

Sexual Assault: Information for Students

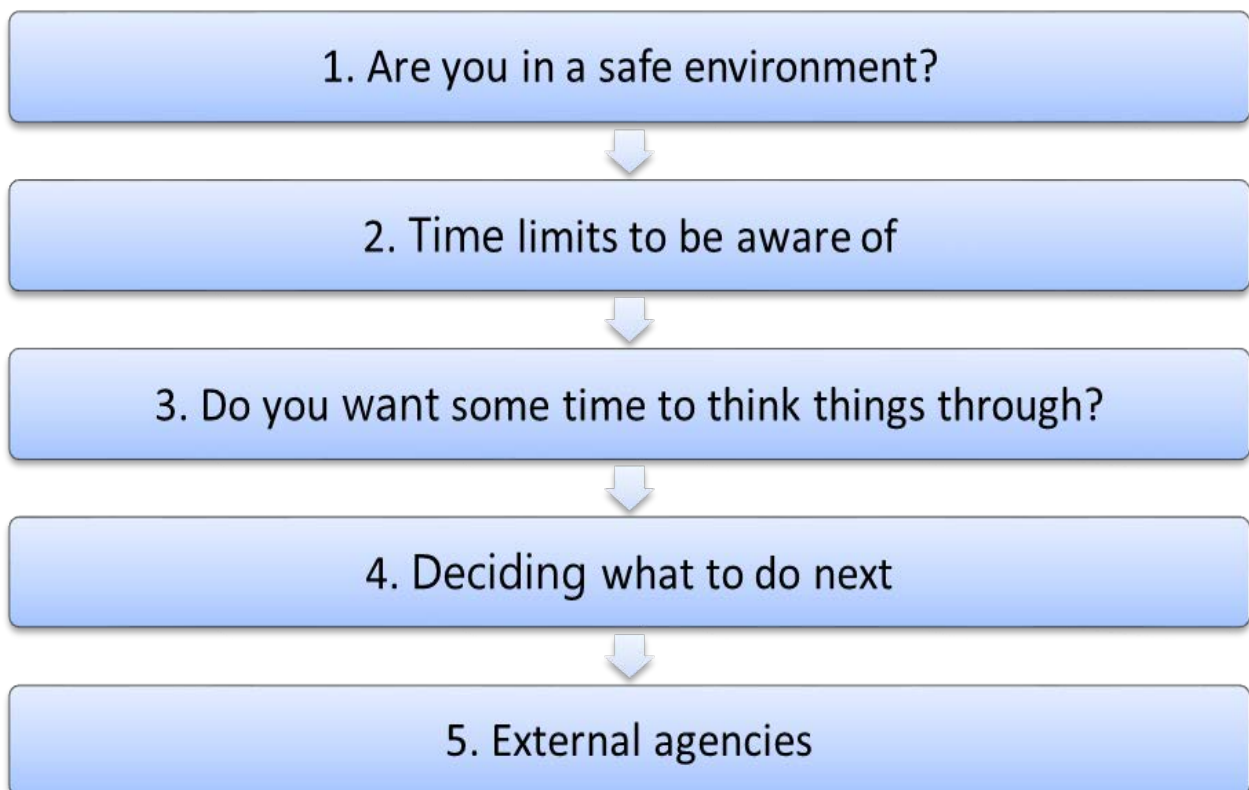
Edge Hill University is committed to providing a safe environment for our students and responding appropriately to any incidents. This guidance has been produced for students who have recently been sexually assaulted, which includes rape. It provides information that you might want to consider when making a decision about what to do next. Whilst the guidance is aimed at students who have been sexually assaulted recently, it also includes information about sources of support which may be useful for any student who is a survivor of sexual assault and historical sexual abuse.

If you have recently been raped or sexually assaulted you may be feeling many things. Some people report that they feel numb or shocked, confused or frightened or fragile or angry. There is no right or wrong way to feel.

However you are feeling, try to remember that this is not your fault, you are not to blame, and you are not alone.

You should not feel under any pressure to act in any specific way. Any decisions made will be yours alone and will be respected.

The list below provides some steps for you to consider which are explained within this information leaflet



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.

EMERGENCY HELP

If you or others feel at risk or consider the situation to be an emergency, you can call the Police on 999. If you require urgent medical help you should call for an ambulance (also on 999).

If you call for an ambulance or the police and you live on campus please also call Campus Support on 01695 584227 so that they can direct the police or ambulance to you as quickly as possible.

