



University of Essex



Tackling Misogyny, Harassment, Sexism, and Sexual Violence Against Women

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Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Policy Statement on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	5
Academic Freedom, Freedom of Speech within the Law and Inclusion	6
Scope	6
Intersectionality	7
Definitions	8
Misogyny	8
Sexual Harassment and Sex-Based Harassment	12
Sexual Violence against Women	14
Domestic Abuse	14
Roles and responsibilities	15
Manager/heads of department	15
All employees and students	15
What you should do if you experience or witness misogyny, harassment, or sexism	16
Report and Support System	16
If you are a student at the University	16
If you are an employee at the University	18
Reporting serious assault or sexual violence	19
Alleged perpetrator(s) – students	19

Alleged perpetrator(s) – employees	19
Alleged perpetrator(s) – workers and contractors	20
Confidentiality	20
Advice and support	20
<hr/>	
Emergency and Security Services	20
Help and support services	21
External help and support services	23

Introduction

1. The aim of this policy is to outline the University's approach to misogyny, harassment, sexism, and sexual violence against women, provide definitions and examples of these, explain the process of reporting examples or experiences of misogyny, and make clear the action that will be taken should any member of our community witness or experience this at the University.
2. It also serves to foster a university culture where individuals feel safe and empowered to speak up when they experience or witness examples of misogyny, harassment, sexism, or sexual violence against women, and where everyone plays their part in eradicating these behaviours at the University.
3. Our University is committed to addressing under-representation where it exists, celebrating the diversity of our students and employees, nurturing communities of belonging in which all are accepted without exception, and promoting inclusion, well-being, resilience and empowerment to enable everyone to reach their full potential.
4. This policy underpins this commitment, and our determination to confront and eradicate violence, harassment and assault in all its forms, including misogyny, harassment and violence against women, and those assaults or violence motivated by those with a bias or hatred towards any of the protected characteristics listed within the Equality Act 2010 (see our policy statement below for information).
5. The University expects all campus communities, employees, workers, contractors, students, invitees and visitors to be treated, and to treat others, with dignity and respect.
6. This policy is relevant to all employees, workers, contractors, students, invitees and visitors and is a means to ensure that every member of our community is aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Policy Statement on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

7. We are committed to meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (EA), which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment¹, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief², sex, and sexual orientation. The University will always act lawfully and have due regard for the need to foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not and this may include taking action to support people with particular protected characteristics.
8. We have a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment and bullying.
9. **Zero tolerance** means that (i) we will take action and (ii) the action will be proportionate to the circumstances of the case. Our zero-tolerance approach means that any demonstrated incidents of harassment or bullying will be regarded seriously and responded to proportionately, which could include disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. For more information, see our Zero Tolerance Approach to Harassment and Bullying.
10. **Discrimination** means treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic (i.e. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation).
11. **Harassment** means unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that (i) violates someone's dignity, or (ii) creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, where in the circumstances it is reasonable for the conduct to be viewed as having that effect.
12. **Bullying** means unwanted behaviour from a person or group that is either (i) offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting; or (ii) an abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates or causes physical or emotional harm to someone. In determining whether behaviours amount to bullying, the University will take into account its duties to secure freedom of speech and academic freedom.

¹ This extends to all gender identities including transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming.

² This includes all protected beliefs such as gender critical beliefs.

Academic Freedom, Freedom of Speech within the Law and Inclusion

13. Our Code of Practice: Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech affirms our commitment to securing and promoting academic freedom, freedom of speech within Higher Education and inclusion within the law and our founding charter also enshrines academic freedom within the law. The management of complaints or concerns about academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law in relation to action taken or not taken by the University is explained in the University's Freedom of Speech Complaints Policy (.pdf).
14. In applying this policy, the University shall place significant weight on the importance of, and work to secure freedom of speech within the law, academic freedom and tolerance for controversial views in an educational and research context and environment.
15. This Policy Statement shall be interpreted and applied in a manner compatible with the Code of Practice: Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech. In particular, no member of staff will be subject to disciplinary action as a consequence of exercising their right to freedom of speech or academic freedom within the law.

