INTRODUCTION

All students should be able to enjoy their time at University without experiencing sexual violence, assault or harassment of any kind. This behaviour is contrary to the College’s values and will not be tolerated. Senior members and staff at Homerton College are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all our students and to giving timely, reliable advice and support to any student affected by such experiences.

- Homerton College will take all reports and complaints of harassment, assault or other unacceptable sexual behaviour seriously.
- Homerton College will offer support tailored to the particular needs of anyone who has experienced or is experiencing harassment, assault or other unacceptable sexual behaviour, and will also ensure that students know how to access support networks outside of College.

DEFINITIONS

This list includes definitions of unacceptable behaviour such as harassment, sexual assault and a broader range of unacceptable sexual behaviour.

Harassment: Unwanted conduct related to age, disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, race, ethnic origin, religion, belief, or nationality which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for an individual, or unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance.

Sexual assault: A person commits sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person in a sexual way and the person does not consent. It may or may not involve physical violence but it is still an intentional act to demonstrate control.

Serious sexual assault: Assault by penetration: if an individual intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person with a part of the body or anything else, without their consent.

Other kinds of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to:
Groping, pinching, pulling at clothing; cat-calling and sexual comments; intrusive questions e.g. about a person’s sexuality or sexual activity; slapping, hitting, beating, dragging; threats of violence; coercion into unwanted sexual activity; constant messaging – phone calls, texts, emails, messages on social media; being followed or pestered.

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT:

If you have just experienced an incident of sexual assault, and are unsure what to do, here is a brief guideline as to how to proceed:
http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/files/sexual_assault_disclosure_students.pdf

MAKING A COMPLAINT:

The College is committed to making any reporting procedure as straightforward as possible, whilst ensuring confidentiality. You can have confidence that, whatever your decision with regard to reporting an incident, you will have access to support and advice within the College, and the College will ensure you are kept informed about any follow up action that may be taken.

The people you can report an incident to in College are: the Porters, Student Health Advisor, Welfare Officers, Counsellors, your Tutor, the Senior Tutor.
Depending on the severity of the incident, there are two possible courses to take:

**Informal Resolution:**

If the incident is of a less severe nature, and the victim considers this type of response adequate, the College will help to resolve the incident informally. Incidents of this kind might be, but are not limited to: inappropriate jokes, persistent teasing, inappropriate or sexualized comments, requests for sexual favours.

The informal resolution would involve responses such as:

- The victim asking the person(s) involved to stop.
- Asking someone else to speak on behalf of the victim to the person(s) involved. This may be a friend, tutor, the HUS Welfare Officers or others.
- Writing a letter outlining the behaviours you find unacceptable and asking for them to stop.

Homerton College is committed to helping those who choose this method to decide how best to proceed and to provide support and assistance if and where necessary. It is hoped that most incidents will be resolved in this manner.

If, following a response of this kind, the incidents do not stop or there is no change in behaviour from those involved, then a more formal procedure can be carried out, as outlined below. In this case it can be useful to keep a record of the incidents and their frequency for future reference.

**Formal Procedure:**

**Repeated Incidents:**
For repeated occurrences of the kind mentioned above, College can look into a complaint further. The original complaint would be passed on to the Senior Tutor who would then carry out a more thorough investigation of the incident. All persons involved in an investigation must be notified as soon as possible by the Senior Tutor. Any findings from this investigation would then be passed on to the Dean for a final decision to be made on both the appropriate course of action and any disciplinary measures required.

**Serious Harassment, Physical or Sexual Assault:**
For more serious incidents the College will do its utmost to support a victim in the time immediately following an incident. The college recommends attendance at Accident and Emergency at Addenbrooke’s Hospital (turn right on Hills Road), which is open 24 hours – this is about half a mile away and the college will supply a taxi. The College strongly recommends reporting any serious incident to the police (more details below) and/or giving consideration to going to the Oasis Centre in Peterborough so that evidence may be collected, and will pay for taxis there and back if required. A Tutor will accompany students to A&E and/or the Oasis Centre.

