

# Student & Staff Gender-Based Violence Prevention & Support Policy

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## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

#### 1. Introduction

At South Lanarkshire College we believe that all members of the College community has the right to prosper and flourish in a safe, supportive, inclusive learning environment free from any form of gender-based violence, abuse or harassment. The College has a zero-tolerance approach to instances of gender-based violence on campus, and will work tirelessly to implement the College's Gender-based Violence Prevention Strategy across all areas of the College. This policy links closely with other relevant South Lanarkshire College policies such as, Equality Policy, Security, Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy, Dignity at Work Policy, Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Student and Staff Disciplinary Policies and Procedures, and the Student Code of Conduct.

Although gender-based violence affects more women and girls, it also impacts men and boys, and those in the LGBT+ community. We recognise that gender-based violence is an issue across all of society and we are fully committed to ensuring our campus is safe for everyone. In addition, the College seeks to provide a caring and timely response to those who have been impact by gender-based violence. In everything that we do, the College will consistently send out a strong message that gender-based violence has no place in our college community or wider society.

#### 2. Scope of the Policy

The College recognises its responsibilities in promoting the welfare and safety of all its students and staff. Therefore, this policy applies to all students and staff who are members of the College community.

The College is committed to:

- Take steps to promote equality and reduce the risk of Gender-based Violence;
- Take action where incidents occur or allegations of abuse are raised; and
- Support individuals who are experiencing or have been impact by gender-based violence by facilitating access to support and specialist services, where appropriate.

#### 3. Definition

For the purpose of this policy, we use the Scottish Government's definition of gender-based violence. Gender-based violence describes a range of behaviours that includes: intimidation, harassment, online abuse, intimate image sharing, domestic abuse, physical and emotional abuse, stalking, sexual assault and murder. The term also includes commercial sexual exploitation and so-called 'honour based' violence, including, female genital mutilation, forced marriages and 'honour' crimes.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/equally-safe-scotlands-strategy-prevent-eradicate-violence-against-women-girls/>

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

#### 4. Context

- Levels of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland have remained relatively stable since 2011-12, with around 58,000 to 61,000 incidents a year. The police recorded 60,641 incidents of domestic abuse in 2018-19, however, there was a 4% increase in 2019-20 to 62,907.<sup>2</sup>
- Where gender information was recorded, in 2019-20 around four out of every five incidents of domestic abuse had a female victim and a male accused. This proportion has remained very stable since 2011-12.<sup>3</sup>
- One in five children in the UK will have experienced domestic abuse by the time they reach 18.<sup>4</sup>
- According to the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey, women are almost twice as likely as men to have experienced partner abuse and young women (aged 16-24) more likely than any other age group of women to have experienced partner abuse.<sup>5</sup>
- At least 40% of the sexual crimes recorded in Scotland in 2019-20 by the police related to a victim under the age of 18. This proportion is similar to the previous year.<sup>6</sup>
- In a study published by the NSPCC, girls experienced more frequent and more severe emotional, physical and sexual violence than boys – one in three 13–17 year old girls reported some form of sexual partner violence. Girls reported high levels of coercive control including surveillance through the use of online technologies.<sup>7</sup>
- On forced marriage, the most recent Scottish Government statistics found that 91% involved female victims.<sup>8</sup>
- Research carried out by NUS Women’s Campaign in 2019 found that unwanted sexual experiences were commonplace in further education and experiences of sexual violence and sexual harassment were heavily gendered with women significantly more likely to experience these than men.<sup>9</sup>

Gender-based violence occurs across all levels of society. The fundamental cause of violence against women and girls is gender inequality. Women and girls may also have other protected characteristics that increases their risk level of experiencing violence and abuse. For example, those from ethnic communities, with disabilities or a status which is particularly vulnerable such as a refugee or asylum seeker, lone parent, homelessness can greatly increase the risk factor, particularly where an imbalance of power exists.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/domestic-abuse-statistics-recorded-police-scotland-2019-20/pages/2/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/domestic-abuse-statistics-recorded-police-scotland-2019-20/pages/2/>

