

# Protocol for when a student discloses that they are a victim of harassment, abuse or sexual misconduct

Student Services Incident Protocols

## Document Control

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For full details of the document approval route and version control, see final page.

## Introduction

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Any member of colleagues may receive a disclosure from a student that they are a victim/survivor of harassment, abuse, or sexual misconduct. This includes but is not limited to:

- Racial harassment
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual Assault
- Domestic Abuse

A student may have found it extremely difficult to disclose this, so it is important to respond appropriately and familiarise yourself with how to make a referral to specialist advice and support.

The university's response to harassment and sexual misconduct is managed under 'Support. Report. Respect.' (SRR). Information about SRR can be found on [dedicated webpages](#), which also contain links to submit disclosures, and information about the support available to students both within the university and externally.

A disclosure refers to a victim/survivor informing someone that an incident(s) has happened. A report refers to a formal report made to the university, Police, or other governing body. Submitting a form to the Support Report Respect team is a disclosure and does not automatically instigate a formal report.

When submitting a disclosure, it is important that the victim/survivor does not include the name of the perpetrator. This information could require escalation without the consent of the victim/survivor as part of our duty of care or safeguarding responsibilities.

## What should you do if you are made aware of an incident of harassment, abuse, or sexual misconduct?

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A disclosure can present itself in several ways. It could be a conversation the student has been working up to, it could be a passing comment, or it could come out as a result of students accessing some other type of support, or process, such as mitigation, or withdrawal. In every case, there are three stages in your response:

1. Providing an initial response to a disclosure.
2. Making a referral.
3. Recording the disclosure if you don't have student consent.

Details of these three steps are provided below:

### 1. Providing an initial response to a disclosure

We encourage all colleagues to make referrals to [Support Report Respect form](#) instead of taking disclosures themselves. This ensures the student will receive the support they need, and the university is handling information appropriately. If you are in a situation where you receive a disclosure from a student, there is some guidance available on the [Support Report Respect](#) webpages. You can also book onto training about receiving disclosures via People Development site. This training is aimed specifically at colleagues who regularly support students on a 1:1 basis. Any questions or non-urgent concerns can be sent to [studentsupportreport@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:studentsupportreport@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

## 2. Making a Referral

If you have the student's consent to refer them to specialist support through Support Report Respect, there are several ways that you can do this:

- Via the online [Contact an Adviser](#) form, that you can complete on behalf of the student.
- During office hours, call the Student Services **Report a Concern Line** on **0113 812 6666**. Student Advice will take the call and will triage appropriately. Office hours are Monday-Thursday 9am-5pm and Friday 9am-4.30pm.
- Outside of office hours, the **Report a Concern Line** diverts to LBU Security Services, or you can contact them directly on **ext. 4444 or 0113 812 3165**. Security Services will advise on any immediate actions required and will liaise with other parties, such as the Police, where appropriate. Any out of hours incidents managed by Security Services are communicated to Student Services for follow-up during the next working day.

Online disclosures will be responded to within 1 working day.

**Please note that Support Report Respect are not a crisis service. If you suspect immediate threat to life, you should contact emergency services before making a referral to Support Report Respect. More information about urgent and out of hours support can be found online:**

<https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/student-information/student-wellbeing/get-urgent-support/>

Making a referral via one of the above methods will record the disclosure so there is no further action required (unless advised by the Support Report Respect team).

## 3. Recording the disclosure if you don't have student consent

If you do not have the consent of the student to make a referral or they are not ready to do this yet, you should complete the anonymous disclosure form. This helps the university understand the prevalence of issues within our community and we can use this to inform our strategies to reduce and prevent these behaviours in our student population.

## What happens next?

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If you have made a referral to Support Report Respect via one of the above methods, the student will be contacted and offered initial advice, with further opportunities to discuss options for reporting the incident and accessing further, professional support if needed.

On taking an initial disclosure, it can be difficult if a student does not want to share their experience further or does not want you to make a referral to Support Report Respect. Students can sometimes find it difficult to understand what kind of support is appropriate for you to provide, and therefore offering this in a bounded way is essential for both you and the student. In this situation, there are several things to remember:

- **You have provided support by listening to their disclosure.**  
You shouldn't feel guilty about not being able to do more.

- **Maintain your boundaries.**  
 Remind students that your time is not unlimited.  
*“I have 10mins to chat now” or “I don’t have time right now, but I can talk on [day] at [time]”*  
 This is a gentle reminder that your emotional energy is not on tap. It’s only fair they consider who they’re talking to and when.
- **Remind students about referral options.**  
 Telling students that there is always an option to refer them to specialist support can be another gentle reminder that they might be asking too much of you.
- **Reaffirm your role and how you can support them.**  
 There may be things surrounding their experience that you can help them with (mitigation, workload, etc.). Focus on practical support where you can.
- **Be cautious with how you invite them to communicate with you.**  
 Telling a student that they can “chat to you whenever” can send a confusing message about how much support you can give, and what support is appropriate for you to provide.

## Support for colleagues

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If you have concerns about a situation and are not sure how to proceed or manage it, you can contact the Support Report Respect team for advice. You do not have to provide the details of the student at this stage but in the event a safety or safeguarding concern is identified, you have a duty of care to disclose the required details without the student’s consent. The Support Report Respect team will make this decision for you.

Responding to a student incident can be challenging and we encourage all colleagues to make their line manager aware of such circumstances to ensure they have support.

For more detailed guidance on handling a disclosure of harassment and sexual misconduct, colleagues can book onto the [‘Support. Report. Respect. Training for Colleagues’](#). This is a 1-hour session that is run on a regular basis.

Colleagues can also access free and confidential support from *Spectrum*, the Employee Assistance Programme, on **0800 196 2016**. See our Employee Assistance Programme pages [here](#).

## Protocol Guidance

Organisation	Leeds Beckett University
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