Scope

16. This policy applies to all students and employees of the University, (academic and professional), inclusive of those on all types of employment contracts as well as those with contracts for services. It applies whether employees are working on our campuses or working from home. The University has developed this policy following focus groups and including consultation with academic and professional services employees, Student Union representatives, staff networks, and trade unions and external experts. Employees at all grade levels and in all job roles should be treated in an equitable and consistent way.
17. This policy should be read in conjunction with our other policies and guidance, including:
 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
 - Our Zero Tolerance Approach to Harassment and Bullying
 - Menopause Guidance

- [Flexible Working Policy](#)
- [Domestic Abuse Policy \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Non-disclosure Agreements](#)
- [Personal Relationship Policy](#)
- [Policy on Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk](#)
- [Data Protection Policy \(.pdf\)](#)

18. This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or contract to provide services, and we may amend it at any time.

Intersectionality

19. Misogyny, harassment, sexism, and sexual violence against women can take place in ways that relate to a number of protected characteristics, and it is important to be aware of the impact of intersectionality (the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination) when such experiences affect individuals. As an example, at the University we recognise that some employees and students may be subjected to misogyny, harassment, sexism, sexual violence or domestic abuse in a way that links to their pregnancy, race/ethnicity, disability, age, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, philosophical beliefs, or faith. Our work on tackling misogyny, harassment, sexism, and sexual violence against women will continue to recognise these differences and to consider what tailored support can be provided for each case.
20. The Equality Act 2010 states that when referring to sex this means biological sex e.g. sex assigned at birth. We acknowledge that transgender women and non-binary individuals who may be perceived by others as women can experience misogyny
21. Intersectionality and people's individual identities also have an impact on their access to support. With this in mind, we will ensure that messages about misogyny, harassment, sexism, and sexual violence against women, and the support available from the University, are available in multiple languages and formats on request, including Easy to Read, British Sign Language and braille.
22. Anybody can experience discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence, where these are experienced but do not fall within the remit of this policy, employees and students should refer to other policies including the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and our Zero Tolerance Approach to Bullying and Harassment. Further advice can also be sought by reporting an incident through our Report and Support online system.

Definitions

Misogyny

23. Misogyny is defined as the conscious or unconscious feelings of hatred towards, aversion to, contempt for, or prejudice against women or girls. It can also refer to social systems, structures or environments where women face barriers, hostility, sexism, discrimination and hatred because they're women³ in a world created by and for men which keeps women at a lower social status than men.
24. Women face a combination of discrimination, harassment, and structural barriers at work and during study. Women are also likely to experience barriers to progression created by recruitment and promotion processes, conflict between external responsibilities (including caring roles) and current models of working, and hostile and isolating organisational cultures, including issues of sexual harassment and stereotyping.
25. Misogyny can be experienced by women in different ways for example women who do not conform to dress code and appearance stereotypes can suffer more from certain forms of misogyny than women who dress in what is perceived to be a more stereotypical feminine way who may, for example, experience more sexualised comments.
26. Misogyny can manifest differently in comments about or in actions towards individual women based on stereotypes, workplace behaviours that favour approaches more likely to be adopted by men, or policies, processes and working practices that make it more difficult for women to succeed or progress.
27. Whilst historically more likely to occur face-to-face, in our dispersed and often virtual hybrid world, it is important to recognise and be alert (in ourselves and others) to the fact that misogyny can occur as easily in remote and virtual environments.
28. Misogyny on some level is deeply engrained in society through stereotyping and is therefore not the exclusive domain of men and may be a secondary expression not deriving directly from a position of hostility or dislike. It is important that we recognise, while abhorrent in its most extreme form, it can be nuanced, institutionalised, and pervasive and have far reaching impact in its less obvious forms.

