

## Rape & Sexual Assault: Information for students

The University of Cambridge and its Colleges are committed to providing a safe environment for their students, and to responding appropriately to any incidents. This guidance has been produced for students who have been sexually assaulted or raped. It gives information on the things you might want to consider to help you make an informed choice about what to do.

You may have very mixed feelings about what happened, and whether to tell anyone. People can react very differently and there is no easy answer about whether to report or not.

You should not feel under any pressure to act in any specific way. The aim of these guidelines is for to have access to some of the information that you might want to consider.

Please see below the checklist of steps to consider:

1.
  - Are you in a safe environment?
2.
  - Do you want to take some time to think things through?
3.
  - Time limits to be aware of
4.
  - Police procedures
5.
  - Who can you talk to?
6.
  - External agencies

## **1. Are you in a safe environment?**

If the assault has just occurred, you might want to consider whether you feel safe where you are.

If you or others feel at risk or consider the situation to be an emergency, you can call the Police or an ambulance on 999. If you are in College, you can alert the Porter's Lodge. For incidents in University premises you can call the University Security Office on 01223 331818.

## **2. Do you want to take some time to talk or think things through?**

If the situation is not an emergency, you may want to take some time to think things through, or to talk to someone you trust. You might want to contact a friend or a member of staff for support.

Each person's reaction to sexual assault or rape can differ as will the effect that it has on you.

You might be in shock so trying to be somewhere that feels safe and warm might help.

## **3. Time limits to be aware of:**

- If you suspect you were given any type of drug, it is best to be tested within 24 hours.
- If you want emergency contraception, the medication should be started within 72 hours.
- If you would like HIV prophylaxis, the medication should be started within 36 hours.
- Any forensic evidence collected can be stored whilst you decide what to do next. Please see section below on the collection of forensic evidence.

It is up to you to choose what kind of support you want to access, but you might want to consider getting medical attention even if you do not want to report the assault to the Police.

## **4. Police procedures**

- See the police website for more information on reporting: <https://www.cambs.police.uk/GetCloser/SexualAssault/faq.asp>
- Reporting at a police station or attending a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) can be a very lengthy process that can take many hours, and can be upsetting. So bringing a supportive friend or relative along might be helpful. It might be worth bringing a set of spare clothes if you have not changed since the assault, as the Police might need to keep them as evidence.

### **Reporting immediately**

- You can call the Cambridgeshire Constabulary on 101. The line is staffed 24 hours a day by trained operators. You can request to talk to the Rape Investigation Team directly, but it might take longer to speak to them. The University Police Liaison Officer suggest you speak to the Operator who can best assess who is available at the time.
- The police can take you to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) at Peterborough Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) - Oasis Centre in Peterborough, <http://www.oasiscentre.org/> The OASIS @ Rivergate, Rivergate Primary Care Centre, Viersen Platz, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 1ES Helpline: 0845 089 6262 - where you can have a forensic medical examination and get medical and emotional help. To help get the best quality forensic evidence, the SARC recommends that you try not to eat, drink, smoke, wash, change your clothes, go to the toilet or clear up the area where the assault took place. If you have done

any of these things, don't worry – it is often still possible to get some forensic evidence, so this should not stop you reporting.

- If you believe you were drugged, or your drink spiked, you can have urine or blood tests done to prove this, the sooner the better.
- When you give your statement to the police, try not to leave anything out, however embarrassing or painful it may be. If you can't remember something, it is okay to say so. Don't be afraid to tell the truth about things like how much you had to drink, or using recreational drugs, because if the truth comes out later it may harm the chances of prosecution. <https://www.cambs.police.uk/GetCloser/SexualAssault/faq.asp>
- Another option is to report anonymously. It can put the perpetrator on the police radar. They might not be arrested, but it can help make another reported case stronger.

