Annual report: incidents submitted through Report + Support

2023-24

Contents

Background and progress

The University of Kent officially launched Report + Support in September 2021 to provide students and staff with one place to find out about student-focused support and campaigns, to report incidents known or anonymously and/or contact a specialist adviser regarding issues of bullying, harassment, discrimination, physical harm and verbal abuse, spiking, hate incidents, and sexual misconduct.

This report and fully anonymised data from Report + Support is shared with the Education and Student Experience Board which is made up of Senior management and Executive Group members to ensure a proactive and strategic approach to intervention and prevention. The University continues to design and deliver targeted interventions with support from the Students' Union in response to the data and local knowledge of incidents

One of the key objectives of the work and this report is to ensure University of Kent students have accessible reporting tools and that the University is transparent in its support provisions, prevention, and handling of cases.

It is acknowledged that improving reporting mechanisms is as essential as effective education and prevention. Therefore, the university considers any initial increase in disclosures and reports as an indicator of greater trust and confidence in the reporting process and its importance in creating and strengthening a culture of inclusivity and respect in our university community.

Progress made in the year 2023-24

- Throughout the year, the University has continued to place a strong emphasis on the promotion of the support available to students through our consent campaign, social media, posters around campus, podcast episodes, and blog articles.

- In September 2023, Kent Police established a Higher Education Liaison Officer (HELO) role to support University of Kent students. A Police Sergeant leads a dedicated team to address crime, anti-social behaviour, and safeguard students. The team works closely with the University and local partners. Key objectives include:
  - Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour.
  - Early intervention in emerging crime trends.
  - Collaborating with local agencies to solve issues.
  - Tackling repeat offenders and vulnerable individuals.
  - Supporting victims and enforcing safeguarding measures.
  - Addressing exploitation, including violence against women and girls.

The initiative aims to build trust, increase police visibility, tackle violence and crime, and provide a safer environment for students in Canterbury. Throughout the academic year, Kent Police have held weekly drop-in clinics for students. In addition to this the Specialist Wellbeing Team have made specific student referrals to the drop-in to receive advice and information on police procedures, in an attempt to further breakdown barriers in reporting.

- As part of the 16 days of activism launched by the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25th November), we held a number of events across Canterbury and Medway campuses. In November and December 2023, we held Medway Collaboration Events to raise awareness of the reporting platforms in conjunction with Canterbury Christ Church University and the University of Greenwich. In December 2023, a free self-defence class was arranged with Kent Sport inviting female-identifying and non-binary students to learn practical ways to keep safe. At the close of the 16 days of activism, we held an event in the library inviting staff and students to meet the Specialist Wellbeing team and learn more about support available, which was well attended.

- In February 2024, during Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week, we held an Empowerment Fair in collaboration with Kent Students' Union. The event featured a range of support services, both university-based and external, including Rising Sun, the Specialist Wellbeing Team, East Kent Rape Crisis Centre, Metro – Get it!, University Nursing Services, and Kent Students' Union Advice Centre. The fair aimed to provide attendees with information about available support while allowing them to meet representatives from these services. Additionally, a banner-making workshop was held, where participants created signs for the Break the Silence march (February 9, 2024) held in the city in collaboration with Kent Students' Union's 'Give it a Go'. The march marked the conclusion of the awareness week, and saw participants walk through the campus to raise visibility and solidarity against sexual abuse and violence.

- From September 1st, 2023 we expanded Report + Support platform to also include the option for staff to report staff. Prior to this, there was a separate reporting system for staff. We hope that this will streamline the experience for reporters. Whilst the reporting process has now been streamlined into the same platform, the reports and procedures remain separate and are managed by the two separate teams (Student Support and Wellbeing and HR).

Training

To ensure that student-facing staff are kept up to date, we continue to attend and provide regular training. This academic year Specialist Wellbeing teams undertook training from Beech House Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)which provided information on immediate sexual violence crisis support including forensic medical examinations that Beech House provide to people of all ages in Kent and Medway. The training also allowed participants to hear from a male outreach worker about Male Sexual Assault Support (MSAS), which is a new male-specific project operating across Kent, Surrey and Sussex to support men and boys who have experienced sexual assault.

Following the introduction of 'Domestic Abuse' as a reporting category on Report + Support, in June 2023 additional training was provided to staff. The local Domestic Abuse service, Rising Sun Domestic Violence and Abuse Service provided training which informed student-facing staff in Student Services with information about domestic abuse, the impact of this on survivors and the support that they can provide to students. A clear referral pathway directly into the charity has also been developed to breakdown any perceived barriers to accessing support.

Data insights

Data collection and reporting categories.

