UNIVERSITY OF
LINCOLN

Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence Policy

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1. Policy Statement

1.1 The University of Lincoln believes that all members of its community have the right to study and work without experiencing gender-based violence, abuse or harassment. The University will not tolerate gender-based violence in any form. All members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others.

1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with One Community Values and The Student Charter which clearly set out the University's expectations around how staff and students should behave with each other and with the wider community. It should also be read in conjunction with the University's Safeguarding Policy which details its commitment to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are provided with a safe environment in which to work, study and live.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy was created to:

- Increase the safety and emotional wellbeing of members of the University's community across all of its campuses;
- Cultivate a campus environment that both facilitates and encourages prompt reporting of gender-based violence by any affected member of the University's community;
- Prevent instances of gender-based violence and respond appropriately when they are reported to the University.

3. Definitions

3.1 For the purposes of this policy, gender-based violence is defined as follows:

- Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, within the general community or in institutions, including: domestic abuse, rape, incest, sexual harassment, sexual coercion, homophobic and transgender abuse, cyber-bullying and stalking;
- Sexual harassment and intimidation at work and in the wider community; commercial sexual exploitation including prostitution, pornography and trafficking;
- Dowry-related violence, forced and child marriages, honour crimes;
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

3.2 The University recognises that such incidents can occur in all relationships and situations regardless of age, disability, economic status, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender reassignment, marital status and sexual orientation. All people, regardless of gender in heterosexual and same gender relationships, can experience gender-based violence.

3.3 The University also recognises that gender-based violence is statistically most frequently perpetrated by men against women and children and against gender and sexual minorities. Many forms of gender-based violence derive from gender inequality and the different power relations based on gender and sexuality. However, acknowledging this does not mean that women and gender and sexual minorities cannot be perpetrators of gender-based violence or that men cannot experience gender-based violence.

4. Examples of Gender-Based Violence

4.1 These apply to both employees and students and can include, but are not limited to:

- Actual, or the threat of, physical, sexual and psychological violence (e.g. physical assault, rape, sexual assault and coercive control);
- Unwanted and unwelcome sexual or gender-based verbal, written, online and / or physical conduct (e.g. being groped in a nightclub or texted or told rape jokes);
- Sexual harassment and intimidation at University, work or in the community (e.g. sexually inappropriate comments);
- Threatening or causing physical harm, extreme verbal abuse or other conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person (e.g. not respecting another's personal space or boundaries);
- Discrimination defined as actions that deprive other members of the community of educational, employment access, benefits or opportunities on the basis of gender and / or (perceived) sexuality (e.g. exclusion from activities such as group work or work meetings where a person would reasonably expect to be included);
- Intimidation, defined as implied threats or acts that cause a reasonable fear of harm in another (e.g. threats to 'out' a person or threats of rape);
- Bullying, defined as repeated and / or severe aggressive behaviour likely to intimidate or intentionally hurt, control or diminish another person, physically or mentally (e.g. purposely using the wrong pronouns);
- Violence between those in an intimate relationship (including romantic relationships, dating, domestic and / or relationship violence). Intimate relationship violence is a pattern of abusive behaviour used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. This type of

violence can be physical, emotional, economic, sexual, psychological or threats of actions that influence another person;

- Stalking, defined as a pattern of repeated and unwanted attention, harassment, contact or any other conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear for their safety or the safety of others (e.g. unwanted gifts, text messages or messages through social media);
- Dowry-related violence – dowry includes gifts, money, goods or property given from the bride's family to the groom or in-laws before, during or any time after a marriage. Dowry is a response to explicit or implicit demands or expectations of the groom and his family;
- Forced and child marriages – forced marriage is when a person faces physical pressure to marry (e.g. threats, physical or sexual violence) or emotional and psychological pressure (e.g. made to feel like they are shaming the family if they do not comply);
- Honour crimes involve physical, emotional, psychological, financial and sexual abuse (including murder), committed by people who want to defend the reputation of their family or community;
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there is no medical reason for this to be done. It is also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting' and by other terms such as sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez and khitan[1];
- Any other University policy, rule or regulation when a violation is motivated by the actual or perceived sex or gender identity of the person against whom the action or conduct is directed may be pursued using this policy.

5. University Policies to Deal with Gender-Based Violence

5.1 The University will take appropriate informal and formal action as deemed appropriate to the circumstances of each case. There are specific procedures for complaints against employees and complaints against students.

5.2 For the person against whom the allegation is being made the relevant procedures confer on them the right to know the case against them and the right to be given an opportunity to defend themselves. A person facing an allegation can make use of the support services offered by the University or Students' Union.

5.3 If a student or employee decides to report an incident to the police and the police decide not to take further action, this does not mean that the University cannot conduct its own investigation according to its policies and procedures. Neither does it mean that the reporting party has made a vexatious or malicious complaint.