³ or perceived to be women

29. We have included examples of misogynistic behaviours, practices, and comments below, to help increase awareness and to empower people to support others or to speak up, and to create positive change:
30. **Silencing or belittling** through sexism, ignoring women, or appropriating their contributions creates an intimidating/oppressive atmosphere for those confronted with them. Those experiencing misogyny may develop higher anxiety levels, be more prone to feelings of resentment and depression, and it can mean that ideas or talents are ignored or under-used. It is important to allow an equal voice in meetings and lectures, and to not allow bias or more vocal contributors to drown out the inputs of others.
31. **Sexist jokes and ‘banter’** or insults masquerading as jokes can intimidate and silence people and they trivialise sexist behaviour. It may seem like a joke or even a compliment to those who have never experienced it, but this does not mitigate the experience which can be felt to be undermining, humiliating, and unsettling. Some may think of sexist jokes as funny, not realising others may be offended, while others intentionally use sexual jokes as a means of intimidating women.
32. **Devaluing women’s views or voices.** This includes men interrupting or talking over women, men over-explaining things as if women have no knowledge of the issue (‘mansplaining’), and women feeling as if their views are not heard or supported until re-stated by a man.
33. **Expressions**, like ‘running like a girl’, ‘man up’, or ‘boys will be boys’, perpetuate gender stereotypes. Other examples include referring to women as ‘emotional’ (or ‘cold’ if they are not emotional) or referring to the menopause or menstruation in a derogatory way (‘must be the time of the month’ or ‘she’s going through the change’).
34. **Examples of sexism in language and communications.** Language and communication matter, because they make people visible or invisible and recognise or demean their contribution to society. Our language shapes our thought, and the way we think influences our actions. Gendered or discriminatory language reinforces sexist attitudes and behaviour and limits equality and progress. Examples of gendered or discriminatory language and communications include the generic use of the masculine gender by a speaker (‘he/his/him’ to refer to an unspecified person); the cover of a publication depicting men only; the use of ‘masculine’ language in a job advertisement (‘strong’, ‘competitive’, ‘confident’); the naming of a woman by the masculine term for her profession (‘chairman’); in a training course using only or mainly images depicting a man showing a woman how to use equipment/technology.
35. **Role stereotyping.** This includes making assumptions about suitability for roles and tasks based on assumptions about sex. For example, women at meetings being expected to organise and bring refreshments to meetings and take minutes when those tasks are not in their job description. This can happen even when women are in equal or more senior positions to the men in attendance. This can also influence the tasks that men and women

are allocated or volunteer for, for example, typically women are more likely to undertake pastoral and caring roles within a workplace.

36. **Preoccupation with physical appearance.** This includes comments made about body shape, size, physical characteristics, or dress over skill and competence. For example, *“I couldn’t take her seriously in that presentation — did you see what she was wearing?”*
37. **Ascribing different value judgements** to the same behaviours by men and women. For example, such as criticising women for behaviours that are seen as positive leadership behaviours for men, such as being focused or competitive. Women may also feel unable to complain about being treated unprofessionally or expressing their emotions at work for fear of being accused of being oversensitive or hysterical.
38. **Microaggressions relating to person’s sex** can be intentional or unintentional comments or actions directed against a person that signal disrespect and inequality. Some microaggressions will result in silencing women, making women question their abilities and themselves, and reducing a women’s own self-worth. Examples include making assumptions about seniority (assuming they are the PA rather than the boss), invading personal space or inappropriate touching, calling them *“love”*, *“darling”* or *“sweetheart”*, interrupting or talking over them.
39. **Benevolent Sexism** is attitudes, practices and actions that seem positive – such as aid, flattery, and rewards – but that undercut their goal of supporting women at work, often under the pretence of providing them with help, protection, compliments, and affection. These actions can promote the idea that women should be taken care of, and men should be the providers. In a work context, this could be that women are left out of late work meetings under the assumption they’d rather be taking care of their family and wouldn’t want to go. Even though the general attitude is not one that is demeaning, and it may even come from a place of ‘care’, it undermines the fact that women should be treated equally.
40. **Internalised Misogyny** is when women subconsciously project misogynist views onto other women and even onto themselves. Misogyny therefore doesn’t always refer to or come from a belief in the inferiority of women. It is a symptom of the societal stereotypes, views and abstract standards that cause women to doubt, shame, and undervalue themselves and others because they are women, including from an early age. These standards normally show how women may be expected to behave and react, and often portray women as emotional, manipulative, weak, or unintelligent. Some women unconsciously project those ideas onto other women, and even themselves, which can further minimise the value of women. For example, treating the commenting positively that *“I’m not like other women”* or focusing on the appearance of other women but not men.
41. **Intersectionality and Misogyny** can occur as some women may face specific behaviours or be the target of specific stereotypes and microaggressions when they have intersecting identities and characteristics. It is not just that some women may face more sexist or

misogynistic behaviour, but that assumptions will be made because of their gender and race, age, culture, sexuality, etc. For example, the 'Angry Black Woman' stereotype that often characterises all Black women as hostile and aggressive, or assumptions about all Asian women being submissive and passive. These forms of misogyny can have far reaching implications for women with intersecting identities professionally and personally and are tied in with other forms and types of misogyny mentioned so far.