The data presented here includes anonymous reports received by Report+Support between **1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024**. In addition, we have included information from the Student Conduct and Complaints Office on formal cases and outcomes for the same period.

It should be noted that there are other reporting mechanisms at the University that students can report incidents to, but students are encouraged to report through Report+Support so that initial support and advice can be given. Students who wish their case to be considered under the university's Student Discipline Procedures are referred to the Student Conduct and Complaints Office for investigation.

Students are also able to report allegations of sexual misconduct by staff through Report+Support. Students receive specialist support and advice from the Specialist Wellbeing team and, if the student wishes, the University will investigate using the Student Complaints Procedure and/or HR Ordinances. Collaborative work between Student Conduct and Complaints and HR have seen changes to procedures which should streamline this process further.

Regardless of the policy or procedure being used, for the duration of the investigation and ongoing studies, specialist support is available to students through Student Support and Wellbeing and for staff reporters they are able to access support from designated HR Advisers.

Reporting categories

Following anecdotal trends in disclosures from reports and changes in the sector, the University added two new reporting categories into Report+Support (stalking and domestic abuse). As of June 2023, the following categories of incident that can be selected are listed below. Detailed definitions are available by clicking on the links:

- **Sexual misconduct**
- **Discrimination**
- **Hate incident**
- **Physical Harm and/or Verbal Abuse**
- **Harassment**
- **Bullying**
- **Spiking**
- **Domestic Abuse**
- **Stalking**

Summary of reports received in Report + Support

- During the 2023-24 academic year a total of 183 reports were received from students and third parties through Report+Support. This is a 52.5% increase in reports when compared to the 2022-2023 academic year (120 reports), and a 35.5% increase in reports made during the launching year 2021-2022 (135 reports).

A breakdown of the 183 reports can be found below.

TABLE 1: Table of Data Comparisons between Academic Years 2021-2022 to 2023-24.

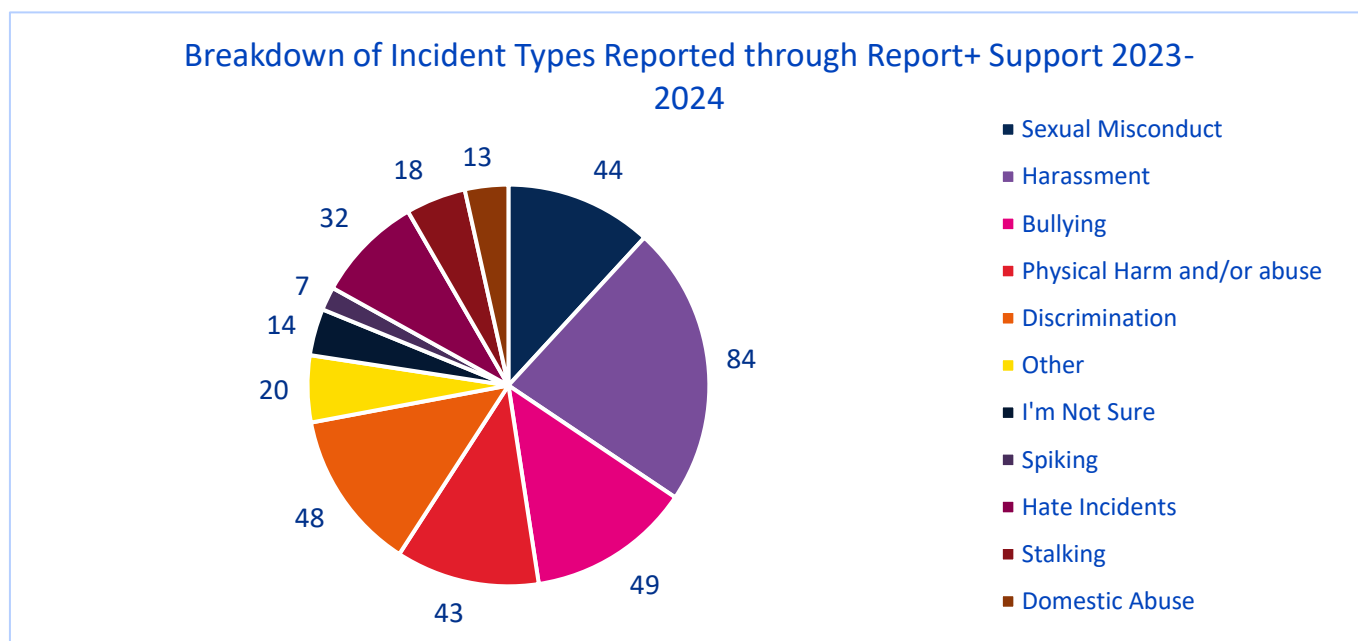|	Academic Year 2021-2022	Academic Year 2022-2023	Academic Year 2023-2024
Total Number of Reports	**135**	**120**	**183**
Postgraduate Students	15 (11.1%)	22 (18.3%)	46 (25.1%)
Undergraduate Students	115 (85.2%)	82 (68.4%)	122 (66.7%)
Third Parties	4 (3%)	7 (5.8%)	15 (8.2%)
Prefer not to Say	1 (0.7%)	9 (7.5%)	0 (0%[1])
Anonymous Reports	48 (35.5%)	46 (38.3%)	67 (36.6%)
Named Reports	87 (64.4%)	74 (61.7%)	116 (63.4%)

