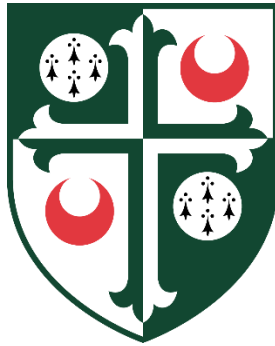


Information for students: sexual harassment and assault



This document is designed to help students who have experienced sexual harassment and/or assault, and those supporting them, navigate a decision about whether or not to report, how to seek support from College and what reporting routes are available. It deals with sensitive topics that might cause distress. If you wish to identify someone to talk through this with, please go to page 4.

IN AN EMERGENCY...

Are you at immediate risk of harm?

- Call the police or an ambulance on 999
- The College porters have been trained to deal with sensitive situations and can get you a taxi back to College, or to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, on the College account – you would not have to give them any details. They can also call the duty tutor or the Senior Tutor.
- If you prefer, you could organise a taxi yourself and keep the receipt. Your tutor can help you get reimbursed by College.
- If you are elsewhere on University premises, you can call University security on 01223 331818.

Time limits to be aware of:

- If you think you may have been drugged, it is best to be tested within 24 hours
- If you want emergency contraception, this needs to be within 120 hours.
- If you would like HIV prophylaxis, this should be started within 36 hours.
- To obtain the best quality forensic evidence, the SARC recommend not eating, drinking, washing, smoking or changing clothes, or going to the toilet, or clearing up the area where you were assaulted. Do not worry though if you have done this – it may still be possible to obtain evidence and you can report without it.

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1. Introduction

Experiencing a sexual assault is traumatic and it takes time to work through. Emotional responses can be varied and include anxieties about going out again, discussing the incident, reporting it and being believed. It is important that you are able to find appropriate support at this time – both to help you work through what happened and how it affected you, and to investigate whether or not you would like to report the incident. This document aims to signpost you to available support within Girton and the University, and to help you make a decision about the options to report the incident if you decide to do so. It also offers some guidance and sources of support for the friends of people who have been assaulted.

“The truth of it is, the shame was not mine, and for all victims in similar situations, it is not ours. The shame is reserved for every creep who has ever touched us inappropriately. The shame is on the abuser, not the victim, not the survivor. It is tragic that so many of us have to survive this kind of crap, and I’m so sorry if it has happened to you.” Rose McGowan, Brave

Harassment and assault

Sexual assault is defined as “kissing/touching without consent; sexual acts without consent; “flashing”; stalking; sharing private sexual materials without consent”.

Sexual harassment is a specific form of harassment (harassment is defined as “verbal offences including sexual, racial, cultural insults; bullying; manipulation; and controlling/coercive behaviour”).

Instances of either of these can be dealt with through the procedures mentioned in this document, in line with the [College Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).

2. Who to contact for support

There are several sources of **help within Girton and the University**. If unsure, the JCR/MCR Welfare Officers may be able to help you decide which of the below to contact.

- Your **College Tutor** or one of the other Tutors are well placed to listen to you and provide advice about specialist counselling and reporting. In particular, Dr Amy Donovan and Dr Arik Kershenbaum are equipped to discuss issues of this kind (email cdhc@girton.cam.ac.uk and ask for a chat with Amy or Arik). You are also very welcome to approach the Senior Tutor (senior.tutor@girton.cam.ac.uk).
- The **College nurses** (nurses@girton.cam.ac.uk), who can also advise you if you have concerns about unprotected intimate contact.
- The **College Chaplain** (chaplain@girton.cam.ac.uk)
- The **University Sexual Harassment and Violence Advisor**, Amy Thompson, and her team can provide specialist counselling and help you think through the options for reporting.
- The **University Counselling Service** can offer counselling sessions.

It is **completely up to you** where you prefer to seek support and who you wish to discuss your experience with. Choosing to keep this experience private is completely valid, and these options are available if or when you wish to use them. The person that you speak to will believe what you tell them.

We would suggest a College Tutor may be a particularly useful option, as they are well-placed to help you access the various means of support and to help you reach a decision about which reporting procedures may suit you best if you choose to report. Please note that this does not have to be your own Tutor.

The people above will keep your disclosure **confidential** and will discuss reporting options with you if you wish. You can also discuss your complaint anonymously with them and decide to reveal identities at a later date. The only exception to confidentiality is if someone you speak to believes that there is a risk to your wellbeing or the wellbeing of others. In that case, if the risk is immediate, they may advise you that they need to contact the police, or the porters or Duty Tutor. If they think there is ongoing risk that is not immediate, they may let the Senior Tutor know. They may also discuss their concerns while keeping you anonymous, if this is possible. They will always discuss revealing your identity with you first. If you make a report to your Tutor, it may be possible to put Precautionary Action in place under the College's Precautionary Action policy, in consultation with the Senior Tutor.