42. **Structural Misogyny** occurs when institutional systems are designed in a way that assumes a typically masculine approach, and as a result exclude or discriminate against women. There are a range of influences based on assumptions about a person's sex within a workplace, including norms, beliefs, rewards, inequalities, and experiences. This can lead to 'punishments' for women based on their low status, including sexual harassment or being excluded from discussions, particularly when these take place outside formal meetings structures, including pre-meets.
43. Influences based on assumptions about a person's sex can lead women to reach a different cost-benefit evaluation to men in particular situations, influencing the behaviour of women in the workplace. For example, research has shown that risk taking, which is a norm of masculinity, is seen as more important for men than for women. This means that men taking risks may often reap greater reputational benefits or smaller costs; women in counter-stereotypical leadership roles are judged more harshly than men when risky decisions do not work out. Other examples of how gendered norms influence organisational behaviour include:
- **Recruitment** – women apply for 20% fewer jobs than men and are more hesitant to ask for a referral from someone they know at the organisation. In order to apply for a job women feel they need to meet 100% of the criteria, while men usually apply after meeting about 60%. Women are therefore less likely to apply for jobs where the job description has a smaller number of essential criteria and competencies and performance objectives.
 - **Salary negotiations** – the stronger expectation of women to 'be nice' compared to men, means that women are more likely to encounter backlash from others when they violate the niceness norm in a workplace setting. This is one reason why women are less likely to bargain for a higher salary when accepting a job and, where they do, the financial pay off from that negotiation is likely to be less.
 - **Listening and being listened to** – in work situations such as meetings on a mixed table, men typically take up 75% of the conversation compared to 25% for women. Women more often speak for shorter periods of time at meetings, preferring conversations rather a series of statements, so may need to be called on more frequently than men to contribute equally. Time inequality can also be reduced if decisions are made by a unanimous rather than a majority vote, particularly if women are outnumbered by men.
 - **Informal working relationships** – Women may prefer different ways of developing working relationships, for example, preferring to meet over coffee rather than after-work

drinks. They may also prefer not to or find it more difficult to attend informal networking events that take place outside working hours, which can allow men to build networks that progress their careers more effectively.

- **Self-assessments of performance** – Research shows that women often systematically underplay their contribution, performance and ability, while men are more likely to overestimate their achievements and potential. This can lead to bias in institutional processes which ask employees to comment on their successes, feedback on their own performance or describe the role they have played in a team.

44. **Gaslighting** is a manipulative tactic in which a person denies that harm another individual is experiencing is genuinely happening to them, in order to gain power and control over that individual, . It is an attempt to cause the person to doubt their statement by either sidestepping the evidence or displacing it and suggesting that the fault lies with the 'gaslit' person or that they are imagining it. Gaslighting is not to be confused with reasonable disagreement on what has happened.
45. Understanding and recognising misogyny, and the social and institutional structures based on masculine assumptions, is hugely important so that we can create a more equitable environment where conscious, implicit or unconscious bias is interrupted and minimised, and where individuals feel able to speak out against misogyny and feel safe and respected.

Sexual Harassment and Sex-Based Harassment

46. Sexual harassment and sex-based harassment are illegal under the Equality Act 2010.
- Sexual harassment is: (i) unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of either violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person; or (ii) less favourable treatment as a result of the submission to or rejection of harassment, and can apply in relation to teaching, learning, working or social situations.
 - Sex-based harassment is unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of either violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person on the basis of their sex. It is important to note that this is disproportionately experienced by women. It refers to harassment that is related to a person's sex but does not necessarily involve sexual behaviour
47. Within the context of Academic Freedom, harassment does not include:

- Critically examining, debating, or researching issues around sex or gender identity, as long as it is done respectfully and does not harass individuals.

48. The following are some examples of activities that might constitute sexual harassment referred to in our Zero Tolerance approach:

- unnecessary and unwelcome physical contact
- suggestive and unwelcome comments or gestures
- persistent unwelcome requests for social or sexual encounters and favours
- display, or electronic transmission, of pornographic, degrading or indecent images or threatening, abusive or unwanted comments of a sexual nature, and
- non-consensual sharing of sexually explicit media
- explicit or implicit promises for compliance that are a misuse of an institutional position (e.g. promises of higher assessment marks for a student or a recommendation for promotion for an employee), and/or
- explicit or implicit threats of penalties for non-compliance that are a misuse of an institutional position (e.g. refusal to provide appropriate support/advice or resources).