Due to the introduction of staff being able to report incidents through Report+Support the 'prefer not to say' option was removed. This is to ensure that reports are triaged to the appropriate team.

The submission of anonymous reports has decreased by 1.7 percentage points when compared to the 2022-23 academic year. Therefore, it has been possible to increase the percentage of students that have been offered support by an adviser following a submission of an incident report. It is pleasing to see that there is trust in the university and its procedures and that students feel comfortable and supported in making named reports.

The reports received can be broken down into the following categories chosen by the reporting person (NB multiple options can be selected on an individual report by the reporting party themselves).

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[1] We have removed the options for reporters to not provide their role now that role is a determinant of whether the report is sent to HR or Student Support and Wellbeing.

FIGURE 1: Breakdown of Incident Types reporting through Report + Support 2023-2024.

Breakdown of Incident Types Reported through Report+ Support 2023-2024

- Sexual Misconduct
- Harassment
- Bullying
- Physical Harm and/or abuse
- Discrimination
- Other
- I'm Not Sure
- Spiking
- Hate Incidents
- Stalking
- Domestic Abuse

Anonymous reporting

Individuals may choose to report anonymously for a variety of reasons. Where possible, to improve reporting mechanisms and services, Report+Support tries to capture the reasons that individuals have chosen to be anonymous. For 2023-24 the following reasons for anonymous reporting was captured with numbers of reporters using the category.

- 'I'm worried about the repercussions for me or others' (29)
- 'Reporting an incident that happened to someone else' (24)
- 'I don't know what to do' (19)
- 'I'm worried about being called a troublemaker' (18)
- 'I'm concerned it may impact my studies/career' (17)
- 'I'm worried I won't be believed' (14)
- 'I've told someone in the past and nothing happened' (14)
- 'I feel like they have more authority than me' (12)
- 'I don't want to get anyone in trouble' 11)
- 'I feel embarrassed/ashamed' (10)
- 'I've told someone before, but it wasn't taken seriously' (10)
- 'The person didn't want to tell you themselves' (7)
- 'I don't want anyone to know what happened' (5)
- 'other' (5)
- 'It's not serious (1)

NB multiple options can be selected on an individual report.

Benchmarking against other universities

Benchmarking data against other institutions is provided to us by Culture Shift, the owners of the Report+Support platform. This data enables the university to compare its own statistical data over the last 12 months, with all other Universities (of a similar size) who use Report+Support.

FIGURE 2: Benchmarking graph comparing other institutions of similar size and total number of reports submitted between 1 September 2023 and 31 August 2024.
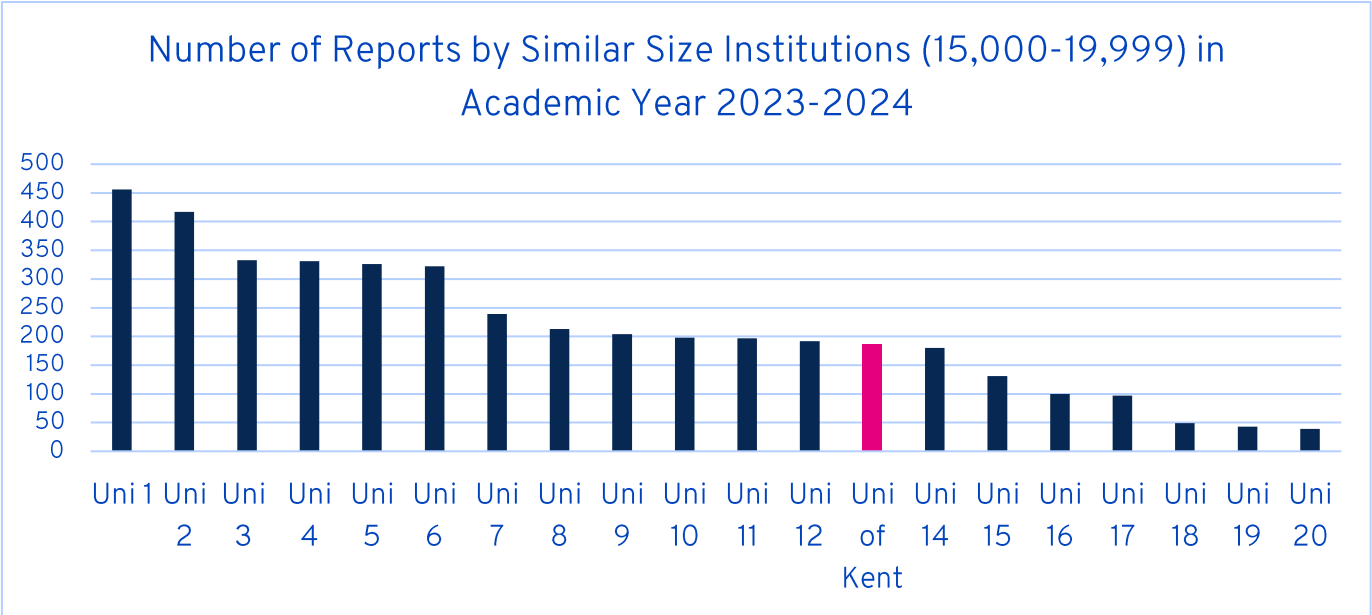