If you do not feel at further risk and the situation is not an emergency but you wish to report the assault to the Police, you can call the Police on 101. This is entirely your decision.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

If you require non-urgent medical treatment, you can either go to;

- Accident and Emergency or the local walk in centre at Ormskirk hospital <http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Walk-in%20centre/LocationSearch/663>
- SAFE Place 0151 295 3550 based in Liverpool, <http://www.safeplacemerseyside.org.uk/>
- SAFE Centre 01772 523344 based in Preston, <https://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/safe-centre>

If you are in University accommodation outside of office hours you may want to contact **Campus Support 01695 584227** (*out of office hours*). However if it is during office hours or you are in other accommodation you can also alert staff in Student Services via the Catalyst Helpdesk on **01695 650800** (*office hours 9am-5pm Mon-Fri*).

It is up to you to choose what kind of support you want to access and whether or not you want to report the assault to the Police. You can also choose to do nothing now if you feel that it would be useful for you to take time and to think about the options open to you then that is a perfectly valid decision.

2. Time limits to be aware of

Please remember it is your choice what support you access and if you choose to report the assault to the police, you may even choose to take some time to think about your options and that is a perfectly valid decision. **Before you make a decision** regarding the support you may want or need, there are a few time limits you need to be aware of.

If you want **emergency contraception** then it is important to access advice as soon as possible. There are several options available to you, some available up to 5 days (120 hours) later.

- To find your nearest emergency contraception provider, use this NHS site and insert your postcode; <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception-guide/pages/emergency-contraception.aspx>
- Local providers to the Ormskirk Campus include the pharmacy at Morrison's and the Hants Lane Sexual Health Clinic.
- Our GP Partner Beacon operates a Sexual Health Clinic from Milton House for students registered with them. Check our website for times; www.ehu.ac.uk/wellbeing
- Information about Sexual Health Clinics if you live in another area of Lancashire can be

found here; <http://lancashiresexualhealth.nhs.uk/>

For **HIV Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)** medication treatment you will need to start treatment within 72 hours, advice can be offered from Safe Place and the Safe Centre.

If you suspect you may have been given any type of drug it is recommended to be tested within the first 24 hours.

The SAFE Place and SAFE Centre also offer a service to collect and store any **forensic evidence** whilst you decide whether or not to report the incident to the police. If you want forensic evidence to be collected you should attend either the SAFE Place or SAFE Centre as soon as you can, advisably within 72 hours of the sexual assault.

In an attempt to preserve any evidence as best as you can try to take the following steps when possible;

- Do not wash,
- Do not brush your teeth,
- Do not have a cigarette,
- Do not eat or drink,
- Do not change your clothes,
- If you do change your clothes, do not wash them and put them in a clean paper bag Try not to go to the toilet,
- Do not clear anything away or let other people or animals enter the area where the incident took place.

***However** do not worry if you have already done some of these things, as it is still possible that there will be forensic evidence to collect.*

3. 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, such as a friend or a member of staff at the University.

Not all University staff are trained to provide specialist support for survivors of sexual assault. However, they can provide initial support and signpost you to specialist staff and support services in the University and in the local area.

The **Wellbeing Team in Student Services** have staff trained in supporting you and we would recommend that it is this team that you speak to you should you want to discuss what has happened. Their services are confidential unless, in exceptional circumstances, where it is deemed there is a danger to yourself or to others, or if there is a legal duty to report. Contact the Wellbeing Team on **01695 650988** or via email **studentwellbeing@edgehill.ac.uk**.

Student Services also provide counselling which you may find useful during this time or in the future.

You may prefer to speak to someone outside of the University such as a specialist support service for survivors of sexual assault and there are details about these organisations at the end of this guidance.

4. Deciding what to do next

REPORTING IMMEDIATELY

*If you have just been attacked you can call **999**, alternatively you can call **101** for less urgent response.*

You can contact SAFE Place sexual assault referral centre in Liverpool on **0151 295 355** <http://www.safeplacementerseaside.org.uk/getting-help/> or the SAFE Centre in Preston on **01772 523344** <https://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/contact-the-safe-centre>

The will ask you the following information:

- Your name (you can just provide first name),
- Your date of birth,
- Your address,
- Your contact number,
- The date and time of the assault (this may be recent or have been some time in the past),
- Some brief details about the assault,
- Do you think you might need emergency contraception?
- Do you want the police to be informed?
- Would you like a forensic medical examination?

If you call Safe Place or the Safe Centre out of hours an operator will take your name and phone number only and will arrange for a crisis worker to call you back.

The police can take you to the SAFE Centre or SAFE Place and will make arrangements for you to visit the centre for forensic medical examination, along with medical and emotional help. If you believe you may have been drugged, or your drink spiked, it is important to have a blood or urine test as soon as possible.

