

## 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.

**Contact a SARC** – specialist staff at a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) are trained to help survivors of sexual assault make informed decisions about what to do next. They can provide a forensic examination (you are not required to go to the police). Click [here](#) to find out more.

**Get specialist support** – there are a number of organisations offering free and practical emotional support. Click [here](#) to find out more.

**Report it to the police** – report to the police by calling 101. To help you decide whether reporting to the police is right for you, there are a number of free organisations, as well as Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) who can help you. Click [here](#) to find out more.

**Report it to the University** – [read the Report.It.To.Stop.It information](#) on the Changing the Culture Initiative page in UniHub for information, guidance and various ways to report. The University will respond in accordance with the Student Conduct and Discipline rules if the incident involves another Middlesex student; the University will respond through the Complaints and Grievance procedure where the incident involves a member of staff.

**Report online abuse 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 abuse. 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** - [read the information-guidance tool 'Pathways'](#) to find out more about getting support (including specialist help) and reporting both to the University and to the police.

## What is sexual assault?

Sexual assault is a broad term that encompasses any sexual act inflicted against someone without their consent. It is a criminal offence. Sexual assault can happen to anybody and can be perpetrated by anybody.

## What is rape and sexual assault?

Rape is legally defined in the UK as the penetration with a penis of the vagina, anus or mouth of another person without consent.

Sexual assault by penetration is the penetration of another person's vagina, mouth or anus with any part of the body other than the person, or any object, without the person's consent. It can carry the same prison sentence as rape.

## What is consent?

Consent is an agreement reached without force, coercion or intimidation between persons. Non-consensual sexual activity occurs when consent is not reached or when somebody does not have the physical or mental capacity to give consent. Watch this [video](#) for a quick straightforward explanation of consent.

## Can you consent if you're intoxicated e.g. with drugs or alcohol?

If someone is incapacitated (for example, they can't speak or move) through the consumption of alcohol or drugs, then they are unable to consent to sexual activity (regardless of whether or not the individual willingly consumed alcohol or drugs). 100% of the responsibility for any act of sexual assault lies with the perpetrator.

## What is 'drug rape'?

The term 'drug rape' is used to refer to sexual assault that takes place after the perpetrator has given a drug to the victim. The drug Rohypnol is sometimes referred to as the 'date rape drug' but other drugs, including prescription medication and most often alcohol, can be used to try and make someone vulnerable to a sexual assault.

Drug rape is most commonly associated with strangers or recent acquaintances. However, it is also an aspect of the sexual assault of people in their own homes, for example, through the forced misuse of tranquilisers and other prescribed medication.

People's reactions to different drugs will vary: some might be unable to move or speak; some might have short or long-term memory loss and some might be stimulated sexually. The effects of drug rape and being "spiked" can be extremely frightening. Click [here](#) for more information.

## What is 'date rape'?

The term 'date rape' is often used to describe sexual assault that occurs between two people who know each other, for example, as acquaintances, friends or lovers, and/or two people who have been on a date or out socially together. 'Date rape' is not a legal term or specific offence. The term can be an unhelpful and misleading label because it infers that sexual assault by a known perpetrator is "not as bad" as sexual assault by a stranger – this is not correct.

## Is sexual assault possible in marriage or a relationship?

Absolutely, yes. Everyone has the right to say "no" to sex, to withdraw or withhold their consent for any sexual act, on any occasion and under any circumstances, regardless of whether they've given consent to sex with that person in the past and regardless of whether they're married or in a relationship.

Staying in a relationship that involves or has involved sexual assault does not mean someone is "weak" or any less deserving of specialist support and justice than someone assaulted in any other kind of circumstance. There are many reasons why someone might stay in an intimate relationship that is violent or/and abusive, including fear, shame and self-blame, concern for their children and hope that their partner's behaviour might change. Click [here](#) for more information.

## 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 unwelcome 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.