

## What to do if you, or someone you know, has been affected?

**Speak out** – talk to your family, a good friend or/and speak to Care and Concern about support available within the University and externally. It's important to let the right people know that this is happening to you so they can help you keep safe.

**Report it** –report it to Care and Concern on 020 8411 6200 or [careandconcern@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:careandconcern@mdx.ac.uk). If the bullying or harassment is being perpetrated by a Middlesex student the university will respond in accordance with the Student Conduct and Discipline rules; if bullying and harassment is perpetrated by a member of staff, the University will address the issues through the Complaints and Grievance procedures. To find out more, see 'Reporting to the University', accessible via the home page of this document.

**Report online harassment and cyberbullying to a website, app or social media platform** - most apps and websites have built in reporting features, or an email to enable you to contact the administrators to report online harassment and cyberbullying. Find out how to report, as well as how to keep your privacy settings updated and how to use the untag and block features on applications on the websites you use.

[Twitter](#)  
[Facebook](#)  
[Youtube](#)  
[Google+](#)  
[Linkedin](#)  
[Instagram](#)  
[Tumblr](#)  
[Flickr](#)  
[Reddit](#)  
[Pinterest](#)  
[Snapchat](#)

**Find out more about your options** - click [here](#) to find out more about getting support (including specialist help) and reporting both to the University and to the police.

## What is bullying and harassment?

The terms 'bullying' and 'harassment' and are often used interchangeably. Examples include:

- Spreading rumours about someone;
- Verbally insulting someone;
- Unreasonably excluding someone or purposely preventing their participation e.g. excluding a student from a group project or social group;
- Criticising without justification;
- Misusing a position of power e.g. a sports captain who doesn't select a student for a team or a Resident Assistant who falsely reports a student for noise disturbance;

Trolling (posting inflammatory or inappropriate messages or comments on the internet in order to upset and provoke responses from other internet users).

It may be a single act with enduring consequences or a repeated act or behaviour. It can be perpetrated by an individual or group of people. It can be enacted even if the perpetrator did not intend to cause harm. There tends to be a power imbalance, for example, a senior person towards a junior person. Bullying and harassment can take place off and online.

Classifying behaviours as bullying and harassment is not always clean-cut. Quite often, bullying and harassment isn't recognisable and may occur without anyone but the victim and the perpetrator knowing about it.

## **When is bullying and harassment a crime?**

Harassment, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, is a crime if it is "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic" (age, gender reassignment, race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation) "which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the individual." Significantly, you don't need to possess a protected characteristic to be the victim of harassment. For example, you could be subjected to homophobic slurs, when you yourself are heterosexual.

Unlike harassment, there is no legal definition of bullying. Nonetheless, it may be considered a criminal offence under a range of acts. For example, bullying may be considered a hate crime if it is committed against someone because of their disability, gender-identity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

## **What is sexual harassment?**

Sexual harassment is any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that makes you feel distressed, intimidated or humiliated. It can take lots of different forms. It can include or be called sexualised bullying.

Sexual harassment can include:

- someone making sexually degrading comments or gestures;
- your body being stared or leered at;
- being subjected to sexual jokes or propositions;
- emails or text messages with sexual content;
- physical behaviour, including unwelcomed sexual advances and touching;
- someone displaying sexually explicit pictures in your space or a shared space, like at work;
- offers of rewards in return for sexual favours.

Although sexual harassment can happen anywhere, it is common in the workplace and likewise in an educational setting.

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. The law says it's sexual harassment if the behaviour is either meant to, or has the effect of: violating your dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

You don't need to have objected to a certain kind of behaviour in the past for it to be unwanted and constitute harassment.