**Introduction**

The Office for Students (OfS) requires Colleges with Higher Education (HE) provision to publish clear and comprehensive information to explain to students how they are preventing Harassment and Sexual Misconduct, how incidences that do happen can be reported, and what support they can expect during any investigation. These requirements have been initiated in response to the findings reported in July 2024 that 20% of students have experienced unwanted sexual behaviour [Survey Published July 2024](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/sexual-misconduct-prevalence-survey-pilot-2023-evaluation/).

Aligned with our Freedom of Speech Code of Practice, the College does not impose any restrictions that would prevent or restrict any student from disclosing information about an allegation of harassment and/or sexual misconduct which involves or affects one or more students.

**Our Promise:**

At Kirklees College, we have a zero tolerance approach to any form of harassment or sexual misconduct (HSM). Aligned with our core values of Kindness, Unity, and Excellence, and underpinned by British Values, we are committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and inclusive community where everyone feels they belong. Harassment and sexual misconduct are wholly unacceptable, and we are dedicated to both preventing such behaviours and responding effectively when they occur. We actively promote these values across all areas of college life, ensuring that students and staff alike feel empowered to report concerns without fear of recrimination and are fully supported throughout the process.

**What is Harassment**?

The OfS defines harassment as unwanted behaviour or conduct that violates a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for them, which interferes with an individual’s learning, working or social environment

Harassment including sexual harassment, can include when a person engages in unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic (such as age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation). It also includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to such behaviour in the past. Harassment also includes unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that has the same purpose or effect. We believe that any form of harassment is unacceptable even if it does not fall within any of these categories.

Some forms of harassment are considered a Hate Crime. A hate incident or crime is any act of violence or hostility against a person or property that is motivated by hostility or prejudice towards a person due to a particular protected characteristic.

 Harassment may include, for example:

* unwanted physical conduct or ‘horseplay’, including touching, pinching, pushing, grabbing, brushing past someone, invading their personal space and more serious forms of physical or sexual assault
* offensive or intimidating comments or gestures, or insensitive jokes or pranks
* mocking, mimicking or belittling a person’s disability
* racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist jokes, or derogatory or stereotypical remarks about a particular ethnic or religious group or gender
* outing or threatening to out someone as gay, lesbian, bisexual or trans
* ignoring or shunning someone, for example, by deliberately excluding them from a conversation or a social activity.
* A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended "target". For example, a person may be harassed by racist jokes about a different ethnic group if they create an offensive environment.

**What is Sexual Misconduct?**

‘Sexual Misconduct’ means any unwanted or attempted unwanted conduct of a sexual nature and includes, but is not limited to: sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape.

Sexual violence and misconduct is any type of sexual activity or contact that you do not consent to. It is unwanted sexual activity that can involve manipulation, pressure, bullying, coercion, intimidation, deception, threats or force.

Acts of sexual violence can include rape, sexual assault, indecent exposure (also known as flashing), sexual exploitation and upskirting.

Sexual Harassment includes offensive remarks or jokes, sending or requesting sexual photos, regular harassment and requests for dates, sexual messages/emails/social media messages, comments about body parts, propositions to engage in sexual activity, spreading rumours, unwanted touching or physical contact without consent, wolf whistling.

Where conduct does not fall exactly within the examples above, that conduct may still amount to sexual misconduct where it is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. This is therefore not intended to be an exhaustive list.

**Reporting Issues and Concerns**

Harassment and sexual misconduct is never ok. Don’t ignore it. Challenge it if you feel safe to do so. At Kirklees College, students, staff, and third parties can report incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct through multiple accessible and confidential channels. Reports are encouraged and accepted on behalf of students who have alleged and/or experienced harassment or sexual misconduct, or on behalf of witnesses. If you witness or experience harassment speak to the safeguarding team for advice or member of college staff. All staff are equipped to handle disclosures with sensitivity and professionalism. If you wish to report a crime, speak to PC Preston our Safer Students Officer or dial 101 (or if you are in immediate risk of harm call 999). Reports can be submitted by those directly affected or by witnesses.

Additionally, the College offers online reporting options, including an anonymous QR code system promoted through awareness campaigns like ‘[Call it Out](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1SP3eY0Ltg)’ and [Keeping you Safe Posters](https://livekirkleescollegeac.sharepoint.com/sites/KCStudentCommunity33/SiteAssets/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FKCStudentCommunity33%2FSiteAssets%2FSitePages%2FKeeping%2Dyou%2Dsafe%2FSafeguarding%2DTeam%2DPoster%2DSept%2D23%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FKCStudentCommunity33%2FSiteAssets%2FSitePages%2FKeeping%2Dyou%2Dsafe) around college. Reporting guidance is also clearly communicated during student induction, in handbooks, and on the College website [Student Support - Kirklees College](https://www.kirkleescollege.ac.uk/supporting-you/).

