

Student Guide: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy

September 2026



Our Commitment to You

UCEN Manchester is committed to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all students and staff.

We take all disclosures and reports of sexual harassment and misconduct seriously. We will respond with dignity, sensitivity, fairness and respect.

Our approach is trauma-informed. This means recognising the impact that sexual harassment and misconduct can have and taking care to avoid causing further distress through our processes.

We will support you to understand your options and make informed choices. You will not be pressured into making a formal report.

What This Policy Aims to Do

This policy explains how UCEN Manchester works to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and misconduct.

It:

- sets clear expectations around consent, respect and personal boundaries;
- explains how to disclose or report an incident;
- describes the support available;
- explains how reports are considered and investigated; and
- protects people who disclose, report or participate in an investigation from retaliation.

We also work to prevent sexual harassment and misconduct through consent education, active-bystander training, awareness activity and clear professional boundaries.

What Are Sexual Harassment and Misconduct?

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that violates someone's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

It can include:

- unwanted sexual comments, jokes or messages;
- inappropriate touching or gestures;
- unwanted sexual advances or requests;
- sexually suggestive images, looks or behaviour; and
- conduct that makes someone feel threatened, embarrassed, intimidated or uncomfortable.

Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct is unwelcome sexual behaviour carried out without consent.

It can include:

- sexual coercion or pressure;
- sexual assault or rape;
- unwanted sexual contact;
- exploiting a position of trust or power for sexual purposes; and
- disregarding someone's personal or sexual boundaries.

Sexual harassment and misconduct can happen between people of any sex, gender or sexual orientation. It can take place in person or online.

How to Disclose or Report

You do not have to make a formal report in order to ask for support. You may want to speak to someone about what happened and understand your options first.

A **disclosure** means telling someone about an experience so that you can be heard, supported or helped to consider your options. A disclosure does not automatically become a formal report.

A **formal report** asks UCEN Manchester to consider taking action through its investigation and disciplinary procedures.

You can disclose or report to any member of UCEN Manchester staff. You can also:

- speak to your Personal Tutor;
- contact the Future U Student Support Team at **futureu@ucenmanchester.ac.uk**; or
- use the online **Reporting Incidents** form.

Can I report anonymously?

Yes. Anonymous information can help UCEN Manchester identify patterns, risks and areas where action may be needed. However, remaining anonymous may limit our ability to investigate a specific allegation.

Safeguarding action may still be taken where the information indicates a risk of harm to an individual or the wider community.

Protection from Retaliation

UCEN Manchester will not tolerate victimisation, intimidation, retaliation or unfair treatment against anyone who:

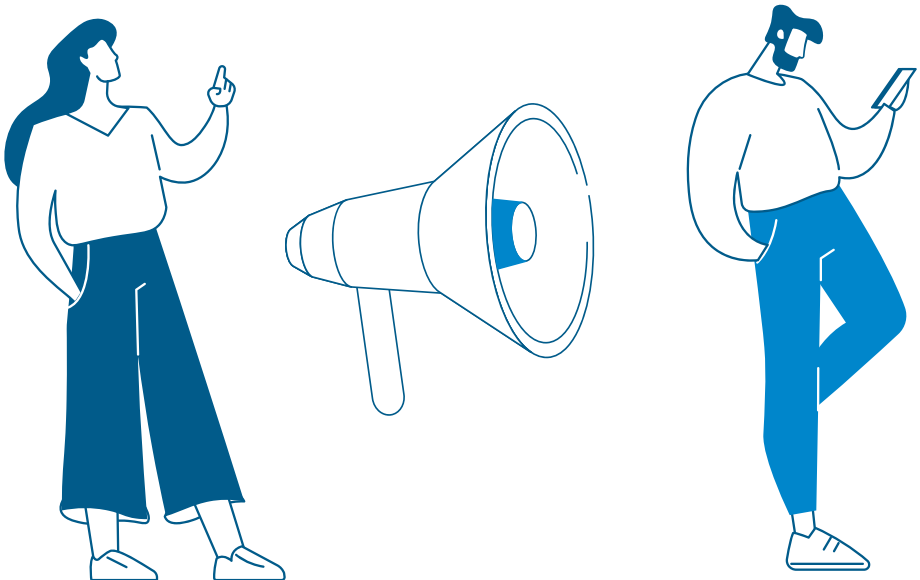
- makes a disclosure or report;
- provides evidence;
- acts as a witness; or
- participates in an investigation.

Any retaliation may be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

Staff-Student Relationships

UCEN Manchester's view is that intimate relationships are actively discouraged and may lead to disciplinary action.

Therefore staff are required to declare relevant relationships so that they can be considered and managed under UCEN Manchester's staff-conduct and professional-boundaries requirements.





Support for Students

Support is available whether or not you decide to make a formal report.

The Future U Student Support Team can help you access:

- wellbeing and counselling support;
- academic adjustments and flexibility;
- attendance support;
- safety planning;
- timetable changes;
- temporary no-contact arrangements;
- specialist external services; and
- ongoing support during and after an investigation.

Support is available without prejudice to both the student making the report and the student who has been reported.

Where appropriate, we can connect you with specialist organisations such as Manchester Rape Crisis and St Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre.

What Happens After a Formal Report?

We aim to:

- acknowledge the report within **two working days**;
- complete an initial risk assessment within **five working days**;
- decide whether the matter will be formally investigated within **ten working days**;
- provide progress updates at least every **ten working days**; and
- communicate the outcome within **five working days** of a decision being reached.

Some cases may take longer because of their complexity. If this happens, we will explain the delay and keep the people involved updated.

Where appropriate, temporary support or precautionary measures may be introduced. These could include no-contact arrangements, timetable changes, academic flexibility or safety planning.

Precautionary measures are not disciplinary sanctions and do not mean that a decision has already been made about the report.

Possible Outcomes

A formal investigation will consider the available evidence fairly and impartially.

- a formal warning;
- required education or training;
- restrictions or other appropriate measures;
- suspension; or
- permanent exclusion from UCEN Manchester.

The outcome and any relevant appeal arrangements will be explained to the parties involved. Appropriate support will remain available during and after the process.

Your Role as a Student

All students are expected to:

- respect other people's boundaries;
- never engage in sexual behaviour without consent;
- complete required consent and respectful-relationships education;
- report concerns if they feel safe and able to do so;
- cooperate honestly with any investigation in which they are involved;
- respect the privacy of people involved; and
- never retaliate against someone who discloses, reports or participates in an investigation.

You are not alone...

Need Help or Advice?

You can contact Future U for confidential advice, wellbeing support and help understanding your options:

futureu@ucenmanchester.ac.uk

You can ask for support without making a formal report.

Specialist support

- Manchester Rape Crisis
- St Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 999.

If you experience or witness sexual harassment or misconduct, you can talk to us when you feel ready. We will listen, explain your options and help you access appropriate support.

Together, we can make UCEN Manchester a respectful, inclusive, and safe place to study and grow.