**Supporting students who report sexual harassment or assault**

**Guidelines for staff: What to do if a student tells you they have been sexually harassed or assaulted**.

Edinburgh Napier University will not tolerate gender-based violence, sexual violence or harassment within our community and we are committed to supporting any students who experience sexual violence and will take the appropriate action regarding those who commit it.

Sexual violence takes many forms. In addition to rape and sexual assault, it includes sexual harassment, i.e. any sexualised behaviour that is humiliating, intimidating or hostile and may include actions like derogatory name calling, belittling remarks, insults, threats, unwanted personal attention, stalking. And of course, anyone can be subjected to sexual harassment regardless of their sexuality, gender, race, religion, or disability.

Support for students who have experienced sexual violence is a specialist matter and non-specialist staff are not expected to provide in depth or on-going support. However a student who has experienced sexual violence or harassment may decide to disclose it to any member of staff. These short guidelines have been created to assist staff who may need to have such a conversation and refer the student on for more specialist support elsewhere.

(A similar set of [guidelines](https://my.napier.ac.uk/wellbeing-support-and-inclusion/report-and-support/sexual-assault-and-harassment-guidance) have been produced for students)

1. Is the student safe?

If the student is in physical danger or in need of immediate medical attention, call the emergency services on 999.

2. Immediate support

The most important message to get across to the student in any conversation is that the University is committed to supporting any students who have experienced sexual violence and to taking the appropriate action regarding anyone who has committed it. Listening sympathetically and non-judgementally to the student’s concerns is the first step in this process.

3. Being accompanied

A student wishing to report sexual violence may well wish to be accompanied by a friend or supporter. Equally, it may be useful for there to be more than one member of staff present during any conversation for the purposes of hearing what is reported (should the matter ultimately end up in the criminal courts). However you should use your discretion as the student may not welcome or feel comfortable with this.

4. Referral

For any form of sexual violence or harassment, you should encourage the student (or staff member if the survivor is a colleague) to seek information, support, and to report the incident via the University’s [Report and Support](https://reportandsupport.napier.ac.uk/) website.

It’s likely that in most instances the information and links found there to teams within and out-with the University will provide access to the most appropriate professional frontline support. The University’s team of trained Support and Liaison Advisers (SLA’s) can support the student or colleague to decide what action they wish to take, including taking police action against the alleged perpetrator or using the University complaints procedures or referring them to other support agencies such as Rape Crisis Scotland.

To access the team of SLA’s the student or staff member should make contact via the secure [Report and Support](https://reportandsupport.napier.ac.uk/) web site. If appropriate you can support the student/staff member by adding a report to the web site on their behalf.

If the student has experienced sexual violence but does not wish to access support from the University, you should highlight the following services:

[Rape Crisis Scotland:](https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/)

They can offer support to those who have experienced a recent or attempted rape or sexual assault. Contact them by calling Rape Crisis Scotland’s helpline on 08088 010302 (freephone, 6pm – midnight every day), phoning their support line on 0131 556 9437 and leaving a message or by emailing their support service at support@ercc.scot

Medical support for injuries or infections. Medical assistance will be available from the student’s GP, from their local hospital or from the [NHS Lothian Sexual Health Clinic](https://www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/GoingToHospital/Locations/Pages/Chalmers.aspx) Medical practitioners will adhere to strict patient confidentiality guidelines.

[Sexual Assault Response Co-ordination Service (SARC):](https://www.nhsinform.scot/turn-to-sarcs) SARCS is an NHS Scotland sexual assault self-referral phone service which can help you arrange care for yourself in the days following a rape or sexual assault. The service can arrange you to have a forensic medical examination within 7 days of the assault, without making a report to the Police. They can be contacted 24/7 on 0800 148 8888.

Reporting the incident anonymously. [Crime stoppers](https://crimestoppers-uk.org/) can be contacted at any point on 0800 555 111 or use their online form

[**Galop**](http://www.galop.org.uk/) is a charity that supports lesbian, gay, bi, trans, and queer people affected by sexual violence.

