

You're Not Alone

Support for Students Experiencing Sexual
Misconduct or Harassment



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WEBSITE

www.southessex.ac.uk

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Creating a Safe and Respectful College Community

At South Essex Colleges Group, we believe everyone has the right to feel safe, respected, and supported—on campus, online, student accommodation, and everywhere in between.



Sexual Harassment and Violence:

**Not Here.
Not Ever.**

Sexual harassment and sexual violence are never acceptable. We know these behaviours can happen anywhere, including outside of college or online—and we take every report seriously.

Even if something seems “minor” or “just a joke,” we know that calling it out early can stop it from becoming something more harmful. That’s why we’re committed to listening, supporting, and taking action.

What Is Sexual Misconduct and Harassment?

Sexual Misconduct includes:

- Unwanted sexual comments or advances
- Sexual assault or rape
- Sharing sexual images without consent
- Stalking or coercive behaviour

Harassment includes:

- Repeated unwanted contact or attention
- Offensive jokes, gestures, or messages
- Bullying or intimidation based on gender, sexuality, race, or other personal characteristics
- Online harassment or image-based abuse

Understanding Online Harassment

Online harassment can happen on social media, messaging apps, email, or any digital platform. It includes:

- Sending threatening or abusive messages
- Sharing private or explicit images without consent
- Spreading rumours or false information
- Cyberstalking or impersonation

What you can do:

- Take screenshots and save messages
- Block and report the person on the platform
- Speak to the Safeguarding Team or HE Student Support Services
- Report it through our Anonymous Reporting platform, Whisper | Text **07860 021 323** and start your first message with **SEC1**
<https://swgfl.org.uk/WHISPER/SEC1/>



What We Do

- We respond to all reports of sexual harassment, violence, and peer-on-peer abuse
- We follow clear procedures to support everyone involved—whether you're reporting, affected, or accused.
- We apply our Further Education Supporting Positive Behaviour Policy or Higher Education Disciplinary Policy to take appropriate action, including sanctions where needed
- We also tackle cyberbullying, harmful online content, and digital exploitation—because online safety matters too

Support for Everyone

We support:

- Victims with care, confidentiality, and access to wellbeing services
- Students accused with fairness and due process
- All students with education, awareness, and a culture of respect
- You can find more about how we handle these issues in this document, which explains how we manage peer-on-peer abuse and support everyone involved.

We're Here to Listen. We're Here to Help.

If you've experienced sexual misconduct, harassment, domestic abuse, or any behaviour that makes you feel unsafe or disrespected, you have the right to speak up and seek support. This leaflet outlines the help available to you—both within college and in the wider Essex community.

Support Within College

Designated Safeguarding Team

- Confidential support from trained staff who can help you understand your options and access further help

All Staff

- We understand your relationship with your teacher, lecturer or support staff will mean you feel more comfortable speaking to them first. All staff are trained in how to support you in accessing further help and keeping confidentiality

Whisper – Our Anonymous Reporting Platform

- Report incidents anonymously or with your name. We'll listen and respond with care
- Text **07860 021 323** and start your first message with **SEC1**

 <https://swgfl.org.uk/WHISPER/SEC1/>



Consent, Respect & Inclusion Training

- All students receive training on:
 - Understanding consent
 - Recognising harassment and microaggressions
 - Being an active bystander

This training will be delivered to Higher Education students via an online platform and will include a series of modules to work through in the first term. Events will also be hosted throughout the year by Student Support Services

Further Education students will access a range of Enhance (tutorials) and eXtra+ (enrichment) sessions throughout the year

HE Student Support Services

- For emotional support, academic adjustments, or wellbeing referrals

Your Rights & Our Commitment

Under the OfS Condition E6 and DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education, we are committed to:

- Taking all reports seriously
- Providing trauma-informed, inclusive support
- Offering clear, accessible reporting routes
- Ensuring staff are trained to respond appropriately and sensitively

Reporting Sexual Misconduct or Harassment: What Happens Next

We understand that speaking up about sexual misconduct or harassment can feel overwhelming. That's why we have a clear, supportive process in place to help you feel safe, heard, and in control.