However the procedures can sometimes be a lengthy process which can be upsetting for you, when possible a supportive friend or relative would be welcome to come to the centre to help support you. Also consider bringing a spare set of clothes if you have not yet changed since the incident took place, as they may need to keep them as evidence.

Police

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 as this may harm the chances of prosecution if the police have been misinformed.

You may choose to report the incident anonymously, to get the perpetrator on the police radar. As this may not lead to their arrest it could help make another reported case stronger.

REPORTING LATER

Some people choose to take time to think about what they want to do, which may lead to you reporting the incident later. If you are not sure what to do, you can go to SAFE Place or the SAFE Centre as they can talk you through the different options available to you. They can store forensic evidence for you for up to two years while you decide what you want, they also provide assistance and support which you can access without reporting to the police.

Examples such as brushing your teeth, taking your clothes and putting them all in a clean bag

in the freezer, may help you preserve some evidence yourself.

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

REPORTING TO THE UNIVERSITY

Even if you choose not to report the incident to the police you can still report it to the University. The University will take your report very seriously and have a team of staff to support you and staff who can investigate the incident if that is what you want to do.

You can report the assault to the University, even if it doesn't involve another student or if it hasn't occurred on campus by contacting a Campus Life Manager on **01695 657570** or via email campuslife@edgehill.ac.uk. Please be assured that you can still receive support if you choose not to report it by contacting our Wellbeing team on **01695 650988** or via email studentwellbeing@edgehill.ac.uk.

If you report an incident to us that involves another student, or member of staff, you can also ask the University to investigate the incident under our Staff or Student Disciplinary Procedures as appropriate. These procedures differ from a criminal investigation in that we will only be able to consider statements from the parties involved and any witness statements and other information such as Facebook posts, texts etc. but we will not be able to undertake any forensic investigation. What we will be investigating is whether a staff member or a student has breached the Disciplinary Procedure and the actions the University can take is restricted to the sanctions that are available in the procedures.

You can report another student and request an incident is investigated by contacting Student Services and asking to speak to a Campus Life Manager on **01695 657570** or via email campuslife@edgehill.ac.uk.

You can report a staff member and request an incident is investigated by contacting Human Resources and asking to speak to an HR Adviser on 01695 584831 or via email HR@edgehill.ac.uk.

If you choose to report the incident to the police you can still report the incident to us as well. Once the police investigation is completed and the outcome decided then you can still request that we investigate the incident under the Staff or Student Disciplinary Procedures. We will not undertake any investigation whilst the police are involved as it may prove detrimental to any criminal case. However we can offer you support during this period and consider any risks to yourself or others that you may be concerned about as a result of the incident.

5. External agencies

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

SAFE Place

Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Liverpool

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

0151 295 3550

OR

SAFE Centre

Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Preston

<https://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/contact-the-safe-centre>

01772 523344

Sexual Assault and Childhood Sexual Abuse

Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre/Cheshire and Merseyside

Offer counselling, access to Independent Sexual Violence Advisors and an information line

<http://rapecentre.org/services>

Lancashire Victim Services

Provide emotional support, information and practical help, regardless of whether you have reported the crime to the police or not.

<http://lancashirevictimservices.org/>

0300 323 0085

Mon-Friday 8am-8pm, Saturday 9-5pm

Survivors UK

Support for male survivors of domestic Abuse/physical violence

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

0203 598 3898 Open Mon- Fri 09.30- 17.00

Helpline webchat Monday- Sunday 12.00- 20.00

Galop

Emotional and practical support for LGBT people experiencing domestic abuse.

<http://www.galop.org.uk/domesticabuse/>

T: 0800 999 5428

Email: help@galop.org.uk

Liverpool Domestic Abuse Service

For women and girls experiencing domestic abuse

<http://liverpooldomesticabuseservice.org.uk>

0151 263 7474/ Freephone 0800 084 2744

Services Mobile/Text for hard of hearing: 0756 201 3316

Savera

For women from black, minority ethnic and refugee communities experiencing domestic violence.

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

Savera UK, 151 Dale Street, Liverpool, L2 2AH

0800 107 0726

National Women's Aid

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

Southall Black Sisters

For black and Asian women and children experiencing domestic and sexual violence, including forced marriage and honour crimes. *Languages: English, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati and Urdu.*

<https://southallblacksisters.org.uk/about/>

Help Line -0208 571 0800 open 9.30am-4.30pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Sexual health clinic

Information about Sexual Health Clinics in Lancashire can be found here;

<http://lancashiresexualhealth.nhs.uk/>

0300 1234 154

Stalking

Stalking Helpline <https://www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/Category/national-stalking-helpline>
0808 802 0300

Network for surviving stalking <https://www.scaredofsomeone.org/>

Rights of Women

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.
<http://rightsofwomen.org.uk/>