When comparing the number of reports the university has received against other institutions the university has dropped to the lower end of the chart when compared to other institutions with a similar student population.

In 2022-23 academic year we positioned 10th. In academic year 2023-2024 we are now positioned 13th. There are several reasons as to why this may be the case. Looking positively, we could conclude that this is due to the impact of several years of campaigns, awareness raising and training to improve the prevention of incidents. The graph demonstrates that there are a number of institutes with a similar number of reports sitting in the middle section of the graph. Small fluctuations in reports being submitted may impact where the University sits in the middle section of the graph. Additional data is required to determine if this is a trend of lower reports.

Report + Support website traffic

3694 separate visits were made to support articles available on Report + Support. This is a decrease of over 29% since last year, when traffic to support pages was 5180.The breakdown of the most accessed resources can be viewed below.

FIGURE 3: Website traffic of support articles on Report + Support
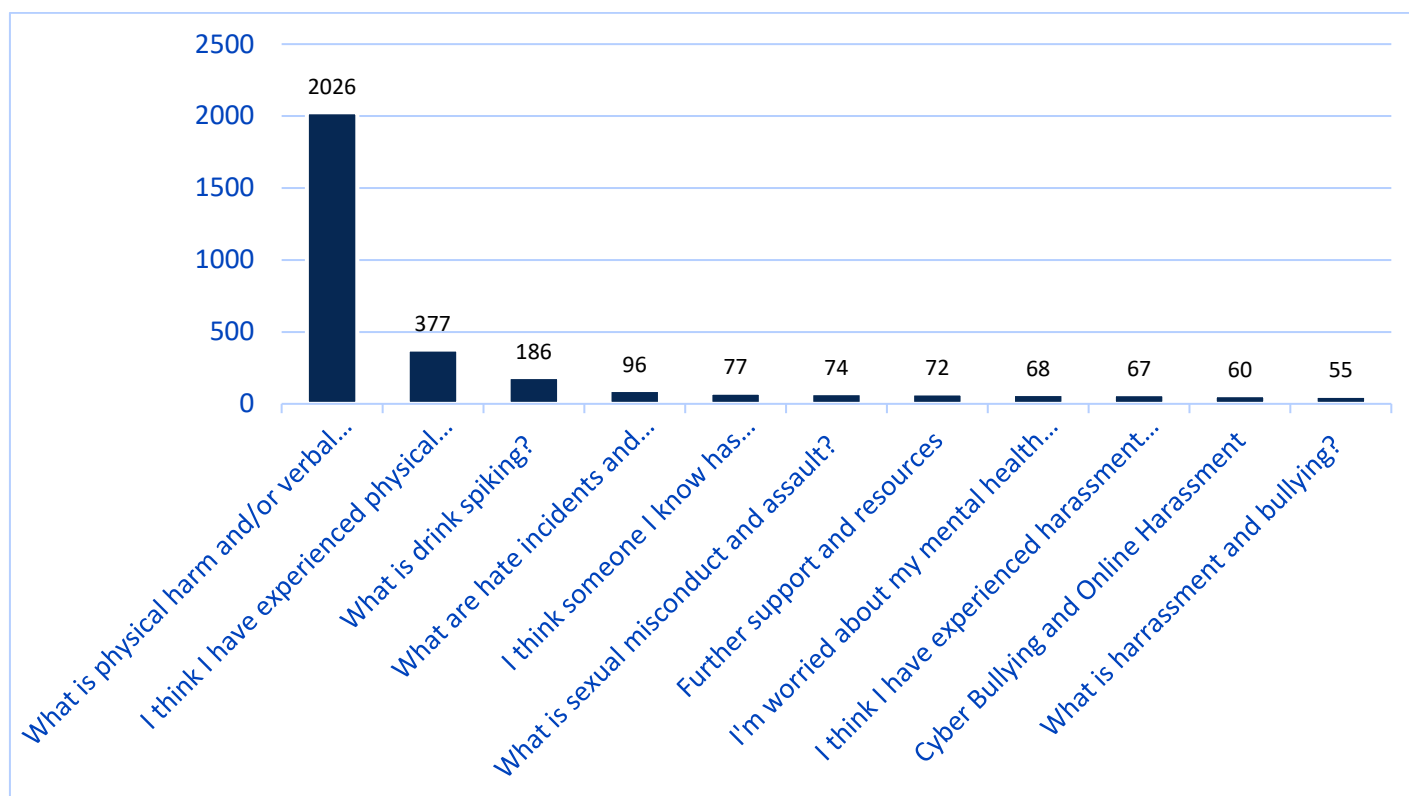
The resource most widely accessed is information pertaining to definitions of physical harm and/ or verbal abuse and getting support after experiencing physical harm and/or abuse. In addition, we also have seen people accessing information about drink spiking and understanding more about sexual misconduct and assault. Interestingly, we have also seen people accessing one of our newer support articles which details advice about cyber bullying and online harassment.