49. Our Zero Tolerance Approach to Harassment and Bullying outlines the following approach to all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment:

50. When deciding whether any unwanted conduct amounts to sexual harassment for the purposes of this policy, the University will consider the perception of the person raising the concern, the other circumstances of the matter and whether it is reasonable for the conduct to be considered to have the purpose or effect described. Sexual harassment can be in verbal, written or physical form and can cause stress, anxiety, fear or sickness to the individual being harassed.

51. Differences of attitude, background or culture and the misinterpretation of social signals can mean that what is perceived as harassment by one person may not seem so to another. However, this does not make it acceptable.

52. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be accepted as an excuse for sexual harassment.

53. Although any of the examples of misogynistic behaviours could potentially be examples of sex-based harassment in certain circumstances, the following are specific examples of activities that might constitute sex-based harassment.

a. A manager makes a comment that there is no point promoting women because they go off to have children, which a female colleague finds insulting.

- b. A university lecturer offers to put on extra teaching sessions for students who are struggling. They then invite predominantly female students without evidence that they are struggling as they believe that women are 'more likely to find it difficult', which female students find degrading, humiliating and offensive.
- c. Sexist jokes/banter.
- d. Assigning work tasks based on a person's sex.

Sexual Violence against Women

54. Sexual violence is any kind of sexual activity or act (including online) that was unwanted or involved one or more of the following: pressure, manipulation, bullying, intimidation, threats, deception or force. This covers, any kind of sexual activity or act that took place without consent. There are many different types of sexual violence:

- physical unwanted sexual advances
- assault
- rape
- intimidation, or promising resources or benefits in return for sexual favours
- voyeurism, and/or
- distributing private and personal explicit images or video footage of an individual without their consent. This is also known as revenge porn

Domestic Abuse

55. Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between two individuals aged 16 or over who are personally connected to each other. This could, for example, include people who are (or who have been) intimate partners or family members, regardless of sex, gender or sexuality.
56. Women and children are at a higher risk of experiencing domestic abuse and violence than men, and some intersecting identities can increase this risk further. Further information on domestic abuse and how we provide support can be found in our [Domestic Abuse Policy \(.pdf\)](#).

Roles and responsibilities

Manager/heads of department

57. Managers have an important role in ensuring the wellbeing of employees who have experienced misogyny, sexism, harassment or sexual violence, as do any employees who engage with students. They should ensure that matters are followed up and refer those who have either experienced or witnessed any of the above to the relevant support. Managers also have a responsibility to be aware of and encourage their teams to be aware of expected standards and the impact of negative behaviours. All employees are responsible for completing their own essential training, which sets out the expected standards at the University, and managers are responsible for overseeing essential training completion rates for their team.
58. Managers can seek advice from the Employee Relations Team in People & Culture on hremployeerelations@essex.ac.uk. Employees concerned about students can contact the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Team.

All employees and students

59. We all have responsibility for our own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. Any employees or students who experience or witness misogyny, sexism, harassment or violence against women are strongly encouraged to report this.
60. Please see the section on how to report incidents, beginning on page 7.
61. In some circumstances, cases of serious or repeated misogynist behaviour can constitute a safeguarding concern, where they involve a person under the age of 18 or an adult at risk. If you are not sure whether a series of incidents constitutes a safeguarding concern, contact a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or the Safeguarding Team.

What you should do if you experience or witness misogyny, harassment, or sexism

Report and Support System

62. Any employee, worker, contractor, student, invitee or visitor to any of our campuses who experiences or observes misogyny or experiences or observes any inappropriate behaviour is encouraged to report it through our Report and Support system. Incidents that can be reported via the system include microaggressions and more serious incidents of bullying, harassment, sexism, and sexual violence.
63. The Report and Support system allows you to make a report and ask for contact from a Harassment Support Worker or to make an anonymous report.
64. Harassment Support Workers undergo specialist training and can help signpost you to appropriate services and channels. Whether you are reporting an incident involving an employee, worker, contractor, student, invitee or visitor, Harassment Support Workers can guide you through informal and formal reporting processes and can also help you get the support and advice that you need. Visit the [Report and Support system](#) online for more details.
65. Where reports are made anonymously, the University is less likely to be able to take any action. This may be because we have not been given details about the alleged perpetrator or victim and survivor or because we do not have sufficient information to investigate fully.
66. You can report an incident through Report and Support at any time during or after an incident or series of incidents occur. You can use the system alongside informal or formal discussions with other individuals if you wish.