<sup>4</sup> Radford et al., 2011

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-crime-justice-survey-2019-20-main-findings/pages/20/>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.rapecrisisScotland.org.uk/resources-stats-key-info/#rslider\\_4](https://www.rapecrisisScotland.org.uk/resources-stats-key-info/#rslider_4)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/partner-exploitation-violence-teenage-intimate-relationships-summary.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/understanding-forced-marriage-scotland/pages/5/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.nus.org.uk/articles/nus-ground-breaking-report-on-sexual-violence-in-further-education>

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

The two factors related to gender inequality and linked to gender-based violence are:

- Social norms supporting violence as a means of conflict resolution
- The unequal position of women in relationships and society – violence occurs in societies in which men are viewed as superior and possess the economic and decision making power.<sup>10</sup>

This does not mean that women do not use violence or carry out gender-based violence. Nor does it mean that men are not the victims of these actions. It merely recognises that statistically men are commonly the perpetrators and women and girls the victims. The different forms of violence have their roots in gender inequality and in the different power relations between men and women in society. They are therefore understood as gender-based violence and are interlinked.

#### 5. Gender-Based Violence Offences

These can include, but are not limited to:

- Physical, sexual and psychological violence (for example physical assault and sexual assault, coercive control etc.)
- Unwanted and unwelcome, sexual or gender-based verbal, written, online and/or physical conduct.
- Sexual harassment and intimidation at college, work and in the public areas
- Threatening or causing physical harm, extreme verbal abuse, or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health and safety of any other person.
- Discrimination, as defined as actions that deprive other members of the community of educational or employment access, benefits or opportunities on the basis of gender.
- Intimidation, defined as implied threats or acts that cause an unreasonable fear of harm in another.
- Bullying, defined as repeated and/or severe aggressive behaviour likely to intimidate or intentionally hurt, control or diminish another person, physically or mentally.
- Violence between those in an intimate relationship (this includes romantic relationships, dating, domestic, and/or relationship violence). Intimate relationship violence is a pattern of abusive behaviour in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over intimate partners. Intimate partner violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.healthscotland.scot/health-topics/gender-based-violence/gender-based-violence-overview/overview-of-gender-based-violence>

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

- Stalking, defined as a pattern of repeated and unwanted attention, harassment, contact, or any other course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear of their safety or the safety of others e.g. unwanted gifts, sms messages, through social media.
- Dowry related violence – Dowry includes gifts, money, goods or property given from the bride's family to the groom or in-laws before, during or any time after the marriage. Dowry is a response to explicit or implicit demands or expectations of the groom or his family.
- Forced and Child Marriages – Forced marriages is when a person faces physical pressure to marry (e.g. threats, physical violence or sexual violence) or emotional and psychological pressure (e.g. made to feel like they are bringing shame on their family).
- Honour crimes involve physical, emotional, psychological, financial and sexual abuse, including murder, committed by people who want to defend the reputation of their family or community.
- FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), also known as female genital cutting and female circumcision, is the ritual removal of some or all of the external female genitalia.

#### 6. College Policies to Deal with Gender Based Violence

Allegations of gender-based violence will be dealt with under the relevant student and staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedures and Student Code of Conduct. These policies outline the processes to be followed and the rights of the accused regarding representation and appeal. Appropriate support will be given to both the victim and the accused throughout these processes.

#### 7. Confidentiality

All disclosures of gender-based violence will be treated confidentially, and as far as possible, information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis. The key exception being situations where there is a reason to believe that there may be a risk to the person concerned or to others, including harm to children and vulnerable adults at-risk.

