



Reporting Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence

Policy Area: Safeguarding

Policy Lead: Assistant Principal Student Experience

Approval By: Executive

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. East Sussex College is committed to maintaining an environment for study and work which is free from sexual harassment and sexual violence of any kind.
- 1.2. The college has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence. It is never acceptable, and it will never be tolerated.
- 1.3. The college follows at all times the government statutory guidance provided in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

2. Scope

- 2.1. This document explains what to do if you, or someone you know, has been sexually harassed or assaulted.
- 2.2. This advice is for all staff and students but also includes visitors, contractors and community providers based on college premises.

3. Definitions

3.1. Sexual harassment

- 3.1.1. This is a broad term, including many types of unwelcome verbal and physical sexual attention.
- 3.1.2. Sexual harassment may be physical, written, verbal, non-verbal, online or via social media.
- 3.1.3. It includes unwanted sexual attention:
 - Unwanted touching – including hugging, stroking, kissing
 - Relentless pressure for dates or sexual behaviour
- 3.1.4. Sexual harassment can happen face to face or online as well as on and off campus.
- 3.1.5. It is especially serious if continued after it has been made clear that the behaviour is unwanted.

3.2. Sexual violence

- 3.2.1. This is a general term to describe any kind of unwanted sexual act or activity, including rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, and many others.

3.3. Sexual assault

- 3.3.1. This refers to a range of criminal acts that are sexual in nature, often physical, that occur without the consent of the victim.
- 3.3.2. This may include unwanted touching and kissing, rubbing, groping, or forcing the victim to touch the perpetrator in sexual ways.

3.4. Bullying

- 3.4.1. This is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.
- 3.4.2. It can happen face-to-face or through electronic means (cyberbullying), and comes in many different forms such as verbal, physical, and emotional.

3.5. Harassment

- 3.5.1. Unlike bullying, harassment is legally defined in the UK and included as a form of discrimination in the [Equality Act \(2010\)](#).

3.6. Sexual harassment, sexual violence and bullying

- 3.6.1. These might be a series of different behaviours, repeated forms of the same unwanted behaviour or a one-off incident.

- 3.6.2. The following non-exhaustive list gives examples of behaviour that may also constitute sexual harassment or bullying:
- Offensive or inappropriate comments, body language, jokes, or 'banter'
 - Threats to disclose, or disclosing, private or personal information, including photographs
 - Comments or posts on social media that are abusive, offensive, or intimidating
- 3.7. **Stalking**
- 3.7.1. This involves behaviours towards a person that make them feel unsafe.
- 3.7.2. Someone who stalks may know the victim, be a former partner or never have met them.
- 3.7.3. The more common examples of stalking are following a person home, following a person around, between or to/from campus, sending or leaving them unwanted and repeated messages, bullying them on social media or making intrusive or unwanted visits.
- 3.8. **Interpersonal relationships**
- 3.8.1. Relationships between individuals can also be abusive without a sexual element to the behaviour.
- 3.8.2. It may involve bullying or coercive behaviours which are used to maintain power or control.
- 3.8.3. While this might include sexual abuse and/or bullying, it can also include emotional, financial, or physical abuse, threats, isolation, or intimidation.

4. Reporting sexual harassment and/or assault

- 4.1. If you (or someone you know) have or are being sexually harassed or assaulted, you can choose to:
- 4.1.1. Talk to a Personal Development and Wellbeing Mentor or the Safeguarding Manager at college.
- 4.1.2. Seek emotional support from a Personal Development and Wellbeing Mentor or external agency.
- 4.1.3. Report harassment to the college via your Study Programme Tutor, teacher, Safeguarding Manager or trusted member of staff.
- 4.1.4. Report to the police.
- 4.2. It is your choice which of these you do.
- 4.3. All reports of sexual harassment and misconduct will be taken seriously.
- 4.4. Victims will be listened to, supported, and kept safe by the college.
- 4.5. Talking to a Wellbeing Adviser does not commit you to doing anything else. However, the college will encourage a young person to seek support from home and/or the police if appropriate.
- 4.6. In addition, if the college thinks that the young person or others are at risk of immediate harm, then it might decide to contact home and/or the police.
- 4.7. If someone under the age of 18 has been raped, or experienced assault by penetration or sexual assault, it must be reported to the police. The college will continue to provide support throughout any investigation.