There are also sources of support **outside of the Collegiate University**:

- The police can talk through the process of criminal investigations; they can be reached on 101 for non-urgent enquiries.
- The **Sexual Assault Referral Centre** (SARC) in Huntingdon offers advice and support to anyone who has experienced sexual violence. They can be contacted on 01480 425003 or theelms.sarc@nhs.net. They can also provide physical examinations if needed.
- The **Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre** offers specialist advice and support to women who have experienced rape or sexual violence. Some services are also available to other genders. They can be reached on 01223 245888 or support@cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk

It is important that you are able to discuss the incident with your support network (friends and family) as you want to. Please note though that wide discussion of the incident might prejudice any investigation of it, either by the police or by the University. To ensure you have the best chance possible of taking your case forward and achieving the result you hope for, please consider keeping the circle small and asking friends to keep it confidential. Please also note that College has a legal responsibility to any student who is the respondent in a complaint as they go through the process.

3. Reporting options

Choosing to report

There are three types of outcome that you could consider when deciding which process to use:

- That the person involved acknowledge there has been an incident and agree to certain restrictions (e.g. not to interact with you at all) by way of a contract (an *informal* process)
- That the University/College apply some formal sanctions to the person involved (a *formal* process)
- A criminal investigation (the police)

The College policy is that all sexual misconduct cases are dealt with via the University procedures. This is because the University has appointed specialist investigators specifically trained to deal with such issues.

The University has two separate documents for its [informal](#) procedure and the [formal](#) one. An overview of the University procedure is [here](#). There is also some further guidance [here](#) and on the “report and support” website [here](#).

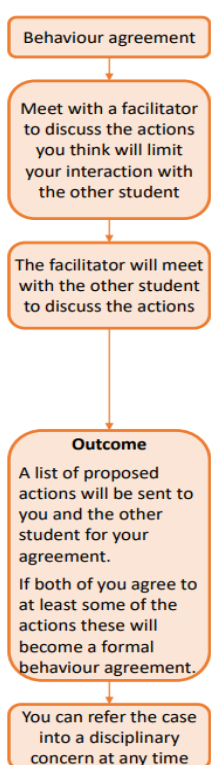
We strongly recommend however that you go through these documents with a Tutor rather than on your own. They are heavy in detail and procedure, so it helps to read them with someone familiar with the process.

It is also useful to write out your account of what happened as soon as you feel able. You could dictate this to a friend or Tutor. Please note that you do not need any evidence to make a report. You (and a tutor and/or supporter) can also meet with the University Investigator before making a complaint, to discuss the process and get more information about the informal and formal procedures.

Anonymous reporting

The University does have a site for students to report sexual violence anonymously, [here](#). No action can be taken on the basis of an anonymous complaint, but it does provide information that allows the University to track the prevalence of incidents that take place.

University informal process – behavioural agreement



The University’s informal process is intended to result in an agreement to restrict interactions between you and the other student. While both the University and College retain a record of the procedure, it is not recorded on any personal records.

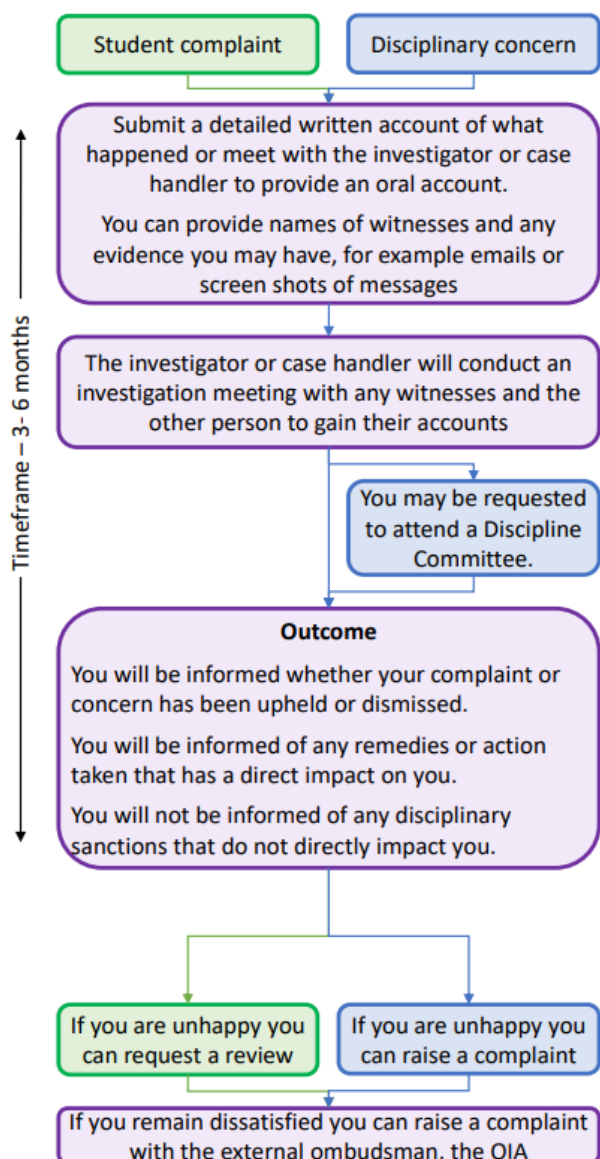
- You [submit a form with your details](#), the details of the other person involved and the details of the incident and any subsequent interaction with the other person.
- The University may appoint an investigator, who will meet with you (and your tutor if you wish) and the other student separately.
- They will write a report and recommend specific actions, agreed with you, that should limit future interactions between you and the other student.
- If the other student does not agree to these actions, then you can report the issue to the formal procedure.
- If the agreement is breached, then this can be referred to the student discipline procedure (the formal process).