Student safety is our priority. [KC Community SharePoint](https://livekirkleescollegeac.sharepoint.com/sites/KCStudentCommunity33/SitePages/Keeping-you-safe.aspx) provides information on how to contact the safeguarding team should you be affected by bullying, harassment, hate crime, exploitation.

It is important to understand that the College ensures that no one will face detriment for reporting concerns and regularly reviews its safeguarding practices to maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all.

**Support when reporting Issues, Incidences and Concerns**

Support when reporting issues, incidences and concerns will be provided through the college’s safeguarding process. There is also access to external support services for rape, sexual violence and sexual harassment on our [KC Community SharePoint](https://livekirkleescollegeac.sharepoint.com/sites/KCStudentCommunity33/SitePages/Keeping-you-safe.aspx). Here you can find out more about the support available and gain advice on how to speak up about rape, sexual violence and harassment through accessible links. External support services include Women’s Aid, Victim Support, Male Survivors Partnership, Rape Crisis, The Survivor’s Trust. If you are worried about anything in relation to Sexual Harassment and Violence and need advice or support speak to the Safeguarding team, Pastoral Mentor, Mentor for Apprentices or any member of staff.

When a student reports an incident of HSM, the College will offer:

* Targeted support to meet the needs of all students involved, including during any investigation and decision making process
* Assurance that any instances of HSM will be managed through our [Positive Behaviour Policy](https://www.kirkleescollege.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/24-25-Positive-Behaviour-Policy.docx)
* Emotional and well being support including counselling
* Reasonable adjustments in relation to decisions about modes of study

**What happens if you submit an anonymous report?**

If you submit an anonymous report, we will have no way of knowing who submitted the report, so no one will make contact with you. Anonymous reports can help provide insight into any emerging areas of concern which we can then respond to. In some instances, we will attempt further investigation for example where the concern raised poses an ongoing risk to people.

**Our stance on Relationships between Staff and Students**

At Kirklees College, we are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for everyone. To help protect students and maintain professional boundaries, the College has a clear policy about relationships between staff and students Code of Conduct Values and Behaviours.

Staff must not have any sort of romantic or sexual relationship with any student that they have responsibility for e.g. supports or teaches them (even if the student is over 18 years of age). This is because:

* There is a natural power imbalance between staff and students.
* These relationships can affect trust, fairness, and the learning environment for others.
* They may lead to conflicts of interest or even be seen as an abuse of power.

**What is an “Intimate Personal Relationship”?**

An *intimate personal relationship* is one that includes: **Physical intimacy** – such as any kind of sexual activity, whether it happens once or more than once or **Romantic or emotional intimacy** – such as dating, romantic feelings, or emotionally close connections beyond a professional level.

Students must also avoid unnecessary contact with staff outside of college hours, which includes communication via social media or any online or virtual relationship.

**Supporting our students to ensure understanding of Harassment and Sexual Misconduct**.

Students are first introduced to the Single Comprehensive Source of Information (SCSoI) through the *Higher Education and Higher Skills Prospectus* and Kirklees College website. Following registration, all new Higher Education (HE) students will be supported in understanding the SCSoI during induction sessions at the beginning of the academic year. As part of this induction, students will complete mandatory training that is both interactive and trauma-informed. These sessions are designed to help students recognise and understand behaviours that may constitute harassment and/or sexual misconduct, learn how to report allegations, and understand the support available throughout the reporting process. This includes signposting to external support agencies [Student Support Services Sway](https://sway.cloud.microsoft/lQ5ZYR7AfdZUmFJ4?ref=Link) [KCCommuitySharpointPage](https://livekirkleescollegeac.sharepoint.com/sites/KCStudentCommunity33/SitePages/Keeping-you-safe.aspx)).This training may be delivered in person or through an interactive online platform. Students will be expected to revisit the online training to reinforce their knowledge annually. The SCSoI will also be accessible in all student handbooks for ongoing reference.

Abbreviations

SCSoI Single Comprehensive Source of Information

OfS Office for Students

HE Higher Education

HSM Harassment and/or Sexual Misconduct

**Other relevant College Policies**

Code of Conduct Values and Behaviours

Freedom of Speech Code of Practice

Harassment Sexual Misconduct Policy (Higher Education)

All College Policies and Codes of Practice can be found [here](https://www.kirkleescollege.ac.uk/policies-reports/).

**Further Literature**

* [Condition E6: Harassment and sexual misconduct - Office for Students](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/student-protection-and-support/harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/condition-e6-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/)