

DIGNITY AT QMUL – guidance for students

1. QMUL is dedicated to creating a safe, welcoming, inclusive and diverse community which allows its students to thrive without fear of any form of harassment or bullying. The Dignity at QMUL statement reflects the values which shape and influence the life of our institution, and describes our zero tolerance approach to all forms of behaviour from staff, students or visitors that might violate the dignity of others.

This guidance provides advice on what to do next if you have experienced harassment or bullying.

2. What does QMUL consider to be harassment or bullying?

2.1 Bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination and victimisation are contrary to the [Equality Act 2010](#) and to QMUL's values. The terms harassment and bullying are often used interchangeably. Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel humiliated, undermined or threatened. Harassment occurs when someone intentionally or unintentionally violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, which interferes with an individual's learning, working or social environment.

2.2 Harassment may involve sexual harassment or be related to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, including age, race, gender identity, transgender identity, disability, pregnancy or maternity, nationality, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. If you believe that you have suffered sexual harassment, please see [here for further information](#).

2.3 Some forms of harassment are considered to be a Hate Crime. A hate crime or incident is any act of violence or hostility towards a person or property that is motivated by hostility or prejudice towards a person due to a particular protected characteristic. [Find out more on hate crime](#).

3. What to do if you are experiencing harassment or bullying?

- If you are in immediate danger or have been seriously injured call 999
- Talk to a friend or approach someone from QMUL who can help you. This may be a trusted member of academic staff from your school or institute; the Representation and Democracy Manager of Queen Mary Students' Union; the Advocacy and Representation Manager of Queen Mary Students' Union; staff in the Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Office; the Head of Residential Support; staff in the Advice and Counselling team.
- It may be possible for you to address the issue informally, either by speaking to the person concerned or by writing to them. It may be that the person does not understand the impact that their behaviour is having on you and sometimes explaining that this behaviour is unwanted may be enough to stop further incidents of the behaviour.
- Keep a record of the behaviour that has taken place, including times, dates locations and details of those involved.
- QMUL recognises that not everyone will feel able to resolve the issue informally and if you choose not to follow this route, or if it proves to be ineffective, then you may wish to submit a formal complaint.

4. Submitting a formal complaint

4.1 If you feel that the informal procedure is not appropriate, or has not been effective, you can submit a formal complaint to the [Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Office](#) using the [Student Complaints Policy](#). In order to support your complaint you should include as much detail as possible

about the issues that you wish to be considered. This should include, where possible: a description of the conduct; dates and times when the incidents occurred; specific detail of the conduct; any action that you may have undertaken to try to address the issues.

4.2 If your case relates to a complaint about another student, a Casework Officer from the Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Office will meet with you in order to discuss the issues that you have raised and will explain to you how your case will be handled. It may be that you have already provided names of those involved, or of any witnesses, and the Casework Officer may need to make further enquiries as part of the investigation. You will be kept informed of the process that will be undertaken with regard to your case and will be able to review a summary of your case before this is considered further.

4.3 Following the investigation of your complaint, it may be that a breach of the Code of Discipline has been identified. If this is the case, you will receive a formal outcome of your complaint and the incident (s) will be considered under the relevant section of the [Code of Discipline](#).

4.4 In the event that your complaint is not upheld, there may be some issues to address with regard to you as the complainant and the other person involved (the respondent). This may involve a suggestion that mediation could be considered (on a voluntary basis) or a recommendation that mechanisms are put in place to support both you and the other person in managing your relationship in the future.

4.5 If you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint you can request a review of the outcome using [Stage 3](#) of the complaints process. If you are still concerned about the outcome after the completion of the Stage 3 process you may submit a complaint to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education](#).

4.6 If your case relates to a complaint about a member of QMUL staff then it may be that your case will be considered by the [Human Resources Directorate](#). You will receive a full response to the concerns that you have raised through the Student Complaints Policy but any subsequent action in relation to the respondent (e.g. under the Human Resources Code of Practice on Discipline) will remain confidential although the details of the complaint may be used as evidence for subsequent proceedings.

4.7 The Student Complaints Policy makes it clear that any student who submits a complaint in good faith will not suffer any detriment as a result of any action taken under the Student Complaints Policy. However, QMUL may consider taking action under the Code of Student Discipline in the event that a complaint is brought in bad faith or is vexatious.