This procedure usually takes about two months or slightly more. Please note that this document does simplify it considerably and you should go through it in detail with a Tutor.

Summary of the informal procedure from University website.

University formal process (the student discipline procedure)

The formal process can result in sanctions or other measures being imposed on the other student, including educative sessions, restrictions on the use of facilities or exclusion from the University. This does appear on their student record.



- You submit a [concern form](#), including your details, the other person's details, details about the incident, what you would like to happen and any available evidence.
- University may appoint an investigator, who will meet with you (and your Tutor if you wish) and with the other student separately. They may also identify other sources of evidence and witnesses.
- The investigator writes a report outlining the findings and submits it to the University Student Discipline Officer
- The Student Discipline Officer decides whether to impose a minor sanction, or to refer the case to a Discipline Committee.
- The University investigator communicates this decision within 7 days to both students
- If referred to a Discipline Committee, the respondent can choose to make a statement to the committee and has ten days to ask for witnesses. The reporting student does not have to attend this meeting.
- The Discipline Committee decides whether to impose a more serious sanction
- The responding student can choose to appeal this decision to the Appeals Committee

This procedure takes longer than the informal procedure, and can result in serious sanctions for the respondent. Again, it is simplified here.

University flow chart of the Student Discipline Procedure.

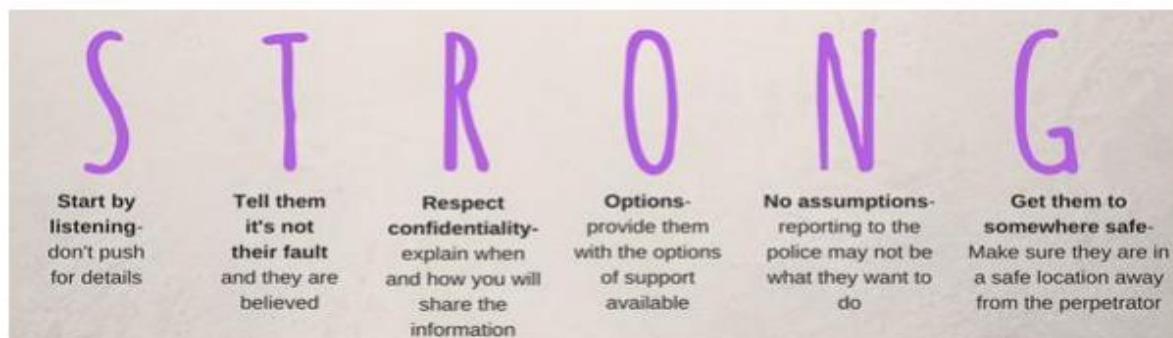
After initiating a procedure

If the University thinks that there is an immediate and significant risk to you or others then precautionary action can be taken to prevent the other student from contacting you during the procedure.

It can take some time for these processes to work through – a month or more for the informal process and several months for the formal process. During this time, the University Investigator will update you as appropriate and you should also continue to receive tutorial support. You may feel impatient or stressed during this time, and that is ok. It is important that you let your tutor know so that they can help you manage your time and workload if you need to. You may also feel that you want to talk things through with a counsellor – perhaps after some time has passed. You can self-refer to the University Sexual Assault and Harassment Advisor, or the University Counselling Service, at any time.

