



Policy on Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Domestic Abuse

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Publication: | External (public) |
| Date approved: | 04 March 2026 |
| Approving body: | Senate |
| Date of next review: | February 2028 |
| Review frequency: | Every 2 years |
| Policy/Regulation Owner: | Alun Minifey – <i>Head of Student Life, Student Journey and Support Service</i> |

1. Overview and Purpose

- 1.1** Any member of the University community wishing to report an incident of harassment or sexual or physical misconduct can report via [Report & Support](#)
- 1.2** The University of East Anglia (UEA) is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all members of its community. This consolidated policy integrates measures addressing harassment, sexual misconduct, and domestic abuse, ensuring compliance with UK legislation and best practices.
- 1.3** UEA is committed to creating an inclusive and supportive experience, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and all members of the University community share a responsibility to create and maintain a safe and welcoming environment.

2. Scope

- 2.1** This policy applies to staff and students registered with the University for a programme of study, whether that is full-time or part-time. It covers incidents occurring, during university-related activities, and in any context where UEA community members interact. The position on Staff-Student relationships is outlined in the Staff Student Relationship Policy.
- 2.2** Organisations that operate or deliver any activity on behalf of the University or on university-owned premises are expected to uphold the standards, or similar standards, outlined in this policy
- 2.3** Adherence to approved policy and regulations is fundamental to the effective operation of the university. This policy has been developed in alignment with sector best practice to promote consistency, accountability, and compliance with relevant standards. Observing the policy ensures that decisions and actions are informed, equitable, and aligned with institutional values.

3. Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|-------------------|--|
| Harassment | as defined in General Regulation for Student Regulation 10: Includes abusive conduct, physical misconduct, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, and protected characteristic harassment |
| Sexual Harassment | as defined in General Regulation for Student Regulation 10 - engage in unwanted conduct of a sexual nature where that conduct has the purpose or effect of violating another person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. In this clause, 'another person' means a student, member |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| | of staff or officer of, or visitor to, the University, or any person in respect of whom you represent the University (such as a competitor in an inter-varsity sports competition). |
| Sexual Misconduct | as defined in General Regulation for Student Regulation 10 - engage in sexual activity (whether physical or virtual) with another person where that person does not consent to the activity in question. A person consents if they agree by choice to that activity, they have the freedom and capacity to make that choice, and you had a reasonable belief that they consented. Whether a belief is reasonable is to be determined having regard to all the circumstances, including any steps that you have taken to ascertain their consent. |
| Abusive behaviour | In line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Abusive behaviour consists of physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, or psychological, emotional, or other abuse. (Economic abuse is behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on your ability to acquire or use money, goods, or services, such as taking your earnings or sabotaging a job). Domestic Abuse may be a course of conduct or a single incident and what makes it domestic is that the persons involved must be 'personally connected.' |

Further guidance and definitions of the above can be sought on the University Report and Support webpages and are outlined in law.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Oversight of the process – Head of Student Life Student Journey and Support Service

4.2 Management of the day-to-day application of the process – Student Journey and Support Service Senior student life team

5. Policy Statement

5.1 UEA is committed to promoting an environment free from harassment, sexual misconduct, and domestic abuse. All members share responsibility for maintaining a safe and welcoming environment. Reports can be made via the University's Report & Support platform.

5.2 UEA is aware that there are students and staff who will be affected by domestic abuse, harassment and sexual misconduct, either currently or historically, as such, the University is working to reduce the risks related to these and create a safer studying and

working environments for all. It also recognises the impact it may have on an individual that affects their learning and experience at University.

5.3 Report and Support

5.3.1 UEA's Report & Support platform is the platform to report, in person reporting is also available, by students, staff and third parties.

5.3.2 Trauma informed support is available to reporters, responders, and where relevant witnesses.

5.3.3 Further details of support are available online on the Report and Support Website and operational guidance is available on request from the Student Journey and Support Service.

5.4 Addressing Reports - UEA commits to:

5.4.1 Clearly defining Student Journey and Support Service as the primary support provided to students affected and People & Culture for staff

5.4.2 Support individuals affected in a trauma informed way

5.4.3 Respond in accordance with Universities Policies and safeguarding obligations while balancing the rights and preference of the reporter.

5.4.4 Put in place risk mitigation within its powers to support the safety of individuals affected

5.4.5 Managing all reports and disclosures sensitivity and confidentially, use of data is outline in the University Data Protection Policies.

5.4.6 Depending on the context, the University will address any harassment allegation under the General Regulations for students or the applicable policy for staffs.

5.4.7 UEA will thoroughly investigate all reports of inappropriate behaviour and conduct and will take appropriate action to address the situation that is proportionate to each case in line with the relevant University policy and procedure. This is outlined in the Universities Non-Academic Disciplinary Procedures.

5.4.8 Will never utilise confidentiality clauses that restrict students or staff speaking about any form of harassment or abuse. As outlined in Condition of registration E6 by the Office for Students.

5.6 Prevention & Awareness

5.6.1 UEA commits to undertaking preventive work in this area to support a safe and inclusive community. Ensuring staff and students remain informed and educated on these matters.

5.6.2 It also commits to working in partnership UEA Students Union and external organisations to promote prevention strategies and seek specialised expertise.

5.6.3 The work in this area will regularly be updated on via the University's Tackling Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Pages. To ensure a single point of information.

5.7 Staff & Student Training

5.7.1 The University will provide training for all students and staff on the topic of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct annually.

5.7.2 With designated staff provided enhanced training annually to deliver trauma informed support. Relevant staff will also be offered additional training where available on all forms of harassment and abuse.

6. Compliance and Monitoring

6.1 UEA adheres to all applicable UK laws and statutory guidance, including safeguarding responsibilities for under-18s.

6.2 The University works in partnership with national bodies such as the Office for Students and Universities UK and collaborates with the Students' Union to ensure best practice.

6.3 UEA will comply with Conditions of Registration E6 set out by The Office for Students and will report annually to the relevant University Committee on its compliance and work to exceed compliance.

6.4 The University has a policy relating to Freedom of Speech and the University's position regarding freedom of speech will be in accordance with relevant extant legislation. The University's commitment to the protection of freedom of speech does not undermine the University's commitment to combating harassment and where speech is not protected by law appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed.

7. Related Documents

[Human Rights Act 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

[Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

[The Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

[UEA Code of Practice for staff – Dignity and Respect in the](#)

[Workplace](#), and for students [General Regulations - University Governance - About \(uea.ac.uk\)](#), and [University Disciplinary and Investigative Procedures and Powers - About](#)

[\(uea.ac.uk\)](#); [Code of Practice Relating to Freedom of Speech - About \(uea.ac.uk\)](#)

8. Revision History

| Version number | Approval date | Approval mechanism | Details of change |
|----------------|---------------|--------------------|---|
| V.1 | TBC March 26 | Senate | Amalgamating and bringing up to date the previously separate domestic abuse and student sexual abuse and sexual misconduct policies |