

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



South  
Lanarkshire  
College  

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East Kilbride

## Document Information

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## Quick Links

We are inclusive and diverse, and this is one of our values.

We are committed to the FREDIE principles of Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement.

To find out more about FREDIE click [HERE](#)

To find out more about our Vision, Mission and Values click [HERE](#)



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# 1. Introduction

At South Lanarkshire College we believe that all members of the College community have the right to prosper and flourish in a safe, supportive and 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, SLC Behaviour Attendance and Punctuality Policy, Dignity at Work Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Student and Staff Disciplinary Policies and Procedures, Student Charter 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 LGBTQ+ 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 impacted 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 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 impacted 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>

## 4. Context

- The police recorded 61,934 incidents of domestic abuse in 2022-23, showing a 4% decrease compared to the previous year.<sup>2</sup>
- Where gender information was recorded, in 2022-23 approximately four out of every five incidents of domestic abuse had a female victim and a male accused. This proportion has remained stable from 2021-22.<sup>3</sup>
- An estimated 800,000 children are affected by domestic abuse within the UK.<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>
- On forced marriage, the most recent Scottish Government statistics found that 91% involved female victims.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/equally-safe-scotlands-strategy-prevent-eradicate-violence-against-women-girls/pages/3/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/domestic-abuse-statistics-recorded-police-scotland-2022-23/pages/2/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/domestic-abuse-statistics-recorded-police-scotland-2022-23/pages/2/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/our-influencing-work-domestic-abuse>

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

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/understanding-forced-marriage-scotland/pages/5/>

Gender-based violence occurs across all levels of society. The fundamental cause of gender-based violence is gender inequality and this violence comes from and is kept alive by gender roles and norms which means all genders suffer. Although women and girls are significantly more impacted by violence and abuse, this group are still being targeted by another group due to gender. LGBTQ+ groups also suffer disproportionate rates of gender-based violence. This demonstrates another dimension how violence and abuse is gendered for example a trans person suffering gender-based violence or a gay man being seen as 'feminine' with their gender identity being the main factor in the violence and abuse.

Men who also experience gender-based violence or who are the perpetrators or bystanders can all suffer in the gender-based violence system. This again can be intrinsically linked to societal pressure around gender roles and norms. Many will also have intersectionality factors and 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>7</sup>

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>8</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 gender-based violence have their roots in gender inequality and in the different power relations between men and women in society i.e., one group being targeted by the other group with gender being the key factor.

## 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 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.
- 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, direct messages through social media, etc.
- 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.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/equally-safe-scotlands-strategy-prevent-eradicate-violence-against-women-girls/pages/3/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://publichealthscotland.scot/our-areas-of-work/equity-and-justice/gender-based-violence/gender-based-violence-overview/overview-of-gender-based-violence/>

- 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 in a trauma-informed manner 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 those 'reporting' regarding representation and appeal. Appropriate support will be given to both the victim and the accused throughout these processes.

Students disclosing an incident of GBV will not face disciplinary action for breaching of policies relating to drug consumption, under-age alcohol consumption or misconduct in relation to the circumstances surrounding this incident. It should be noted that in a small minority of cases there may be instances where investigation, possibly disciplinary action or extended disclosure to named support contact may be required. This will be with regards to any safeguarding concerns or fitness to study policies. Any additional action will be carried out in a sensitive and trauma-informed manner to best support the student.

The College will not tolerate any instances of 'outing'. As outlined in both the Student Charter and Student Code of Conduct, students should treat all members of the college community with consideration and respect. 'Outing' would be considered an example of Gross Misconduct and appropriate action will be undertaken following the Policies and Procedures mentioned above.

## 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:

- 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
- Risk taking behaviours i.e., increased drinking
- 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 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.

Disclosures should be acted upon promptly with regular check-ins taking place with the student to ensure wraparound support is in place.

## 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.
- 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 'reported person' 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. This would mean risk to the person concerned or to others, including harm to children and vulnerable adults at-risk.

The College will provide a safe, confidential space for students and staff to receive support with no time limits set for meetings.

## 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. All emails to the dedicated Student Support email address listed below will receive a response within 24 working hours.

T: 01355 807780 (ask for Student Services)

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

#### Looking for Help - Let us Know Through Report and Support

Students can make formal reports to the Student Services team about a variety of issues including gender-based violence, safeguarding or mental health support directly through the Student Portal. These reports can be created either by providing contact details or reporting anonymously. All reports containing contact information will be responded to within a maximum of two working days.

To find out more about Report and Support click [here](#). On this page you will find support articles about various topics. You can also make a formal report by clicking 'Tell Us What Happened' or 'Tell Us Anonymously'.

For further information, email the Guidance and Support team at [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.slc.ac.uk/students/student-support/student-counselling-service/>



### **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.

T: 01355 807780 (ask for Human Resources)

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

### **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.slc.ac.uk/students/student-support/mental-health-and-wellbeing/>

### **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

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.West@victimsupportscotland.org.uk](mailto:VictimSupport.West@victimsupportscotland.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: [helpline@sdaafmh.org.uk](mailto:helpline@sdaafmh.org.uk)

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

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

T: 01355 249897 / 0141 404 0015

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: 03300 949 395

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

### **Survivors UK**

Survivors UK offers telephone counselling and advice for men and non-binary survivors of sexual violence. They provide counselling and community support for those who have been raped or sexually abused at any time in their lives.

W: <https://survivorsuk.org>

T: 020 3598 3898

## **LGBT Youth Scotland**

LGBT Youth Scotland are a national charity for LGBTQ+ young people, aged between 13 and 25.

W: <https://lgbtyouth.org.uk/>

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. Further details on this can be found by clicking [here](#).

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

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

## **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)

## **Action Against Stalking**

Action Against Stalking looks to advocate on behalf of victims of stalking and to highlight the impact of this crime.

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

T: 0800 820 2427

E: [support@actionagainststalking.org](mailto:support@actionagainststalking.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

E: [womensaid@hematgryffe.org.uk](mailto:womensaid@hematgryffe.org.uk)

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

Provide help for black 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

E: [info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk](mailto:info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk)

### **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: [fm@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fco.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

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

Text: 88247

Email: [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org)

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