4. Supporting a friend who has experienced sexual misconduct

If you have a friend who has experienced sexual misconduct, they may ask you to listen to them and support them. You can use the STRONG approach, shown below. Please keep what they tell you strictly confidential – it is important that your friend is able to control who knows about their experience, and please bear in mind that a breach of confidentiality could prevent a formal investigation or any precautionary action moving forward.



Your friend may be seeking support or may be interested in their reporting options, or may simply want someone to listen to them and take care of them. If they are seeking further support or reporting options, please refer them to the sources detailed on page 4.

It is up to your friend who they discuss their experience with, and they may wish to keep it as private as possible. It is very useful if you or they can discuss it with a College Tutor, because they can help access the various means of support and help make a decision about which of the procedures to follow – please note that this does not have to be your own Tutor.

Your friend can also discuss with the nurses or contact the [University Sexual Assault and Harassment Advisor](https://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/sexual-assault-and-harassment-advisor).
<https://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/sexual-assault-and-harassment-advisor>

Please remind your friend not to discuss the complaint widely with other friends. We know they may wish to have a few people close to them to talk to, and that is fine, but wider knowledge might undermine future investigations.

Being a supporter can be invaluable to your friend, but you will be most effective at this if you ensure you have support too.

You can also discuss the case anonymously with the people suggested below if you need advice. You do not have to deal with difficult situations like this alone. No one will press you to reveal names if you are not comfortable doing so. You should not be deterred from seeking help for this reason.

- Your Tutor, or another of the Tutors (Dr Amy Donovan and Dr Arik Kershenbaum are particularly equipped to discuss issues of this kind – email cdhc@girton.cam.ac.uk);
- The Senior Tutor (senior.tutor@girton.cam.ac.uk)
- The College nurses (nurses@girton.cam.ac.uk).

The only exception to confidentiality is if you believe there is a risk of significant harm to someone. In that case, if the risk is immediate you should contact the police, or the porters or Duty Tutor if you prefer. If you think there is ongoing risk that is not immediate let the Senior Tutor know. She will be happy to discuss with you as to whether or not revealing names is necessary. You do not have to make this decision alone.

5. FAQs

Why does College use the University procedure to deal with sexual misconduct?

The University has investigators with specialist training for dealing with this kind of case.

Will I have to talk to the perpetrator if I report?

No. None of the processes require you to have any contact with the perpetrator.

Can I report a historical incident?

Yes – there is no time limit for reporting.

Can I take a friend with me to report an incident?

Yes – you can take a friend to see any of the sources of support noted in this document.

Is the procedure different for LGBT sexual assault?

No – the procedure is the same and incidents are taken equally seriously, with recognition that the power dynamics may be different.

The incident occurred when I was in breach of College rules. Will I be punished if I report?

Your Tutor will support you through the reporting process. They may discuss the circumstances with you, and they will also support you through any other meetings about the incident. The role of a Tutor is to support you, not to judge you.

What kind of evidence do I need to report an incident?

You do not need physical evidence or witness accounts – **you can report an incident regardless of evidence**. In the 7 days after the incident, once you decide to report to the police or the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (where evidence is taken), you are advised not to: wash your hair or body; brush your teeth; smoke; eat or drink (including non-essential medication); go to the toilet; discard any sanitary products; remove or wash clothing worn during or after the incident; tidy up, clean or remove items touched by the assailant. You should also preserve any relevant text or social media messages or emails.

How long do the procedures take?

The informal procedure takes 4-8 weeks from report to outcome. The formal procedure may take longer – several months.

If I observe a serious incident in College, what do I do?

You should report the incident to the porters, who are trained to contact the relevant people, take necessary action and provide you with advice. You can also speak to a Tutor about this as detailed on the previous pages. You should do this even if other people are breaking other College rules at the time. The porters will always prioritise the most serious incident.

If I observe a serious incident in College while I'm breaking College rules, what do I do?

You should still report the incident to the porters, who are trained to contact the relevant people, take necessary action and provide you with advice. A Tutor will support you through any additional meetings about the incident and they will not judge you.

If I am asked to give evidence as a witness to the police, what should I do?

We advise that you take a supporter – a friend or a Tutor – to meet with the police. You do not need a lawyer to give a witness statement. You should tell them the facts of the incident. It might be worth making notes about the key points beforehand so that you do not forget anything. It is important to keep your evidence confidential so that you do not compromise any future proceedings.

If I am asked to give evidence in the University Disciplinary Procedure, what should I do?

You are welcome to take a supporter – a friend or Tutor – to meet with the Investigator. You should tell them the facts of the incident. It might be worth making notes about the key points beforehand so that you do not forget anything. It is important to keep your evidence confidential so that you do not compromise any future proceedings.