How to Report

You can report:

- In person to a member of the Safeguarding Team
- Through our Anonymous Reporting platform, Whisper
 - <https://swgfl.org.uk/WHISPER/SEC1/> (anonymous or named)
 - Text **07860 021 323** and start your first message with **SEC1**
- By phone or email: safeguarding@southessex.ac.uk | **0345 52 12345**

Remember you can speak to any member of staff at South Essex Colleges Group. If you reside in University Square student accommodation, the Security Team will offer support and get you in touch with the Safeguarding Team the next working day.

You can report something that happened:

- On or off campus
- In Student Accommodation
- Online or in person
- Recently or in the past



What Happens After You Report

1. You'll be contacted by a trained member of the Safeguarding Team who will:

- Listen to you without judgment
- Explain your options
- Offer support and next steps

2. **You'll never be pressured to make a formal complaint.**

You're in control of what happens next.

If you are under 18, we may need to make referrals to external agencies to ensure you are safeguarded. We will always try to do this with your consent but there may be times we need to make referrals to keep you or someone else safe.

3. If you choose to proceed, the Safeguarding Team may:

- Refer you to external support services
- Help you access medical or mental health support
- Put in place safety measures (e.g. no-contact agreements, timetable changes)

Your Safety Comes First

We can offer:

- A named Safeguarding Team Member to support you
- Adjustments to your learning environment
- Help with academic extensions or wellbeing referrals
- Ongoing emotional support

We will never share your information without your consent unless there is a serious risk to your safety or someone else's.

Higher Education Behaviour and Disciplinary Process

If a Formal Complaint Is Made

The college follows a three-stage disciplinary process:

- **Stage 1:** Informal resolution with your Programme Leader (e.g. mediation, verbal warning)
- **Stage 2:** Formal hearing with the Programme Partnership Manager (e.g. written warning, referral to support)
- **Stage 3:** Final hearing with the Deputy Executive Director HE and Quality or Executive Director (e.g. final warning, suspension, expulsion)

In cases of gross misconduct (e.g. sexual violence, harassment, threats), the college may suspend a student immediately while a full investigation is carried out.

Gross Misconduct

Some behaviours are considered gross misconduct and may lead to immediate suspension and a Stage 3 disciplinary hearing. These include:

- Sexual violence or harassment
- Physical assault or threats
- Theft, fraud, or serious damage to property
- Serious breaches of safeguarding, equality, or health and safety policies

In these cases:

- The student may be suspended immediately to protect others while investigation takes place
- A Stage 3 disciplinary panel will be convened, chaired by a senior leader
- Outcomes may include a final written warning, suspension, or expulsion from the college

This process is designed to be fair, transparent, and trauma-informed. Students will be supported throughout and have the right to appeal any decision.

Further Education Behaviour and Disciplinary Process

If the behaviour reported breaches our Code of Conduct, the college may take action under the Supporting Positive Behaviours Policy, which includes:

- Support Interventions to help students re-engage and reflect
- A three-stage disciplinary process (verbal, written, and final warnings)
- In serious cases, a Serious Breach Panel may lead to:
 - Suspension
 - Withdrawal
 - Exclusion (with Executive Board approval)

All students involved will be treated with dignity and respect. You can bring a parent, carer, or trusted adult to any meeting.

Your Rights and Support

- You will be treated with dignity and respect throughout the process
- You can bring a parent, carer, or trusted adult to any meeting
- You will be kept informed of outcomes and supported throughout
- You can appeal any formal outcome within 5 working days



♥ You Deserve to Feel Safe

Whether it happened recently or in the past, whether it was in person or online—**you are not alone**. We believe you. We support you. And we're here to help you take the next step—whatever that looks like for you.

Want to Know More?

- Check out our **Anti-Bullying Policy** for how we handle non-sexual peer conflict
- Read our **Safeguarding Policy** for how we handle disclosures of sexual misconduct, harassment and radicalisation & extremism concerns.
- All College policies, including Student Behaviour/Disciplinary Policies are available on our website and requests can be made for accessible documents.
 - **Further Education:** <https://www.southessex.ac.uk/policies>
 - **University Centre (HE):** <https://www.southessex.ac.uk/he/he-policies-and-procedures>
- Visit the **Moodle (FE)** or **Canvas (HE)** or speak to the Safeguarding Team for guidance, resources, and support.



