serious.

It is recommended that a “Stop” Notice is written in the form of an email or letter, and that it includes:

- A description of the inappropriate behaviour that is causing distress or concern.
- A description of the impact of the inappropriate behaviour on the student.
- A politely worded request for the behaviour to stop.
- An understanding that the relationship between you can be improved with goodwill and respect between both parties.
- A reference to this Procedure, to help the person understand what a “Stop” Notice is and how they might wish to respond.

What to do if you receive a stop notice:

Often people are not aware that things they say or do can be upsetting to others and had no intention to deliberately offend. If you receive a “Stop” notice, please remember that:

- It is an attempt by the sender to improve relationships based on goodwill.
- It is an informal alternative to making a formal complaint.
- No record will be retained by the University at the time that the “Stop” Notice is sent.
- A positive response from you is not an admission that you have done anything wrong.
- Try to respond as positively as you can in light of the above.

Formal action

Where informal methods for resolving abuse, harassment, discrimination or bullying fail, or the case is a serious one, you are advised to make a formal complaint. Complaints should be reported as soon as possible, stating:

- the name of the person about whom a complaint is being made;
- the nature of the abuse, bullying, discrimination, or harassment;
- the dates, times and locations when harassment, discrimination or bullying occurred;
- the names of witnesses to any incidents; and
- any action already taken by the complainant to stop the unwanted behaviour.

If your complaint is about another student (including Resident Advisors)

Write to your Hall Warden. If you would prefer to speak with someone different from the Hall Warden (maybe someone of your own race or sex, for example), you can state this in your complaint.

If your complaint is about a member of staff

Please write to residential.life@london.ac.uk. Your complaint will be referred to an appropriate manager for investigation.

Investigation

The Hall Warden or relevant manager shall make the necessary arrangements to have the complaint thoroughly investigated as quickly as possible ensuring the rights of all parties are protected.

The Hall Warden or relevant manager shall arrange for the Reporting Party to be interviewed. Wherever possible the interview will take place within 10 working days of the Hall Warden or relevant manager receiving the complaint. The Reporting Party may be accompanied by a friend who is a member of the University's staff or a student.

Outcome

If the report of the interviewer indicates that the matter should be pursued, disciplinary proceedings will be initiated at the appropriate stage of the [Student Disciplinary Procedure](#) or the appropriate disciplinary procedure for staff (depending on the seriousness of the allegation). Where the misconduct is less serious, it may be sufficient for the Responding Party to promise not to re-offend and to be warned as to their future conduct.

If the complaint is upheld, given the requirement for confidentiality in disciplinary cases, the Reporting Party will not be told the actual level of disciplinary action taken against an individual.

If, after the report of the interview, the Hall Warden or relevant manager decides not to pursue the matter, a written statement of the reasons will be given to the Reporting Party.

Confidentiality and anonymity

It is not normally appropriate to keep the identity of Reporting Parties secret during disciplinary proceedings. To do so may undermine the Responding Party's ability to defend themselves. If a Reporting Party does not agree to the Responding Party knowing their identity it is not usually appropriate to rely on their evidence.

It may be that you want to make a complaint but do not yet feel ready to be identified to the Responding Party. In this case, we will continue to support you and provide a safe listening space in which we hope you may later decide that your evidence can be used and your identity made known.

Support for all parties

Being involved in a complaint, as either the Reporting or Responding Party, can feel stressful. The University is committed to supporting all parties involved in any formal procedures. Where necessary and appropriate, and with your consent, we will arrange for support to be provided by a person who is not otherwise involved in managing the complaint or disciplinary process (e.g. the Warden of another Intercollegiate Hall).

Alleged misconduct that may also constitute a criminal offence

An internal disciplinary process is a civil matter, based upon an allegation that a student has breached the University's rules and regulations, and the allegation must be proven on the balance of probabilities. In contrast, the criminal process is an external procedure, deals with allegations that a student has committed a criminal act, and the allegation must be proven beyond reasonable doubt.

The University will follow its policy in respect of offences that are also criminal offences. In summary:

- The University will not normally report any alleged offence to the police without the consent of the victim, unless there is a *significant public interest* legal basis for doing so.
- In the case of alleged serious offences, the University may take reasonable and proportionate precautionary measures pending the outcome of criminal or disciplinary proceedings. Such precautionary measures may be necessary, for example:
 - to ensure that a full and proper investigation can be carried out (either by the police or by the University); and/or
 - to protect the Reporting Party, the Responding Party, or others whilst the allegation is being dealt with as part of a criminal process or disciplinary process.
- If a report is made to the police and the matter is considered under the criminal process then save for taking any necessary precautionary measures, the University will not normally take any disciplinary action against the accused until the criminal process is concluded.
- When action is taken following a criminal conviction that amounts to misconduct, the conviction shall be taken as evidence of the misconduct.

- The University may impose a penalty upon a student in respect of an offence even if that offence has already been the subject of criminal prosecution and penalty.

Appeals

If you are not satisfied about the way your report of abuse, bullying, discrimination, or harassment has been handled, you may choose to follow the [Student Complaints Procedure](#). Any complaint should be lodged within two weeks of receipt of the letter confirming the outcome of the harassment, discrimination or bullying investigation.

Any appeals made in this way will be escalated immediately to Stage 2 of the formal complaints procedure (so bypassing the informal stage and Stage 1 of the formal process).

Malicious complaints

Making malicious allegations of abuse, bullying, discrimination, or harassment is regarded as a serious disciplinary matter.