[1] https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/

5.4 The University may use powers available under its policies and procedures to exclude a student or suspend a member of staff, as a neutral act and without prejudice to the outcome of any investigation. Conditions may form part of the exclusion / suspension such as requiring the person against whom the complaint has been made to cease contact with the reporting party.

5.5 In certain circumstances, and where an allegation has been made to the police, the University may pause an investigation pending the outcome of any criminal proceedings.

Staff on Staff

5.6 The formal procedures for complaints by staff against staff, operated through the Department of People, Performance and Culture (PPC), are the Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure and / or the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Student on Student and Student on Staff

5.7 The formal procedure for complaints made by students against other students or by staff against students is contained within the Student Misconduct Regulations (Part P of the University General Regulations).

Staff on Student

5.8 The formal procedure for complaints made by students against staff is the Student Complaints Regulations (Part O of the University General Regulations). Complaints are formally investigated by Heads of School or Heads of Service (or an alternate if the Head of School or Service is the subject of the complaint) and, the Governance team shall inform PPC of the allegations and keep them informed throughout the process to enable PPC to decide whether and when a separate staff procedure may need to be instigated.

6. Responding to an Incident: Sources of Support

6.1 Students

6.1.1 Any student experiencing gender-based violence at the University is encouraged to report it immediately to someone in the institution that they feel comfortable with and who can support them. A student may or may not wish to report the incident to the police and that is entirely their decision. See 5.3 above.

6.1.2 Students should be aware that if the incident is reported to the police the person to whom the first disclosure of the incident was made may be called to court to provide an account. For this reason, the practice in the Student Wellbeing Centre and the Student Support Centre is that when a student is about to make a disclosure to an individual a second, independent and trained colleague is introduced and takes

the disclosure (the first colleague leaves the room). After the disclosure is made the first colleague will provide support to the student as needed.

6.1.3 Sources of confidential support include the Student Support Centre, Student Wellbeing Centre and the Students' Union Advice Centre. These services are available to students whether they decide to make a complaint or to make a disclosure but not take it forward through any formal procedure.

6.1.4 Students may report incidents anonymously through the online reporting tools for sexual misconduct and hate crime Misconduct and Harassment Support. The University may not be able to take action on anonymously reported incidents but reporting enables an understanding of the overall picture in relation to gender-based violence and helps inform prevention strategies.

6.2 Employees

6.2.1 Employees experiencing gender-based violence at the University are encouraged to report it immediately to someone in the institution they feel comfortable with and who can support them. The employee may or may not wish to report the incident to the police and that is entirely their decision.

6.2.2 In some cases, incidents may have happened months or years previously. Both employees and students can choose to report an incident regardless of the amount of time that has passed and both will be offered appropriate advice and support. It may not be possible, however, for the University to investigate allegations against, for example, former students or former employees. It does, however, encourage employees and students to disclose incidents so that support can be offered.

6.2.3 For further information about how to raise a complaint please refer to the Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure.

7. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Equalities and Diversity Committee annually to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and has the most up to date information available (unless, for example, a legislative change necessitates an earlier review date).

8. Sources of Support

This list is not exhaustive.

- Student Wellbeing Centre - 01522 886400 or studentwellbeing@lincoln.ac.uk
- Lincolnshire Rape Crisis - 0800 33 4 55 00 or support@lincolnshirerapecrisis.org.uk
- Spring Lodge - Lincolnshire's Sexual Assault Referral Centre - 01522 524402 or lpn-tr.springlodge@nhs.net
- Trust House - 01476 579379 or support@trusthouselincolnshire.org
- Refuge – for women and children against domestic abuse Refuge
- Care International https://www.careinternational.org.uk
- Stonewall www.stonewall.org.uk/help-and-advice
- Lincolnshire Police - In an emergency you should call 999. If you are no longer in immediate danger you should call 101. The address for Lincoln City Centre Police Station is South Park Avenue, Lincoln, LN5 8EL.
- Rape Crisis - 0808 802 9999
- SurvivorsUK - Text 020 3322 1860, WhatsApp 07491 816 064 or SurvivorsUK
- Galop provides support to LGBT+ people who have experienced any form of sexual violence. Call 0800 999 5428 or Email help@galop.org.uk
- Victim Support - Lincolnshire specific number: 0300 30 30 158 or National number: 0808 1689 111
- NHS - In a medical emergency you should call 999. For non-emergency medical advice you can call 111.

9. Data Protection and Confidentiality

The University respects the confidentiality of those reporting acts of gender-based violence perpetrated against them and will handle employee and students' data in accordance with the data protection principles set out in data protection legislation.

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Owner	Last Reviewed
Operations	April 2023

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