Support Services in Essex and Nationwide

In an Emergency

- Call 999 if you are in immediate danger.
- Campus Security University Square 01702 328408 / Security Mobile: 07920821678
The Team are available 24/7 if you live in University Square Student Accommodation.
- NHS 111 for urgent medical advice.

Local and national organisations and helplines that support victims of sexual assault and sexual harassment in Essex and across the UK:

CARA (Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse)

Specialist support for survivors of sexual violence and abuse.

 01206 769795 |  caraessex.org.uk

Synergy Essex

A partnership of Essex-based support services including CARA. First Contact Navigators help you access the right support.

 03000 037 777 |  synergyessex.org.uk

 support@synergyessex.org.uk

Compass (Essex Domestic Abuse Helpline)

Single point of contact for domestic abuse support across Essex.

 0330 333 7 444 (8am–8pm weekdays, 8am–1pm weekends)

 essexcompass.org.uk

Safe Steps

Support for women and children affected by domestic abuse across South and South West Essex.

 0300 003 7777 |  safesteps.org

Break the Cycle by Safe Steps

Support for anyone aged 13 to 19 years old who may be in an unhealthy relationship, or who are recovering from an unhealthy relationship in Southend.

 01702 302333 |  btcsafesteps.org

SERICC (Rape and Sexual Abuse Specialist Service)

Support for anyone in South and West Essex affected by sexual violence.

 01375 380609 |  sericc.org.uk

Safer Places

Support for people affected by domestic and sexual abuse.

 03301 025811 |  saferplaces.co.uk

Changing Pathways

Support for survivors of domestic abuse in South Essex.

 01268 729707 |  changingpathways.org

The Next Chapter

Support for women, children, and families affected by domestic abuse in North Essex.

 01206 500585 |  thenextchapter.org.uk

Victim Support Essex

Free, confidential help for anyone affected by crime.

 0808 168 9111 |  victimsupport.org.uk

Essex Child & Family Wellbeing Service

Support for families and children affected by domestic abuse.

 Mid Essex: 0300 247 0014 |  North Essex: 0300 247 0015

 South Essex: 0300 247 0013 |  West Essex: 0300 247 0122

 essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk

Local and national organisations and helplines that support victims of hate crime and harassment in Essex and across the UK:

Local Support in Essex

Essex Victim Support

 (Essex office): 0808 178 1694 (Mon–Fri, 8am–5pm)

 National 24/7 Support line: 0808 168 9111

Offers emotional and practical support whether or not the crime has been reported

Stop Hate UK – Essex Dedicated Line

 0800 138 1625 (Free, 24/7)

Provides confidential support and advice for victims of hate crime across Essex, funded by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

Hate Incident Reporting Centres (HIRCs)

Located across Essex in community venues.

Offer a safe space to report hate incidents without going directly to the police.

Find your nearest HIRC via Essex Police: <https://www.essex.police.uk/ro/report/hate-crime/information/v1/hate-crime/how-to-report-hate-crime>

National Helplines

Victim Support (UK-wide)

Offers emotional and practical support for all crime victims

☎ 0808 168 9111 (24/7)

💬 Victim Support Live Chat

🌐 <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/crime-info/types-crime/hate-crime/>

Stop Hate UK

Independent charity offering support and anonymous reporting

☎ 0800 138 1625 (24/7)

☎ Under 18s: 0808 801 0576

🌐 www.stophateuk.org

Galop – LGBT+ Hate Crime Helpline

Supports LGBT+ individuals facing hate crime, domestic abuse, or sexual violence

☎ 0800 999 5428

🌐 <https://www.galop.org.uk/>

Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks)

Offers confidential support for victims of anti-Muslim hate

☎ 0800 456 1226

✉ info@tellmamauk.org

🌐 <https://tellmamauk.org/>

On Your Side (East and Southeast Asian Communities)

Supports East and Southeast Asian communities facing racism or hate

☎ 0808 801 0393 (24/7)

🌐 www.onyoursideuk.org

Crimestoppers

Anonymous crime reporting line available UK-wide

☎ 0800 555 111

🌐 <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/keeping-safe/personal-safety/hate-crime>

SupportLine

Offers emotional support and information for victims of hate crime and other issues

☎ 01708 765200

✉ info@supportline.org.uk

🌐 <https://www.supportline.org.uk/problems/hate-crime/>





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