[**The National Stalking Helpline**](http://www.stalkinghelpline.org/) can give you information and advice on support and options available to you.

[**Edinburgh Women’s Aid**](https://edinwomensaid.co.uk/) provides a range of services for women and their children experiencing domestic violence.

[Respect](https://mensadviceline.org.uk/) is an advice line for male victims of domestic abuse.

Counselling and support for mental wellbeing.

Students can find out more about the support offered by the team from the MyNapier [Counselling and Mental Wellbeing](https://my.napier.ac.uk/wellbeing-support-and-inclusion/counselling-and-mental-wellbeing) web pages.

If a student wishes to report an instance of sexual harassment or assault, whether by a fellow student or by a member of staff, they will be guided to use the [University’s Student Conduct Regulations and Complaint Handling Procedure.](https://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/governance-compliance/governance/AppealsComplaintsConduct/Pages/AppealsComplaintsConduct.aspx)

For further advice about the University’s Student Conduct Regulations or Complaints Handling Procedure, contact Richard Bews: Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Manager on complaints@napier.ac.uk or extension 2396.

5. Record keeping

During the meeting you should ensure that you clarify/confirm the student’s correct university email address. Following the meeting, firstly please double check that you are sending any record of the meeting to their correct email address to ensure there is no breach of data protection legislation, and then you should send a brief e-mail to the student summarising the meeting. This should be brief and factual noting only the date and time of your meeting and summarise the actions taken or agreed with the student. You should note also if the student has been guided to use the report and support web site to formally report to the university or if this was completed within the meeting with you. You should note which support services or agencies you discussed with the student and ideally provide the contact details of these also. If you agreed any follow up action with the student you should also make a note of this. You should also keep a copy of the e-mail in a secure location in case you need to refer to it in the future. Finally, you should request that the student confirm that the record is accurate and ask that they reply indicating that this is the case.

6. What about confidentiality?

The student may ask that you keep anything they tell you confidential. You need to be aware that:

Complete and permanent confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, as in the event of an investigation by the University or in a criminal investigation, you may be required to give evidence about the conversation you have had. **It is very important that you advise the student of this before they go into any detail or name individuals.**

If the student wishes the University to take action by submitting a report and a complaint, the University will need to disclose the reporting student’s identity to the alleged perpetrator.

The University will not normally report an allegation of sexual assault to the Police without the student's permission. However in the event that the alleged perpetrator of the assault represents a continued threat to other members of the University community, it may be necessary for the University to breach confidentiality and report the assault to the Police. Any such decision would be taken by a member of the University’s senior leadership group, following discussion with the student and/or seeking legal advice.

7. Reporting

For any form of sexual violence or harassment, you should encourage the student (or staff member if the survivor is a colleague) to seek information, support, and to report the incident via the University’s [Report and Support](https://reportandsupport.napier.ac.uk/) website.

It’s likely that in most instances the information and links found there to teams within and out-with the University will provide to most appropriate professional frontline support. The University’s team of trained Support and Liaison Advisers (SLA’s) can support the student or colleague to decide what action they wish to take, including taking police action against the alleged perpetrator or using the University complaints procedures or referring them to other support agencies such as Rape Crisis Scotland.

To access the team of SLA’s the student or staff member should make contact via the secure Report and Support web site.

8. Support for you

The University recognises that responding to a disclosure can be stressful and may impact negatively on your wellbeing. For this reason the University provides access to an Employee Assistance Programme Provider called [MCL Medics](https://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/hr/workingattheUniversity/healthandwellbeing/Pages/Employee%20Assistance%20Programme.aspx). They provide a free, confidential and independent resource to help employees balance their work, family and personal lives.  This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year by phone, e-mail or online via the MCL Medics app and they provide information, resources and counselling.

Access to MCL Medics is easy:

FREEPHONE:  0808 196 1441

E-MAIL: eap@mcl-medics.com

WEBSITE: register at <https://app.mclmedicseap.com/login> ​