Breakdown of quantitative Report + Support data

TABLE 2: Total number of reports in relation to student numbers.

| University of Kent Profile	Number of students[2]	Number of student reports [3]	%
2023-2024	17,327	168	0.97%
2022-2023	18,902	104	0.55%
2021-2022	19,100	130	0.68%

The number of total reports submitted via Report + Support will differ from the overall number of incidents reported or experienced at the university. It is not possible to completely rule out duplications of

[2]As reported at the end of the academic year
[3] Excluding third party data

report figures where multiple reports may have been submitted regarding the same incident, however, wherever possible this has been recorded as one. Similarly, some students may have used the Report + Support platform as a way of seeking support only for a historical incident that has taken place.

FIGURE 4: When incidents were reported
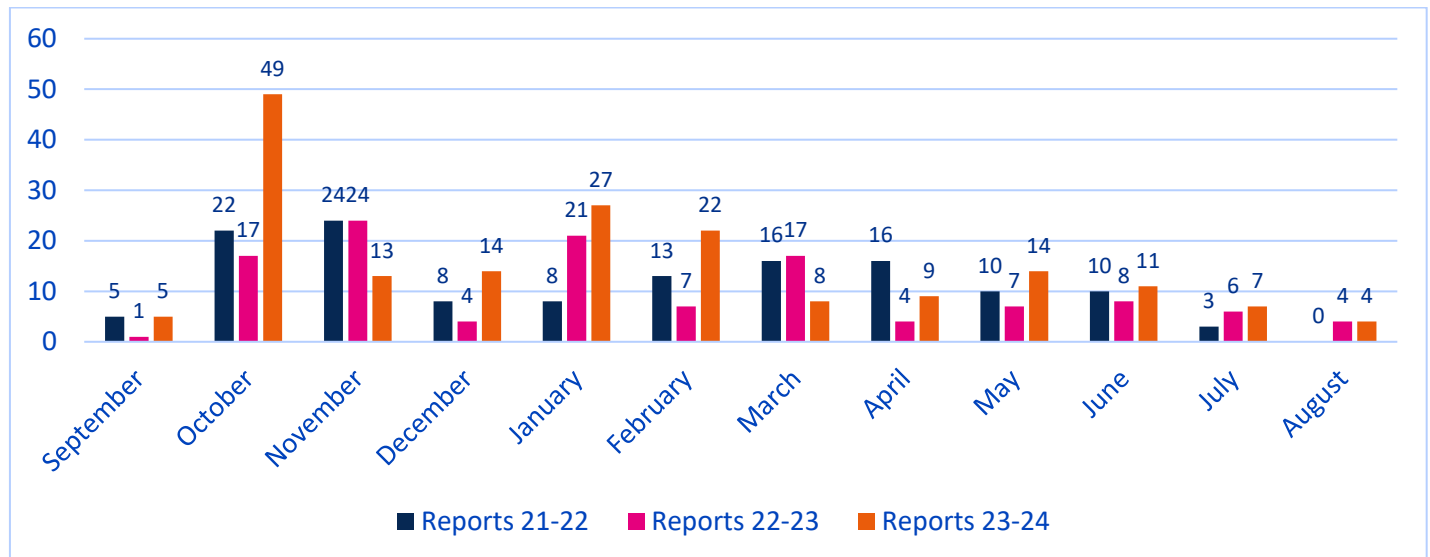
Most reports were made just after the start of academic year in the month of October (49, 26.8%) in 2023. There was a further small peak, January 2024 (27, 14.8%). The least reports received were in August 2024, likely due to it being summer vacation. Other quieter months include September 2023, and July 2024 (7, 3.8%) and March 2024 (8, 4.4%). These are quieter months due to them being around vacation periods. When compared to the previous years in which Report + Support was available, this academic year has seen an increase in overall reporting by 52.5%. Additional data can be found in the Benchmarking section, however this increase appears to be in line with sector data where other providers have seen an overall increase in reports.

