

Guide for Students and Staff on Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

Keeping you safe

The purpose of this document is to provide a comprehensive overview of the policies and procedures in place to address harassment and sexual misconduct that could occur during your studies. It serves as a resource to ensure that all students are aware of their rights, the available support, and the proactive measures taken to foster a safe and inclusive environment.

The Office for Students (OfS) requires all UK higher education providers, including their partner institutions, to implement robust policies and procedures to address harassment and sexual misconduct. These policies must ensure that students are protected from harm, have access to clear reporting mechanisms, and are supported throughout the process. The OfS mandate emphasises the importance of fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment, where incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct are not tolerated and are addressed effectively. This policy has been developed in alignment with the OfS requirements to ensure compliance and uphold the highest standards of student welfare and safety. As a partner of Liverpool John Moores University, Informa Connect Academy wholly adopts the policies of LJMU for the joint programmes. However Informa Connect Academy is also fully committed to offering equivalent services where appropriate. For full details of LJMU's policy, [please refer here](#).

LJMU and Informa Connect Academy recognise that incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct occur within and beyond your studies with us. Informa also acknowledges that harassment and sexual misconduct can be experienced by any individual regardless of their sex, gender, sexual orientation, relationship status, age, disability, faith, ethnicity, nationality or economic status. Alongside the University we are committed to promoting a culture in which incidents of sexual misconduct or harassment will not be tolerated and will be addressed to ensure the preservation of a safe work and study environment, and a culture of zero tolerance.

What is harassment?

Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. In many countries, harassment has a specific legal meaning, and concerns harassing behaviour that relates to on certain characteristics, which are sometimes known as protected characteristics.

These protected characteristics are defined by local laws or regulations. The list varies according to location, but may include age, ancestry, citizenship, race or ethnicity, gender reassignment or identity, national origin, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Someone might also be harassed based on the assumption they have a characteristic even if they don't, or if they were not the intended recipient or target of the action or comment.

Harassment can also happen when someone is treated less favourably because they either submit to or reject harassment related to a protected characteristic, like sex or gender reassignment.

Harassment is always unacceptable, whether it involves a legally protected characteristic or not.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. This behaviour doesn't have to be sexually motivated, just sexual in nature.

It can include a wide range of actions including sexual comments or jokes; showing sexually graphic images; suggestive looks, staring or leering; propositions and sexual advances; sexual gestures; intrusive questions or comments of a sexual nature; sexual posts or social media content; spreading sexual rumours about a person; sending sexually explicit emails or text messages; unwelcome touching, hugging, massaging or kissing.

Harassment can also occur if someone is treated less favourably because they either submit to or reject sexual harassment.

Misconduct through any medium, including, for example, in the online environment is unacceptable and will not be tolerated

Why it is important to us that we tell you about harassment and sexual misconduct?

Harassment and sexual misconduct have no place in our learning community. We are committed to fostering an environment that values respect, dignity, and equality for all students. This document aims to raise awareness, prevent incidents, and empower students by providing them with the knowledge and resources needed to address such issues effectively.

How to report an incident

There are a number of ways that a student or member of staff can let the University or Informa Connect Academy know about an incident or something that is concerning you.

LJMU's Report and Support

Report and Support is an online tool that students, staff and visitors to the University can use to inform the University of an incident of harassment or sexual misconduct. When someone leaves an anonymous report in the tool, this information is used as statistical data to understand what is happening and to inform proactive prevention work. When a student leaves a report with their name and contact details, this is sent to relevant staff within the university including the Specialist Support Advisors and Officers in Student Advice and Wellbeing, who will contact you to provide you with an offer of support. Specialist Support Advisors can let students know what their options are, including making a complaint to the Police or making a formal student complaint (see below).

[You can Report and get support](#)

Informa's Speak Up and Reporting Concerns

Informa's Speak Up can be used if you think you're being bullied, harassed, sexually harassed or retaliated against. You can report actions that happen in relation to your studies or outside of your studies. You are also encouraged to report this at a local level if you feel able to and where a crime has been committed you should also contact local law enforcement.

Informa is committed to ensuring that anyone can speak up with confidence if there are any concerns or help is needed. Speak Up is run by an external third-party provider and allows concerns to be reported in confidence in your own language.

[Speak Up can be accessed here.](#)

For local telephone numbers for other countries, please visit the Speak Up website.

Criminal Cases

Only in exceptional circumstances will Informa Connect Academy report an alleged crime to the police contrary to the wishes of a victim, for example if the disclosure of the information is to protect the reporting students (or others) from harm or to prevent a further crime taking place.

Usually, when a matter is being dealt with by the police or the courts, Informa Connect Academy suspends any investigation of the matter until policing and criminal justice proceedings have ended.

If there is an immediate risk of serious harm, students should call the emergency services on 999 in the UK or local equivalent. In the UK call 101 to report a crime where there is no immediate danger.

Reporting to Informa's lecturers and other staff

You may feel more comfortable reporting the incident to your Programme Leader or Programme Manager. This can be a good way of ensuring that you have support during times when you need it most. However, reporting matters in this way would be considered informal. If you wish to make a formal report then please do so via [LJMU's Report & Support](#) or [Informa's Speak Up](#).

Awareness and training programmes

All Informa Connect Academy colleagues are required to complete training related to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or retaliation, including any training mandated by the laws applicable in their location or place of work, and must ensure they complete any such training within the required timeframe. This training includes specific information on recognising, preventing, and addressing sexual harassment.

Confidentiality

We recognise that reports of bullying, sexual harassment, harassment or retaliation can give rise to difficult situations for those involved, including witnesses, possible victims, and anyone whose conduct has been reported.

Any investigation carried out will be done so in confidence to the extent possible. The names of any individuals involved (either the reporter or the person accused, or witnesses) will only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis.

Protecting confidentiality during an investigation is important in maintaining trust for those involved in the process. Any breach of confidentiality will be taken seriously and could result in disciplinary action.

Further information

If you have queries in relation to this policy, please contact us on LEteam@informaconnect.com