

HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT: COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENT

Purpose and Context

The University of Huddersfield is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all students and staff. This statement provides a comprehensive overview of the policies, arrangements, and resources that enable us to do that.

The University Senior Leadership Team is responsible for approving this statement and ensuring that capacity and resources are available to comply with the Office for Students (OfS) Condition E6 on harassment and sexual misconduct.

This statement includes the key information to enable staff, students and external partners know how the University provides a safe and supportive environment and responds to any incidents of harassment or sexual misconduct. This is published within the [University Policy framework](#) providing a structure for approval and version control. Additionally, the content is accessible via hud.ac.uk/gov/harassment.

University webpages contain further information and guidance to support students and staff, which do not form part of the Comprehensive Statement.

Scope

This condition applies to all students on higher education courses provided by or on behalf of the University of Huddersfield, including those registered with collaborative partners

1.0 Definitions of harassment and sexual misconduct.

1.1 The University references the Equality Act 2010, Section 26 to define harassment. Harassment is unwanted behaviour that is linked to a protected characteristic, such as age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, and that either:

- Violates someone's dignity, or
- Creates an environment that feels intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive.

The behaviour doesn't have to be deliberate. Even if the person didn't mean to cause harm, it can still be harassment if it has that effect and it's reasonable for someone to feel that way. Harassment can happen in many forms—spoken or written words, images, gestures, jokes, or physical actions. It can occur in person, online, by phone, or in writing, and may be a one-off incident or a repeated pattern.

1.2 The University [Community Code of Conduct](#), applicable to staff and students details that "Sexual misconduct which relates to all unwanted conduct of a sexual nature" is a breach of our code and may be subject to disciplinary action.

1.3 The University [Student Sexual Misconduct and Violence Policy](#) defines Sexual Misconduct and Violence "as any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which occurred in person or by

letter, telephone, text, email or other electronic and/or social media” and gives examples of unacceptable behaviours.

- 1.4 The University [Dignity at Work Procedure](#) focuses on staff and aims to provide “a positive working culture and to outline a transparent process to deal effectively with any alleged incidents of discrimination, bullying, harassment, including sexual harassment, or victimisation”. It explains what is meant by these terms. Staff [Disciplinary Rules](#) confirm “You will be expected to treat colleagues, students and visitors with respect and not to misuse your authority.” The procedure also determines harassment as Gross Misconduct.

2.0 Steps to report harassment or sexual misconduct.

- 2.1 The University recognises that there may be barriers to reporting harassment and sexual misconduct and provides several ways to report and raise matters.

2.2 For Students:

- 2.3 **Share and Support:** the University of Huddersfield's online reporting tool provides students, staff and visitors to campus the opportunity to report incidents of hate crimes, bullying, harassment, sexual violence and further anti-social behaviour. The reporting tool also encourages people to report incidents they have witnessed. ([Share and Support](#))
- 2.4 **Students' Union Advice Centre (SUAC):** Independent of the University they provide advice, guidance and support to help students understand University policy and procedures. They also offer a safe and non-judgemental environment to support students to articulate their case confidently and effectively. ([Huddersfield SU Advice Centre](#))
- 2.5 **Student Wellbeing:** have trained staff able to provide initial information, advice and guidance alongside wellbeing support for students who may have experienced harassment or sexual misconduct. (studentwellbeing@hud.ac.uk)
- 2.6 **Student Regulations and Casework:** have trained staff able to support and guide students through the policies and procedures used to handle matters related to harassment or sexual misconduct. (studentconduct@hud.ac.uk)
- 2.7 **For Staff:**
- 2.8 **Share and Support:** the University of Huddersfield's dedicated online reporting tool provides students, staff and visitors to campus the opportunity to report incidents of hate crimes, bullying, harassment, sexual violence and further anti-social behaviour. The reporting tool also encourages people to report incidents they have witnessed. ([Share and Support](#))
- 2.9 **Managers:** All staff are required to complete mandatory training on harassment and sexual misconduct. Managers will take any concern seriously and will support colleagues to choose how they would like to resolve matters.
- 2.10 **Dignity At Work Advisors:** are members of staff from across the University who have volunteered and are trained. They provide a confidential and informal service for anyone involved in cases of bullying or harassment, including those facing allegations about their

behaviour. Advisors can listen, talk through the options available and, if appropriate signpost to other sources of support and advice. [Dignity at Work Advisors](#).

- 2.11 **Human Resources:** professional colleagues in HR will take any concern seriously and will support members of staff to choose how they would like to resolve matters. ([HR Contact Page](#))

2.12 For Third Parties

- 2.13 The University will take seriously any referrals from third parties and will always seek the consent of the alleged victim(s) to determine a course of action.

3.0 Procedures for handling reports and investigations

- 3.1 We have robust procedures for the confidential handling reports, investigations and any disciplinary action that may arise. Key documents include:

3.2 Student Regulations and Policy

- [Section 12: Student Disciplinary Regulation](#)
- [Section 13: Student Complaints Regulation](#)
- [Section 14: Precautionary Measures, Contact Limitations and Criminal Proceedings within University Investigations Regulation](#)
- [Student Sexual Misconduct and Violence Policy](#)

3.3 Staff Policy and Procedures

- [Dignity at Work Procedure](#)
- [Disciplinary Rules](#)
- [Disciplinary Procedure](#)

4.0 Personal relationships between staff and students

- 4.1 The University discourages intimate personal relationships between staff and students. Where these occur, it has a policy in place to manage these. Disclosure of such relationships is mandatory to prevent conflicts of interest and potential abuse of power. ([Policy On Relations Between Staff And Students](#)). This aligns with expectations in the University Disciplinary Code, which states “You will be expected to treat colleagues, students and visitors with respect and not to misuse your authority.”

5.0 Non-Disclosure Agreements

- 5.1 The University does not use Non-Disclosure Agreements or restrict disclosure of information where they relate to allegations about harassment or sexual misconduct.

6.0 Staff training

- 6.1 We ensure that staff responsible for receiving reports, conducting investigations, or making decisions about harassment and sexual misconduct are appropriately trained and supervised. This includes understanding the comprehensive source of information,

recognising behaviours that constitute harassment and sexual misconduct, and supporting students involved in such incidents.

7.0 Student information, training and support

- 7.1 This Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Comprehensive Statement will be communicated to students when they enrol at the start of each year of study and they will be asked to confirm they have read the statement.
- 7.2 All new students are enrolled on an e-learning module considering harassment and sexual misconduct, developed by external experts and tailored with relevant University information.
- 7.3 Students are expected to complete the module within four weeks of enrolling. They are regularly reminded to complete the module which uses a summative quiz to test understanding.
- 7.4 We provide support for students involved in incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct. This includes personal support (e.g. access to wellbeing advisors, counsellors or specialist organisations), academic support (e.g. where an incident or investigation effect studies), and assistance during investigatory and decision-making processes. This is fully detailed in the [Student Sexual Misconduct and Violence Policy](#).

8.0 Freedom of Speech

- 8.1 The University [Freedom of Speech and External Speakers Policy](#) details our commitment to promoting the principles of freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law. The University believes that an attitude of tolerance is essential to enable academic debate of a wide variety of ideas, including some which may be controversial, while having due regard to the welfare of its staff and students.

9.0 Statement Updates

- 9.1 Our policies framework is designed to be current, transparent and easily accessible. All current policies are available at www.hud.ac.uk/policies. Archive versions of the Comprehensive Statement and relevant policies are available from the policy owner.

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REVISION HISTORY			
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