

Student Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

This document summarises the School's policies and procedures on student harassment and sexual misconduct, including intimate personal relationships between staff members and students.

This document is the 'single comprehensive source of information' required by the Office for Students (OfS registration condition E6).

What is Harassment and sexual misconduct?

Harassment and sexual misconduct can be defined as follows:

“Harassment” is unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment as defined by the Equality Act 2010. This includes harassment by association or perception.

“Sexual Misconduct” relates to all unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexual harassment as defined by Section 26(2) Equality Act 2010.
- Assault as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- Rape as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Physical unwanted sexual advances as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission: Sexual harassment and the law, 2017.
- Intimidation or promising resources or benefits in return for sexual favours as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission: Sexual harassment and the law, 2017.
- Distributing private and personal explicit images or video footage of an individual without their consent as defined by the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015.

Reporting Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

Students should report incidents to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Reports can be made in person to the DSL or by emailing studentsupport@lis.ac.uk.

In addition, students can use the anonymous sexual misconduct dropbox.

Support for those affected

- Our student support staff will be available to support you in confidence.
- Students facing any allegations will also be provided with a named staff member who they can contact for support.
- The School also uses an external counselling service who provide 24 hours crisis support.

Investigating Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

The following policies are relevant to how we investigate allegations of student harassment and sexual misconduct:

The Student Sexual Misconduct Policy defines what sexual misconduct is and sets out the School's approach to preventing and addressing sexual harassment and misconduct.

The Dignity at Work and Study policy also defines what harassment, victimisation, bullying and discriminatory behaviour are.

In terms of how incidents are investigated, both the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy and Dignity at Work and Study Policy specifies that:

- The Student Disciplinary Procedure will be used to investigate allegations of harassment victimisation, bullying and discriminatory behaviour and sexual misconduct against students.
- The staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure will be used to investigate allegations of harassment and sexual misconduct made by students against staff.

The Student Disciplinary Procedure and the Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure set out how allegations will be investigated fairly, including timescales, stages, penalties and appeal provisions.

Handling Information

Ensuring confidentiality is a key principle in creating a culture where those affected feel safe to make a disclosure about harassment, victimisation, bullying, discriminatory behaviour and sexual misconduct.

The School will take all reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality and privacy of those who disclose harassment and sexual misconduct. However, there may be circumstances (e.g. in order to protect an individual at risk) where we are required to share information with other agencies or to share information internally.

Informing Individuals

Where it is reasonable and practicable to do so in accordance with its duties and obligations under data protection legislation, the School will provide the student that has raised an allegation of harassment or sexual misconduct with an outcome of the investigation and/or an explanation of any actions that the School has taken or not taken. This includes where the outcome is changed for any reason. However, it may only be possible for the School to provide limited information depending on the circumstances.

Personal relationships between Staff and Students

We are committed to protecting students from any actual or potential conflict of interest and/or abuse of power that may arise from intimate personal relationships with staff.

Staff must not enter into a romantic or sexual relationship with a student for whom they have a responsibility for teaching, assessment, supervision, pastoral care or where they provide administrative or technical support.

In the event that a relationship does occur or pre-exists then the staff member must inform their line manager so that any conflict of interest can be appropriately managed.

Taking Steps to Protect Students

We are committed to taking steps that will make a significant and credible difference to protecting students from harassment and sexual misconduct.

These include:

- Analysing and publishing data on the number of reports made to the School.
- Building feedback surveys into our training for students and staff, evaluating the results and making changes to the training where appropriate.
- We will consult with student representatives on changes to our student policies on harassment, sexual misconduct and codes of conduct. Students are represented on the committees where these policies are approved.

Non-disclosure agreements

The School will not use non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) in relation to complaints of sexual harassment, abuse, misconduct, or other forms of harassment and bullying.