### **Reporting later**

- Many people do not wish to report immediately, but decide after a while that they want to do so. This is perfectly acceptable and there are steps you can take to make this easier.
- If you are not sure what to do, you can go to the SARC or Rape Crisis. They can talk you through the different options available to you. SARC can store forensic evidence for you until you make up your mind about reporting. If you wish, they can keep DNA results on record and let you know if it matches with other reported assaults, still with no obligation on you to report. The SARC also provides medical and emotional help, which you can access without reporting to the police. The SARC is located in Peterborough. It might be possible to arrange for a taxi to be paid for by your College (approximately £60.00 each way). Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) Oasis Centre in Peterborough, <http://www.oasiscentre.org/> The OASIS @ Rivergate, Rivergate Primary Care Centre, Viersen Platz, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 1ES Helpline: 0845 089 6262
- If you do not wish to see anyone, information on this Rape Crisis website states that it is possible to preserve some evidence yourself. They recommend putting your clothes (including e.g. sanitary pad) in a clean bag in the freezer can help preserve evidence, as can brushing your teeth and then freezing the toothbrush.  
(<http://www.hertsrapecrisis.org.uk/gettinghelp.html>)

### **5. Who can you talk to?**

If you experience an incident of sexual harassment, sexual assault, during your time at Cambridge, you are strongly encouraged to tell someone about your experience and seek support.

#### **You can talk to any of the following people in College and the University:**

- College Nurse
- GP
- Tutor
- Senior Tutor
- University Counselling Service
- College Counsellor
- Chaplain
- Welfare/Women's Officer
- CUSU Women's Officer/Welfare Officer

- Student Advice Service

## 6. External agencies

**For expert advice on these issues, you can contact the following agencies:**

### ***Sexual Assault***

#### Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

Oasis Centre in Peterborough, <http://www.oasiscentre.org/> The OASIS @ Rivergate, Rivergate Primary Care Centre, Viersen Platz, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 1ES  
Helpline: 0845 089 6262  
e-mail: [oasiscenter@nhs.net](mailto:oasiscenter@nhs.net)

Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre – support for women, advice, listening

<http://www.cambridgerapecrisis.co.uk/>

Survivors UK – support for male survivors. Helpline: 0845 1221201, Mon, Tues and Thurs 7-10pm

<http://www.survivorsuk.org/>

M-Power – for male survivors, Helpline: 0808 8084231, Thurs 8-10pm

The Fylde Coast Men's Support Association – support male survivors of child abuse, rape, domestic/partner abuse, men with depression and men who self-harm. Helpline: 07932 898274 every day 9am-6pm.

### ***Childhood Sexual Abuse***

Choices Counselling (for Men and Women)

Telephone: 01223 358149

[www.choicescounselling.co.uk](http://www.choicescounselling.co.uk)

Services for:

- Female and male people of all ages who are survivors of rape or sexual abuse
- Parents of survivors of rape or sexual abuse
- Partners of survivors of rape or sexual abuse
- Mental health/care workers supporting survivors of rape or sexual abuse

### ***Domestic Abuse/physical violence***

Broken Rainbow – for LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans) people, experiencing domestic abuse

<http://www.brokenrainbow.org.uk/>

National Women's Aid <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

Women's Aid Cambridge – for women experiencing domestic violence

Refuge: 01223 460947 Mon-Fri, 9.30-6. Outreach: 01223 361214, Mon-Fri 10-5. Out-of-hours emergency line: 07730 322098, 6pm-9-30am.

Southall Black Sisters – for black and Asian women and children experiencing domestic and sexual violence, including forced marriage and honour crimes.

Helpline: 020 85710800 10am-5pm Mon-Fri (closed Weds 12.30-1.30). Languages: English, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati and Urdu.

Rights of Women is a women's voluntary sector organisation which provides free legal advice and information to women affected by sexual violence. They publish a range of free information on areas of sexual violence law to support women through the criminal justice process, including From Report to Court: a handbook for adult survivors of sexual violence.

[www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/legal.php](http://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/legal.php)

### ***Sexual health clinic***

<http://www.icash.nhs.uk/home>

### ***Sexual Harassment***

Advice Place

<https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/adviceplace/healthandwellbeing/harassment/sexualharassment/>

### ***Stalking***

Stalking Helpline <http://www.stalkinghelpline.org/>

Network for surviving stalking <http://www.nss.org.uk/>

### ***General***

CUSU Women's/Welfare Officer - listening, support and advice [womens@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:womens@cusu.cam.ac.uk)

Student Advice Service – listening, support and advice <http://www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk>

University Counselling Service – counselling <http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk>

Linkline – listening and support <http://linkline.org.uk/>

Leaflet Based on The University of Chichester Guide to dealing with Sexual Violence/Assault, and from the Rape Crisis website, which contains further information:

<http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk/reportingrape2.php>

*Student Health & Wellbeing Committee*

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