If you are a student at the University

Informal resolution

67. If you experience or witness misogyny, harassment, or sexism, it may be appropriate in the first instance to speak with the individual concerned and let them know that their behaviour is not acceptable. This should only be done if you feel comfortable and safe to do so. Informing a person that their behaviour is not OK and of the impact their behaviour is having may mean

that this issue can be resolved quickly and at an informal level. This does not prevent you from reporting the incident/s through the Report and Support system, either at the time or if an informal resolution is not satisfactory. You should keep a written record of the incident/s.

68. There may be occasions where it is not appropriate for those who witness or experience incidents to speak to the alleged perpetrator directly, and on such occasions the matter should be raised with your personal tutor, Head of Department, a Harassment Support Worker, or other appropriate employee, who will take appropriate action.
69. You should try to provide specific examples of what you have experienced or witnessed so that the unacceptable behaviour is made clear.
70. In cases where the alleged perpetrator is an employee or if there is any other imbalance of power, it is recommended that you use the Report and Support system from the beginning. Going through Report and Support does not itself mean a matter is escalated in a formal manner, but that there is a trained employee who can support you through whatever type of resolution you wish to seek.

Formal complaints

71. Where an informal approach to dealing with misogyny, harassment or sexism has not been successful, or where the matter is sufficiently serious that informal approaches are not appropriate, you should make a formal complaint.
72. If you would like to make a complaint about another student, it comes under the [Code of Student Conduct \(.pdf\)](#) and can be made through the Student Progress team.
73. If you would like to make a complaint about an employee at the University, it should be made through the [Student Concerns and Complaints Procedure \(.pdf\)](#), which is also handled by the Student Progress team.
74. Where a complaint of misogyny, harassment or sexism received via the Student Concerns and Complaints Procedure involves the conduct of an employee, People & Culture will advise on process and any investigation.
75. There are some limitations on the action that the University can take in the instance of a complaint made against a contractor, invitee, or visitor external to the University. Advisers assigned through Report and Support can guide you on the best course of action.

If you are an employee at the University

Informal resolution

76. If you experience or witness an act of misogyny, harassment, or sexism, it may be appropriate to speak to the individual(s) involved first and let them know that their behaviour is not acceptable. This should only be done if you feel safe and comfortable doing so.
77. When seeking to resolve an issue informally, you should try to keep a written record of the incident and communicate in writing with the alleged perpetrator.
78. There may be occasions where it is not appropriate for those who witness or experience incidents to speak to the alleged perpetrator directly, or they may not feel comfortable doing so, and on such occasions the matter should be raised with your line manager, Head of Department, a Harassment Support Worker, or other appropriate employee.
79. You should try to provide specific examples of what you have experienced or witnessed so that the unacceptable behaviour is made clear.

Formal complaint

80. Where an informal approach to dealing with misogyny, harassment or sexism has not been successful or where the matter is sufficiently serious that informal approaches are not appropriate, you should make a formal complaint.
81. Employees can make formal complaints against both students and other employees at the University via the [University's Harassment or Bullying procedure](#) (.pdf).
82. Where a complaint of misogyny, harassment or sexism is received via the Harassment or Bullying Procedure and involves the conduct of a student, People & Culture will either try, where considered appropriate, to resolve the complaint informally through the relevant Head of Department or pass it on to the Student Progress Team to deal with, depending on the nature of the complaint.
83. Where a complaint of misogyny, harassment or sexism is made involving the conduct of another employee, the complaint will be handled by People & Culture.
84. There are some limitations on the action that the University can take in the instance of a complaint made against a contractor, invitee, or visitor external to the University. Advisers assigned to your case through Report and Support can guide you on the best course of action.