Data by Division

 Whilst it is important to have a whole institution approach to the prevention of, and response to, bullying, harassment, and sexual misconduct, it is also important to look at divisional breakdown. The aim of this is to highlight trends and where the Report+Support platform could be promoted more widely, or further training and awareness needs to take place. Our next data report for academic year 2024-2025 we will change this section to reflect the removal of the Divisions.

FIGURE 5: Proportion of Report + Support reported issues in Divisions
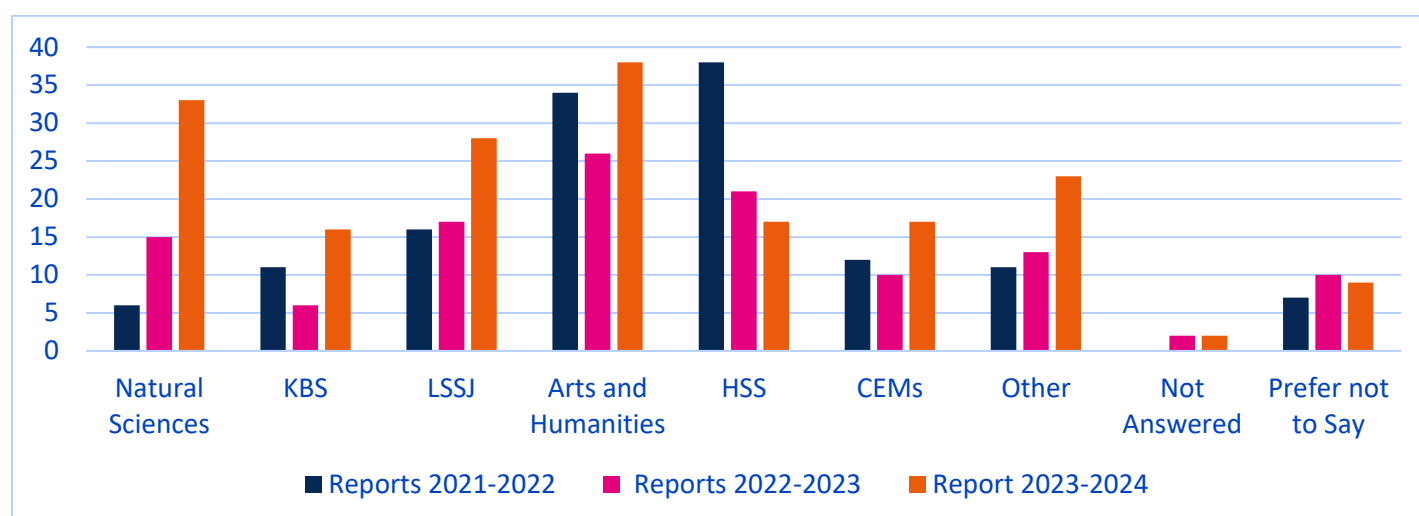
- In the **Division of Natural Sciences** out of the 33 reports submitted, 6 documented physical harm and/or verbal abuse, 16 reports documented harassment, 10 incidents documented discrimination, 8 incidents documented hate incidents, 5 reports documented an incident of stalking, < 5 reports documented sexual misconduct, < 5 reports documented bullying, < 5 were reported as 'other', and <5 reports of domestic abuse.

- In the **Division of Arts and Humanities**, out of the 38 reports submitted, 17 reports documented harassment, 6 reports of sexual misconduct, 15 reports documented bullying, 10 incidents documented discrimination, 9 reports of physical harm and/or abuse, 5 reports were submitted as 'I'm not sure', < 5 reports of hate incident, < 5 reports of 'other', < 5 reports of domestic abuse, and < 5 reports of stalking.

- In the **Division of Computer, Engineering and Mathematical Sciences**, out of the 17 reports submitted 10 reports documented harassment, 7 reports of bullying, 7 reports documented discrimination, 5 reports of physical harm and/or verbal abuse, < 5 reports of sexual misconduct, < 5 documented an incident of hate incident, <5 reports of spiking, < 5 reports documented 'I'm not sure' and < 5 reports were documented as 'other'.