5. Informal reporting

- 5.1. Anyone can report any type of bullying, sexual harassment, or sexual violence to the College.
- 5.2. You can talk to, phone or email one of the following:
 - The Safeguarding Manager
 - Personal Development and Wellbeing Mentor
 - Your Study Programme Tutor
 - A trusted member of staff
- 5.3. You can talk to a Personal Development and Wellbeing Mentor to get advice without needing to take it further.
- 5.4. However, if the College thinks that you or others are at risk of immediate harm, then it might decide to contact home and/or the police.

6. Formal reporting

- 6.1. All reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence will be taken seriously. Victims will be listened to, supported, and kept safe by the college.
- 6.2. A student will never be disadvantaged for raising a complaint that they believe to be genuine. If you raise a complaint against a staff member, the college will ensure that you will not be assessed by or taught in a small group by that person. Again, the Wellbeing team can talk to you about this.

7. Reporting procedures overview

- 7.1. This is an overview of the different processes that would be followed when sexual harassment or sexual violence is reported. The wishes of the victim will be considered but this will be balanced with the college's duty and responsibilities to protect other young people.
- 7.2. Each situation will be managed sensitively on a case-by-case basis and could involve one or more of the following:
 - 7.2.1. Managed internally
Using the Student Management Policy and/or staff Code of Conduct with wellbeing support.
 - 7.2.2. Early help
Providing support as soon as a problem emerges for both the victim and the perpetrator. See Chapter 1 of the government publication [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
 - 7.2.3. Referral to children's social care
Referring a young person who has been harmed or is at risk of harm or immediate danger.
 - 7.2.4. Contacting the police
Reporting a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault.

7.3. Students reporting sexual harassment or sexual violence by a student

- 7.3.1. If you are a student who has experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence by a fellow student, the complaint will be dealt with by the college and a risk and needs assessment for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator may be carried out.
- 7.3.2. This assessment should be regularly reviewed, especially after any police involvement or social care referral.
- 7.3.3. You can talk to, phone or email one of the following who will listen to you. You do not have to do anything else:
- The Safeguarding Manager
 - Wellbeing Advisor
 - Your Study Programme Tutor
 - A trusted member of staff

7.4. Students reporting sexual harassment or sexual violence by a college staff member

- 7.4.1. If you are a student who has experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence by a college staff member, the complaint will be dealt with by the college.
- 7.4.2. If the complaint is about a teacher, you will not be taught by them during the investigation.

7.5. If you are a student and have been accused of sexual harassment or sexual violence

- 7.5.1. If you've been accused of sexual harassment or sexual violence, the Wellbeing team will support you throughout the process.

8. Reporting to the police

- 8.1. Sexual harassment, assault and rape are serious criminal offences. You can choose to report them to the police, who have the authority and resources to investigate.
- 8.2. You can report an offence at any time, including many years after the event.
- 8.3. If you report a matter to the police, you can still report it to the college. The college can take precautionary action whilst the police investigate. This will prevent the other person from having any contact with you.

9. College sources of support

- 9.1. All members of college, staff and students can seek advice from:
- The Safeguarding Managers
 - The Wellbeing team
- 9.2. **Members of staff** should do one of the following:
- 9.2.1. Phone the Safeguarding Manager using the emergency number on the back of their lanyard.
- 9.2.2. Email the Safeguarding Manager and/or Wellbeing team for support and advice.
- 9.2.3. Record what they have been told on ProMonitor under 'Confidential Comments'.
- 9.3. **Students** can also seek advice from:
- Their Study Programme Tutor
 - A teacher or trusted member of college staff
- 9.4. If you have witnessed sexual harassment or violence, please report the incident as per the advice above.
- 9.5. For 24 hour emergency support, please see the College Safeguarding page for advice: <https://www.escg.ac.uk/support/safeguarding/>
- 9.6. The Wellbeing team is available whether or not you decide to report the sexual harassment

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or violence formally and can provide emotional support if you have been sexually harassed or assaulted.

- 9.7. There are several external agencies who are also able to offer support. The Wellbeing team will discuss the most appropriate referral with the young person.
- 9.8. The college has a responsibility to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator as well as any other people who were involved and/or impacted by the incident.