Reporting serious assault or sexual violence

85. If you experience serious assault or sexual violence and are in danger, or you witness a serious assault or sexual violence and the person involved is in danger, it is particularly important that you seek help immediately. **If you or another person is in immediate danger, and depending on the nature of the incident, you should call 999 as soon as possible.** In other circumstances, you should report the incident to the University in the first instance. The University's conduct procedures are not intended to replace criminal proceedings and if an allegation is made which may constitute an offence under criminal law, you may decide to take the matter forward with the police. Although the decision whether to report the matter to the police will be the victim's, please note that there may be a need for the University to contact the police where there is an imminent threat to life or risk of harm.
86. Where there has been a report to the police, and the University has initiated an investigation, it will be kept under regular review and may be suspended if there is a clear reason for doing so.
87. If you are on Colchester campus, you should contact the Security and Safety Centre on Square 3, either in person or by **calling extension 2222 or 01206 872222**. If you are on Southend Campus, you should contact University Square Reception either in person or by **calling 01702 328208**. If you are on Loughton Campus, you should call reception during office hours on **extension 5983 or 020 8508 5983** or security from 5pm to midnight (Monday to Saturday) on **07825 670709**). The University can advise you on reporting to the Police and can also send Patrol Officers to the site of the incident.
88. If you have been the victim of, or witnessed, an assault or sexual violence, the Harassment Report and Support Service can also offer guidance and direct you to various internal and external support agencies.
89. Any information you provide to us about your health will be processed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

Alleged perpetrator(s) – students

90. Allegations received against students (including allegations of a criminal offence) will be dealt with under procedures set out in Code of Student Conduct.

Alleged perpetrator(s) – employees

91. Allegations against employees will be investigated under the University's Disciplinary Procedure.

Alleged perpetrator(s) – workers and contractors

92. Allegations made against agency workers and contractors provided via an employment agency will be dealt with under the rules and disciplinary procedures of the agency. Self-employed contractors may have their contracts terminated in the event of a finding of misconduct.

Confidentiality

93. Strict confidentiality will be adhered to, and the consent of the individuals involved will be sought when disclosure of information relating to misogyny, harassment, sexism, or sexual violence against women has been made. There may, however, be situations when disclosure of personal information without consent is deemed necessary in the public interest, for example, where the University has a duty of care to address concerns relating to the safety of students and/or employees or where there are safeguarding or vital interests concerns. In such cases, this will be communicated to the individual concerned.
94. There may also be occasions where it is appropriate for a matter to be escalated internally or to an external agency where there are concerns about the safety of the individual or others connected to them, or there may be a need to contact the police where there is an imminent threat to life or risk of harm.

Advice and support

Emergency and Security Services

Service	Contact details
Emergency Services	999
NHS Emergency Line	111
University Medical Practice	Phone: 01206 794484 Email: hcentre@essex.ac.uk
Campus Security – Colchester	Phone: 2222
Campus Security – Loughton	Phone: 5983
Campus Security - Southend	Phone: 01702 328400 or 07872 7988085

Service	Contact details
Safeguarding Team	Phone: 01206 872984 Email: safeguard@essex.ac.uk
Security	Phone: 2125/3148 Email: patrol@essex.ac.uk
Colchester Police Station	Phone: 01206 762212
Loughton Police Station	Phone: 01279 641212
Essex Police	Phone: 01245 491491
Police – non-emergency	Phone: 101

Help and support services

Service	What they do	Contact details
Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service (SWIS)	SWIS provides support to students to ensure that they can achieve their full potential. SWIS can signpost students to the support available for mental and emotional health, disability support, academic concerns, financial worries, and accommodation issues.	Phone: 01206 873133 Email: wellbeing@essex.ac.uk
Report and Support	An online system that allows employees and students to all forms of bullying, harassment, abuse, and violence. Reports can be made anonymously or can be assigned to a trained Harassment Support Worker, who will help the reporter get the support they need and help escalate the issue if the reporter wishes to.	<u>Website and online form</u> Employees: Email: harass@essex.ac.uk Students: Email: wellbeing@essex.ac.uk