- In **Kent Business School**, out of the 16 reports submitted, 8 reports documented harassment, 7 reports documented an incident of discrimination, 6 reports of sexual misconduct, < 5 reports of hate incident, < 5 reports of domestic abuse, < 5 reports of stalking, < 5 reports of physical harm and/or verbal abuse, < 5 report documented 'other', < 5 report documented spiking, < 5 report of 'I'm not sure', and < 5 report of bullying.

- In the **Division of Human and Social Sciences**, out of the 17 reports submitted there were 5 reports of sexual misconduct, < 5 reports of bullying, 5 reports documenting physical harm and/or verbal abuse, 8 reports of harassment, < 5 reports of hate incidents, < 5 reports of domestic abuse, < 5 report was submitted as 'I'm not sure', and < 5 report documented an incident of stalking.

- In the **Division of Law, Society, and Social Justice** out of the 28 reports submitted there were 10 reports of harassment, 9 reports of sexual misconduct, 8 reports of physical harm and/or verbal abuse, 9 reports of bullying, 5 reports of hate incidents, 5 reports of discrimination, < 5 reports of stalking, and < 5 reports of 'other' < 5 report was submitted as 'I'm not sure about what had happened'.

NB multiple options can be selected on an individual report.

FIGURE 6: The number and proportion of form of reporting in Divisions through Report + Support[4]
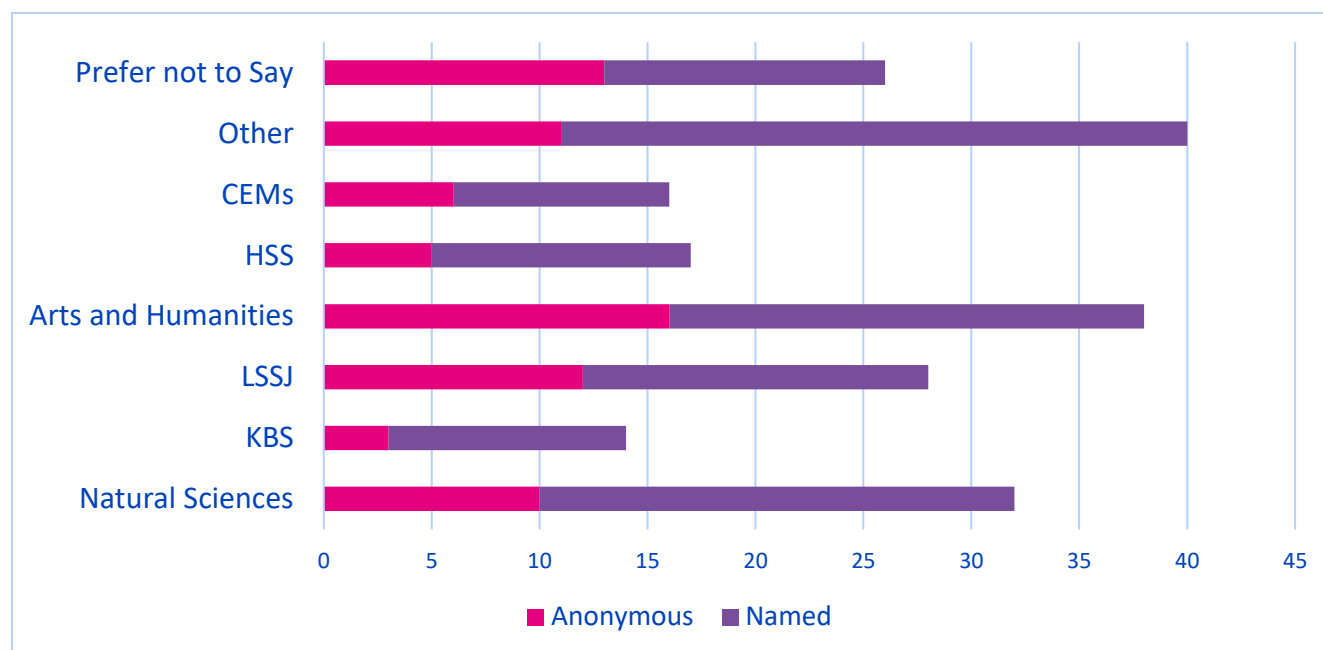

- The Division of **Computer, Engineering and Mathematical Sciences** had 59% named reports (10) and were contacted by an adviser for support and 41% of anonymous reports (6) out of a total 16 reports.

- The **Division of Human and Social Sciences** had 71% (12) named reports and were contacted by an adviser for support and 29% of anonymous reports (5) out of a total 17 reports.