#### 8. Identification

The College recognises that it takes courage to disclose experiences of gender-based violence which may include historical, recent and ongoing abuse. Those impacted may be fearful and anxious about making that disclosure. Given the barriers that can make it difficult to disclose, there may be other signs that indicate someone may have been impacted by gender-based violence. These can include, but are not limited to:

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

- There may be obvious effects of physical violence e.g. bruising
- Explanations for injuries/incidents that occur that are 'explained away' by the victim
- Interruptions at college, e.g. repeated upsetting calls/texts/emails
- May cry or be very anxious
- Uncharacteristic distraction, problems with concentration
- Poor attendance or presenteeism
- Changes in behaviour
- Depression/suicidal ideation
- Fear of partner/references to anger
- Expresses fear about leaving children home alone with partner
- Appears to be isolated from friends and family
- Needing regular time off for 'appointments'

It is important not to make assumptions as some of the above indicators may be indicative of other concerns unrelated to abuse. The context within which they occur is therefore an important consideration.

#### 9. Asking about Abuse and Responding to Disclosure

When there is a suspicion of abuse or responding to a disclosure, it is important to listen to what individuals have to say without rushing to judgement, solutions or taking control away from them. Being empathetic and present with them during this process, to then work collaboratively to provide immediate and/or therapeutic solutions, will ensure those impacted feel listened to and in control of the situation. The foremost priority at all times is the safety and care and support of the person involved.

You should provide a private space, reassure them about confidentiality and advise of the limits of this from the outset. In instances where you pick up on possible signs of abuse, proactively initiate a discussion. Ask non-threatening, open questions, including for example: "how are things at home?" or "how are you feeling generally?" If there is obvious bruising/injuries, then ask direct questions: "I'm worried about you because..." or "I'm concerned about your safety..."

Although some people don't ask about abuse because they are afraid of being intrusive or causing offence, there is evidence that most people experiencing domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence wish somebody had asked them about it.

6 steps to help guide your conversation if you receive a disclosure:

1. **Believe them.** Be kind and reassure them they are not to blame. Confirm you take the matter seriously. Do not ask for proof.
2. **Explain your role and encourage towards specialist support.** Advise that you are not a trained specialist but you can listen and provide information and

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

refer for support. The best outcome is they seek specialist support as soon as possible.

3. **Ask if they feel safe.** Ask them if they are feeling frightened and, if they are, ask what they are afraid of. Early on, let them know you are duty bound to tell someone immediately if they disclose that they, or someone else, is at risk of serious harm. This is to keep them safe.
4. **Listen actively.** Don't interrupt. Don't investigate or probe for details; that's not your role. Take brief, factual notes of what was said and don't make assumptions.
5. **Give them control.** The person making a disclosure needs to be in control and make their own decisions about what happens next. It is not appropriate to offer solutions or advice or to act on their behalf without their full consent unless there is a risk of harm to them or others (see 3).
6. **Safeguarding for under 18s.** If the disclosure is being made by someone over 16 but under 18, you need to pass this disclosure to the Head of Student Services who has responsibility for safeguarding procedures. This should ideally be done with the person's consent.

If you are unable or feel uncomfortable about asking about abuse or responding to a disclosure, it is important that you take steps to refer to somebody else to ensure that the focus is on that person's immediate safety and health and wellbeing. In addition, if someone chooses not to share information about abuse during a first discussion, you should advise them of this policy and offer support in the future.

#### 10. Support Services

Anyone experiencing gender-based violence is encouraged to report it immediately to someone in the institution that they feel comfortable with who can support them. All staff have been provided with vital specialist and confidential support information that fits into staff ID badges. They can use this information to support individuals or make a referral to another member of staff. Staff can access direct support from line managers or from Human Resources. Students can access support from Course Guidance Tutors or directly with Guidance and Support staff through Student Services. For anyone affected by gender-based violence, immediate support can be provided and a prompt referral made to external specialised support services, if necessary. In addition, arrangements can be made to make use of the internal support services including for example, Student Counselling Service and Employee Assistance Programme.

The College will respond sympathetically, confidentially and effectively to anyone who discloses that they are experiencing gender-based violence. The type of support offered may include, but is not limited to:

- Agreed periods of absence (Authorised Absences for students) for relevant appointments, including for example support agencies, solicitors, to attend counselling, to rearrange housing or childcare and for court appointments.