Service	What they do	Contact details
Student Services Hub	A place for students to get advice, information, and support related to all aspects of university life. The Student Services Hub can signpost students to services and procedures related to health, wellbeing, and access.	Phone: 01206 874000 (for all campuses) Live chat Ask the Hub online enquiry form Email: askthehub@essex.ac.uk
Students' Union Advice Centre	Students can get free, confidential, and impartial advice related to a range of topics from the Students' Union, including but not limited to harassment, hate incidents, and complaints about the university.	Located in SQ3 on Colchester Campus Phone: 01206 863211 Email: su@essex.ac.uk
Student Progress Team	The Student Progress team handles complaints made by students about fellow students or employees at the University of Essex.	Email: studentprogress@essex.ac.uk
Nightline	Nightline is a confidential listening and emotional support, and information service run by University of Essex students. During term-time, they are available 24 hours of the day.	Phone: 01206 87 2020/2022/4062 Email: nlhelp@essex.ac.uk
Faith Centre	The Faith Centre provides a confidential listening ear, pastoral support, and spiritual support. There is a Faith Centre on each of the campuses.	Phone: 01206 873952 Email: faithcentreadmin@essex.ac.uk

External help and support services

Service	What they do	Contact details
Synergy Essex	Synergy Essex is a partnership of rape and sexual abuse centres in Essex: Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse (CARA), South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC) and Southend-on-Sea Rape Crisis (SOSRC). They have a first contact team who can provide and signpost to support services, and Synergy Essex can also provide advocacy, support, and specialist counselling.	Phone (Helpline): 0300 003 7777
Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse (CARA)	CARA provides independent and specialist advice for victims and survivors of sexual violence and child sexual abuse.	Phone: 01206 769795 Email: info@caraessex.org.uk
South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC)	SERRIC provides support to anyone in the South and West Essex area who has experienced or is experiencing any form of sexual violence or abuse.	Phone (Helpline): 0300 003 7777 Office: 01375381322 E sericc@sericc.org.uk
Southend-on-Sea Rape Crisis (SOSRC)	SOSRC provides support for all victims and survivors of sexual violence and rape. They provide support to anyone who is experiencing sexual violence or has experiences it in the past. They provide services in Southend-on-Sea, Castle Point and Rochford.	Phone (Helpline): 0300 003 7777 Office: 01702 667590 info@sosrc.org.uk
Essex Compass	Essex Compass is a partnership of several domestic	Phone (Helpline): 0330 333 7444

Service	What they do	Contact details
	<p>abuse support agencies including Safe Steps, Changing Pathways and The Next Chapter and provides support for domestic abuse victims and survivors across Southend, Essex, and Thurrock. It is a single point of access for victims and survivors of domestic abuse to get the help and support they need, and the employees are trained to be able to direct people to the appropriate services where needed.</p>	
Safe Steps	<p>Safe Steps provides assistance and support to victims and survivors of domestic abuse in the Southend and wider Essex area.</p>	<p>Southend Phone: 01702 302333</p> <p>Wider Essex (Helpline): 0330 3337444</p>
Changing Pathways	<p>Changing Pathways provides support to victims and survivors of domestic abuse and stalking in Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford, Thurrock, Harlow and Epping Forest.</p>	<p>Phone (Helpline): 0330 333 7444</p> <p>Email: referrals@changingpathways.org</p>
Next Chapter Colchester	<p>Next Chapter Colchester works with victims and survivors of domestic abuse and provides help and support. They are able to signpost to different services and can also provide refuge and accommodation to those who may need it.</p>	<p>Phone (Helpline): 0330 333 7444</p> <p>Office: 01206 500585</p> <p>E info@thenextchapter.org.uk</p>
Oakwood Place - Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Essex	<p>Oakwood Place offers support and advice to victims and survivors of sexual violence</p>	<p>Phone: 01277 240620</p> <p>Email: Essex.sarc@nhs.net</p>

Service	What they do	Contact details
	<p>and/or abuse. They are also able to offer medical assessments and treatments for some cases. An appointment is needed to access their services and can be made through the given phone number or email address and will be set up within 24-48 hours of making contact.</p>	
<p>Colchester/Southend Samaritans</p>	<p>Samaritans is an organisation that provides a listening and support for people, not matter what issue they are facing. Their aim is to reduce the risks that can lead to suicide and provide support for those that are at higher risk of taking their own lives.</p>	<p>Phone: 116 123 (free from any phone, national helpline)</p> <p>Colchester Branch Phone: 0330 094 5717</p> <p>Email: jo@samaritans.org.uk</p>

Document Control Panel

Field	Description
Title	Tackling Misogyny, Harassment, Sexism, and Sexual Violence Against Women
Policy Classification	Policy
Security Classification	Open
Security Rationale	N/A
Policy Manager Role	Director of Inclusion
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