

**CITY OF LONDON COLLEGE**



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A UNIVERSITY SECTOR PREMIER COLLEGE

**ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY**

**2023/2024**

# **CITY OF LONDON COLLEGE POLICY STATEMENT ON: ZERO TOLERANCE TO SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. All students and staff have the right to live, study, work and relax in an environment where they feel safe and are free from any form of sexual and domestic violence, abuse and harassment.
- 1.2. All students and staff have the right to live, study, work and relax in an environment where their body and personal boundaries are respected.
- 1.3. No student or staff member should be forced to just 'put up' with sexual and domestic violence, abuse or harassment, and action must be taken where necessary to ensure all students and staff are able to enjoy the campus/student life without experiencing these.
- 1.4. Sexual harassment should not be tolerated by the College or Students' Union, and those who commit acts of sexual harassment should be stopped (i.e. their behaviour challenged) and disciplined as appropriate for their actions.
- 1.5. That in order to be effective, a whole- institution approach to preventing sexual and domestic violence, abuse and harassment is necessary. The process of driving social and cultural change must be student-led and in collaboration with and supported by College staff.

## **2 City of London College commitment**

- 2.1. To adopt a zero tolerance approach to sexual and domestic violence and sexual harassment on College premises and / or perpetrated by/against students or staff members. 'Zero tolerance' for the purposes of this policy means that incidents of such behaviour should not be left unchallenged.
- 2.2. To promote a social and cultural environment in which sexual and domestic violence and harassment is less likely to occur.
- 2.3. To challenge the causes of violence against women such as gender stereotyping and the sexualisation and objectification of women.
- 2.4. That the institutional response to sexual harassment is no different to its response to racial or homophobic harassment for example. Derogatory comments are no less offensive when they are ostensibly expressed as 'humour', 'banter' or 'joking'.
- 2.5. To promote better understanding of the concept of sexual consent, and in particular the awareness that if an individual is incapacitated by alcohol or drugs they are not able to give consent freely, and being in a relationship with someone, or consenting to previous sexual activity, does not imply consent to sex.

- 2.6. To promote better understanding that some behaviours, such as unwanted groping or kissing or other forms of sexual assault, constitute criminal offences which, if reported to the police, may result in arrest and conviction.
- 2.7. To promote better understanding of the early warning signs of domestic abuse and awareness of specialist support services.
- 2.8. To take appropriate action, be it formal or informal (as deemed appropriate to the circumstances), against students or staff who perpetrate abuse. Possible student disciplinary action is outlined in the College's Student Conduct and Discipline Code.
- 2.9. To actively encourage students and staff who experience or witness abuse to report it.
- 2.10. To publicly promote the campus, as a zero tolerance to sexual harassment space, along with a similar promotion for 'virtual spaces' such as social media channels e.g. Facebook, Twitter.
- 2.11. To develop robust and effective measures to improve the safety of the campus environment and the wellbeing of our students, including issues such as CCTV and security staffing, training and procedures.
- 2.12. To ensure that every staff member or student suffering abuse, harassment or sexual violence and every staff member or student supporting others who are suffering abuse, harassment or sexual violence, is able to find information and have access to support including specialist support.
- 2.13. To systematically collect relevant data by which to measure the scale of the problem and the impact of the College's action.
- 2.14. This policy statement sets out the College's commitment as an institution to this aim, and we will work with relevant stakeholders to ensure its implementation, including periodic review.

### **3 National and International Context**

- 3.1. The NUS have recently published their own research report, "*That's What She Said: Women students' experience of 'lad culture' in higher education*". The research undertaken makes it clear that in the social side of College life sexist, misogynistic and homophobic "banter" appears to be commonplace.
- 3.2. In the United States, President Obama launched the It's On Us campaign, a national public service campaign that urges students to combat sexual assault on their campuses. In the United States, it is estimated that one in five women has been sexually assaulted during her college years, of which only 12 percent are reported, and only a fraction of those offenders are punished.
- 3.3. Calling for a "fundamental shift in ... culture," Obama stated that:

*Campus sexual assault is no longer something we as a nation can turn away from and say, 'that's not our problem,'...It is not just on parents of young women to caution them, it is on the parents of young men to teach them respect for women. It is on grown men to set an example and be clear about what it means to be a man. ... It is on all of us to reject the quiet tolerance of sexual assault and to refuse to accept what's unacceptable.*

3.4. Data suggests the seriousness of the problem faced by women students nationally:

- 7% of women students experienced a serious sexual assault (2010 NUS Hidden Marks Report)
- 77% students have experienced sexual harassment (College of Cambridge survey)
- 12% women students have been subjected to stalking (Hidden Marks Report)
- Women aged 16 - 24 have higher risk of experiencing domestic violence (Office for National Statistics 2013)

3.5. It is acknowledged that sexual violence, abuse and harassment are not only an issue for women but may impact on individuals of any gender or sexual orientation. However we recognize that the vast majority of victims of sexual violence, abuse and harassment are women, and the vast majority of perpetrators are men. The focus of our policy and actions will take account of this reality.

## **4 Legislative context**

4.1. Individuals may be criminally or civilly liable for their own actions. The College recognises its duties and obligations in law to students and staff as individuals and the community as a whole, such as under the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.

4.2. The College has a number of policies already linked to this area, under which reports can be made and action taken, in particular the Student Conduct Policy, Bullying and Harassment policy and Student Safeguarding Policy.

4.3. We acknowledge that sexual violence and harassment will often occur outside College premises, particularly in clubs in London, and we will actively seek to promote 'safer spaces' in other venues that students use (note: the successful College of Leeds campaign on this issue).

4.4. We also acknowledge that violence and abuse occur within domestic or family environments and between those in a relationship, and all forms of domestic abuse are encompassed within this policy statement.

## **5 Awareness of this policy statement**

- 5.1. This statement shall be available to view on the CLC website and should be actively promoted through CLC Student Communication and Students' Union channels across the campus.
- 5.2. CLC staff should all be made aware of this statement through staff communication channels as well as becoming part of new staff induction.

## 6 Judgements on interpretation

- 6.1. Where a ruling on the interpretation of this policy statement is required in particular circumstances, i.e. if clarification on what the wording in this policy means is needed, the judgement of the CLC CEO should be sought.
- 6.2. This policy statement complements and promotes other policies such as the College's Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures, and does not replace or change such policies. Any challenges or appeals to such policies, or to disciplinary action initiated by them, should follow the procedure outlined within the relevant policy.

## 7 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or if there is a change in legal or other business or academic related requirement.

<i>Review date</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Reviewer</i>
October 2024	Zero Tolerance Policy	Academic Director

Document history:

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28/11/2016	Policy approved and accepted by Academic Board	Task and Completion Committee
30/11/2017	Zero Tolerance Policy	Academic Director
30/11/2018	Zero Tolerance Policy	Academic Director
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30/11/2021	Zero Tolerance Policy	Academic Director
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