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

- Where possible, give favourable consideration to temporary changes to attendance, work arrangements and workload.
- Approve requests for an advance of pay or bursary/discretionary support.
- Access to counselling support services during college time and other internal support services.
- Review the security of information held such as temporary or new addresses, bank or healthcare details.
- Alert reception and security staff where the alleged perpetrator is known to come to the College.
- Implement particular security arrangements that may have to be put in place to ensure the safety of the person concerned.
- Record any threatening or violent incidents by the perpetrator that takes place in the College.

This list is not exhaustive and there may be other measures that can be tailored to the individual circumstances of the person involved. It is the choice of the person involved whether to accept the support and the College cannot share what they have disclosed with anyone unless there are reasons to break confidentiality.

## 11. Sources of Information and Help

### Internal Support Services

#### Support for students - Student Services

Guidance and Support staff can provide confidential, non-judgemental listening support and offer guidance on next steps, should you wish. This includes access to counselling services and external specialist support agencies.

T: 01355 807780 (ask for Student Services)

E: [student.support@slc.ac.uk](mailto:student.support@slc.ac.uk)

#### Student Counselling Service

The College provides free accessible counselling which is available to all students.

<https://www.south-lanarkshire-college.ac.uk/life-at-slc/student-support/mentalhealth/>

#### Support for staff - Human Resources

The Human Resources team can provide confidential support to staff where you are able to talk over your problems or concerns in private and they can help you get the appropriate support you need.



## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

#### **Staff Employee Assistance Programme**

The Employee Assistance Programme is a completely free, confidential and impartial service providing information and support on a variety of matters. You may refer yourself confidentially, or seek a referral through Human Resources. The Counselling Service is operated by PAM Assist and can be contacted by telephone on 0800 882 4102. To access [www.pamassist.co.uk](http://www.pamassist.co.uk) please log in using the following details: Username – SLCollege Password – SLCollege1

#### **South Lanarkshire College Community Pastoral Support Team**

A dedicated team of volunteer Chaplains who are there to support students' and staff's spiritual wellbeing and provide pastoral guidance and support.

W: <https://www.south-lanarkshire-college.ac.uk/home/community-pastoral-support-team-quiet-room/>

#### **External Support Services**

##### **Police Scotland**

Police Scotland's purpose is to improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland. Their focus is on keeping people safe which is at the heart of everything they do.

W: <https://www.scotland.police.uk/>

T: For emergencies call 999. For non-emergencies call 101.

##### **Police Scotland**

##### **Domestic abuse - support and information**

W: <https://www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/domestic-abuse/>

##### **Police Scotland**

##### **Victims of crime – support and information**

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/victim-support-scotland/>

##### **Rape Crisis Scotland**

Rape Crisis Scotland provides a national rape crisis helpline and email support for anyone affected by sexual violence.

W: <https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk>

T: General Enquiries – 0141 331 4180 Helpline Number – 08088 01 03 02

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

E: [support@rapecrisisscotland.org.uk](mailto:support@rapecrisisscotland.org.uk)

#### **Lanarkshire Rape Crisis Centre**

W: <https://www.lanrcc.org.uk>

T: 01698 872 298

E: [support@lanrcc.org.uk](mailto:support@lanrcc.org.uk)

#### **Victim Support Scotland**

Victim Support provides victims with free and confidential emotional and practical assistance about the criminal justice system. Trained volunteers and staff deliver assistance throughout Scotland. There is a Victim Support office in every local authority.

W: <https://www.victimsupport.scot>

T: Helpline Mon – Fri 8am - 8pm 0800 160 1985

#### **Victim Support South Lanarkshire**

T: 01698 301 111

E: [victimsupport.southlanarkshire@victimsupportscot.org.uk](mailto:victimsupport.southlanarkshire@victimsupportscot.org.uk)

#### **Scottish Women's Aid**

The Women's Aid network supports women, children and young people, who have experienced domestic abuse across Scotland by promoting women and children's rights, providing services and advice to members and ensuring that services are available to women, children and young people with experience of domestic abuse.