Information about the Oasis Centre and their procedures is available here: [http://www.oasiscentre.org/index.html](http://www.oasiscentre.org/index.html)

Please note that the Oasis Centre may be visited as a ‘walk-in’ service 9-5, Monday to Friday, and evidence of rape or assault can be collected there for possible future use without necessarily involving the Police. *Outside these hours access can only be arranged via the Police and victim may feel under pressure to make a Police complaint before they feel ready to make a decision.*

If a Police investigation into an incident begins, College will await the findings of this investigation before proceeding further. In the immediate future following the reporting of an incident, College will be advised by the police as to how to proceed. Whilst a police investigation takes place, College will offer support and ameliorative action for the victim (e.g. counselling, change of supervisions, mutual agreement on shared spaces in College, change of room). During the investigation College will make sure to meet with the victim regularly to ensure that they are kept up to date with regards to how the investigation is proceeding. If the investigation confirms that a crime has taken place, College is entitled to take full disciplinary action. If the investigation is unable to proceed, College will offer continuous support as outlined above.
If a complaint is made to College and no report to the police is made, the College will proceed based on the evidence available to them. If no evidence is available then College will do as much as possible in order to ameliorate the situation. If evidence is available, a gender-balanced group will be set up comprised of the Senior Tutor, the Dean and one other Senior Member of College. The group will notify all members involved and will investigate as thoroughly as possible, as soon as possible. The findings will be reported to the Dean for further disciplinary action.

If an accusation is discovered to be unfounded and malicious, then action may be taken against the complainant. However, if an accusation is made in good faith but is unfounded, no action will be taken against the complainant. Any harassment or bullying of a victim as a consequence of their reporting of, or considering the reporting of, an incident is totally unacceptable and shall be dealt with separately.

**Making a complaint to the police**

Sexual assault is a criminal offence; you can report the crime to the police and are encouraged to do so, especially in the most serious cases. At the Cambridgeshire Constabulary you can speak to an officer specially trained in dealing with sexual assault, but they may not be immediately available. They do not have the right to ask you about your relationship history or your sexual life. The officer will explain police procedures to you and give you advice and information about the next stages including the court process.

A code of practise for victims is available here, and includes a guide to police procedures on page 12:  [https://www.cambs.police.uk/victims/](https://www.cambs.police.uk/victims/)

For forensic evidence to be gathered, you should report the incident as soon as possible. The best way to do this is to go to the Oasis Centre, as outlined above. Evidence is collected during a medical examination by a forensic medical examiner, who will also advise you on any immediate health concerns.

Try not to wash or get cleaned up in any other way until you have given evidence. Take a change of clothes with you if possible in case your clothes are kept for forensic examination.

You can choose someone to accompany you for support e.g. a friend, relative, your Tutor (or the Duty Tutor), the Senior Tutor. If you are finding the experience of speaking to the police too upsetting, you can arrange to give your statement at a later point.

**FURTHER HELP:**

Information for further help and support, both inside and outside of College, is available below.

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*Policy developed by Leo Buizza (HUS) with input from the Pastoral and Tutorial team, Homerton College*

*Last updated by PJB 20/9/16*

*(to be reviewed further in 2017 when University policy published)*
Help and support for victims of sexual assault

Local Support in and around Cambridge:

Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre is a helpline service run by women, for women and girls who have survived or are currently experiencing sexual violence. The helpline is also open for family, friends and professionals who are supporting a survivor. Cambridge Rape Crisis also offer a call back service. Tel: 01223 245888 (Wednesdays 7.30pm - 9.30pm, Saturdays 3.00pm - 5:30pm & Sundays 10:00am - 12:30pm) / Email Support Service: support@cambridgerapecrisis.co.uk (expect a reply in 2-7 days)

The Oasis Centre at Peterborough is the Sexual Assault Referral Centre covering Cambridgeshire. They provide support as well as emergency contraception, pregnancy testing and STI testing, and can guide you through police reporting procedures. They have a helpline at 0845 089 6262 / Email: oasiscenter@nhs.net

Choices Counselling offers a confidential counselling service in Cambridge and surrounding areas for women and men whose lives are affected by childhood sexual abuse. Tel: 01223 358149 (24hr answerphone) / Email: choicescounselling@hotmail.co.uk

The NHS also provides information and advice on help and support after sexual assault

Cambridge police sexual assault unit are available, and have a hotline at 617-349-3381

SupportLine provide information and temporary support for any victim, and have a hotline available at 01708 765200 (hours vary) / Email: info@supportline.org.uk

National Support:

The Havens are a network based in London who can help you support a friend who has been a victim of sexual assault. They have a 24/7 helpline at 020 3299 6900.

Women’s Aid are a support network for abuse against women and children in the UK. They have a Freephone 24hr service at 0808 2000 247 / Email: helpline@womensaid.org.uk

Victim Support are a support network for victims of crime in the UK, and have a page dedicated to victims of sexual assault and rape (for women), and another for men. They have a helpline at 0808 1689111 (8pm to 8am weekdays, 5pm-8am weekends) / Email: supportlineemail@victimsupport.org.uk

The Survivors Trust is an umbrella organisation for agencies that support women, men and children. They can provide you with information on support available and procedures, and have a helpline available at 01788 550554 / Email info@thesurvivorstr