W: <https://womensaid.scot/>

T: 0800 0271234

E: [info@womensaid.scot](mailto:info@womensaid.scot)

#### **Women's Aid South Lanarkshire**

W: <http://www.wasl.org.uk>

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

T: 0800 027 1234

E: [info@wasler.org.uk](mailto:info@wasler.org.uk)

#### **AMIS Abused Men in Scotland**

Provide direct support to men experiencing domestic abuse, as well as helping to improve mainstream service responses and campaigning for further inclusion of male victims in the wider narrative on domestic abuse.

W: <https://abusedmeninscotland.org>

T: 0808 800 0024

#### **MASH Men As Survivors Helpline**

MASH offers telephone counselling and advice for men who have been raped or sexually abused at any time in their lives.

W: <https://survivorsuk.org>

T: 0117 907 7100

#### **LGBT Youth Scotland**

T: 0141 552 7425

E: [info@lgbtyouth.org.uk](mailto:info@lgbtyouth.org.uk)

#### **LGBT Domestic Abuse Project**

The LGBT Domestic Abuse project works across Scotland to raise awareness of LGBT people's experiences of domestic abuse and improve service responses to LGBT people who experience domestic abuse and other forms of gender based violence.

E: [info@lgbtyouth.org.uk](mailto:info@lgbtyouth.org.uk)

#### **Galop LGBT+**

Provide information and support on domestic violence and abuse and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.

T: National LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0800 999 5428

E: [help@galop.org.uk](mailto:help@galop.org.uk)

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

#### **National Stalking Helpline**

This is a national helpline to specialise in providing information and guidance to victims of harassment and stalking as well as their friends and families.

W: <https://www.suzylamplugh.org>

T: Helpline Number – 0808 802 0300

E: [info@suzylamplugh.org](mailto:info@suzylamplugh.org)

#### **Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid**

The first Asian, Black and Minority Ethnic Women's Group in Scotland. They can provide a whole range of support relating to women, children and young people experiencing domestic abuse.

W: <https://www.hematgryffe.org.uk>

T: 0141 353 0859

#### **Shakti Women's Aid**

Provide help for back minority ethnic women, children and young people who are experiencing, or who have experienced domestic abuse.

W: <https://shaktiedinburgh.co.uk/>

T: 0131 475 2399

#### **Forced Marriage Unit**

For support and advice if you are trying to stop a forced marriage or need help leaving a marriage you have been forced into.

W: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

T: 020 7008 0151

From overseas: +44 (0)20 7008 0151

E: [fmufco.gov.uk](mailto:fmufco.gov.uk)

#### **The Samaritans**

Offer a safe place for you to talk at any time you like, in your way – about whatever's getting to you. They offer confidential, listening and emotional support to those experiencing distress and anxiety.

W: <https://www.samaritans.org>

T: Freephone Helpline – 116 123

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SUPPORT POLICY

E: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

#### **Hopeline UK (Papyrus)**

Provide confidential support and advice to young people (aged 35 or under) struggling with thoughts of suicide, and anyone worried about a young person.

W: <https://papyrus-uk.org/hopelineuk/>

T: 0800 068 4141 (9am–10pm weekdays; 2pm–10pm weekends; 2pm–10pm bank holidays)

Download the free Stay Alive app - <https://www.prevent-suicide.org.uk/find-help-now/stay-alive-app/>

#### **Breathing Space**

Provide a free, confidential, phone service for anyone in Scotland experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety.

E: <https://www.breathingspace.scot>

T: 0800 83 85 87

#### **NHS 24**

NHS 24 provides a co-ordinated, single source of quality assured health and social care information for the people of Scotland.

W: <https://www.nhs24.scot>

T: 111