- The **Division of Arts and Humanities** had 58% named reports (22) and were contacted by an adviser for support and 42% of anonymous reports (16) out of a total 38.

- The **Division of Law, Society, and Social Justice** had 57% named reports (16) and were contacted by an adviser for support and 42% of anonymous reports (12) out of a total 28 reports.

- **Kent Business School** had 79% named reports (11) and were contacted by an adviser for support and 21% of anonymous reports (3) out of a total 14 reports.

- The **Division of Natural Sciences** had 69% named reports and were contacted by an adviser for support (22) and 31% of anonymous reports (10) out of a total 32 reports.

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[4] Third Party report data removed

Location of where incidents happening

FIGURE 7: A chart highlighting the location of where reported incidents took place
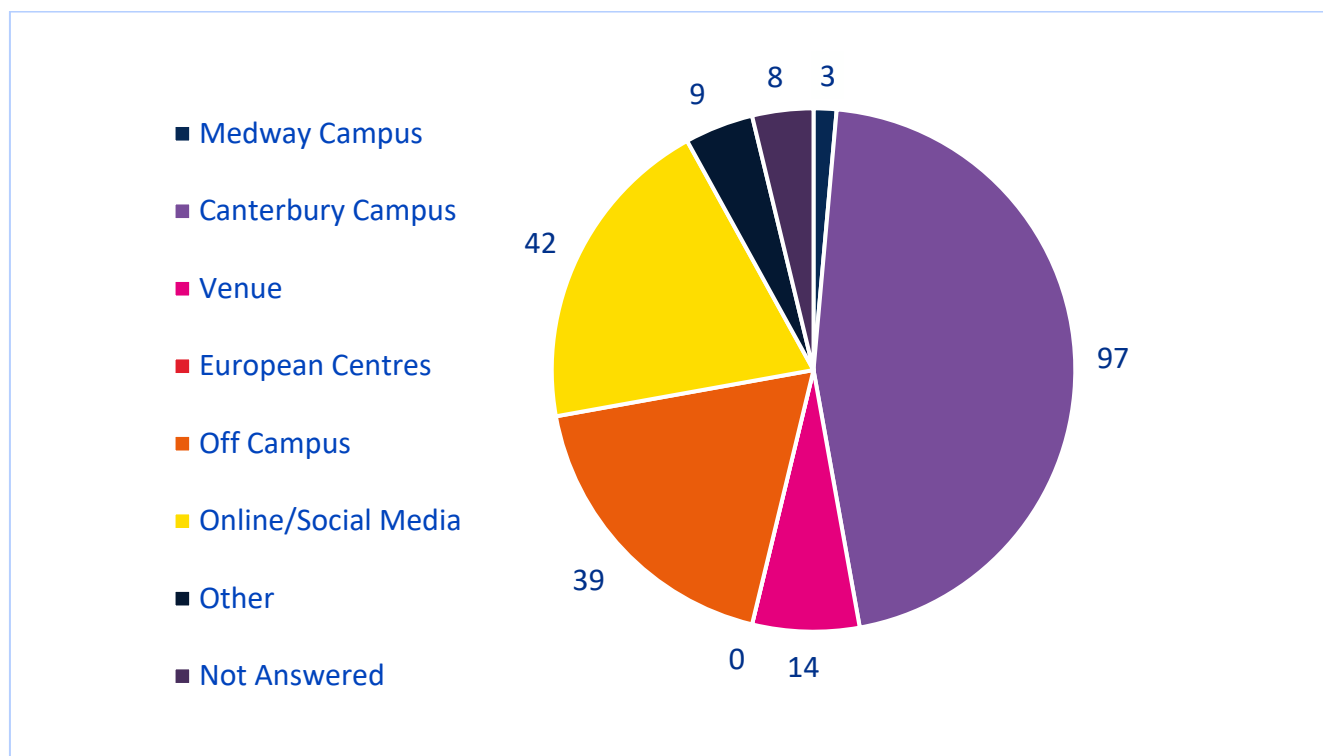
People submitting incidents can record several locations that the incident took place, therefore it is noteworthy that the locations will total more than the number of incidents reported. The mostly widely reported location is on the main campus in Canterbury. This is to be expected as a large percentage of students attend the campus and student accommodation is on site. A total of 97 Incidents were reported to have taken place on Canterbury campus. This includes in on-campus accommodation, food outlets, study spaces (i.e., Library), and sports areas. On Medway campus (a campus without onsite student accommodation) there were a total of 3 incidents reports. There were 14 incident reports taking place at the Venue, the Canterbury campus-based night club. 42 incidents were recorded as having taken place online, via social media or through the format of online teaching. 39 incidents were reported to have taken place off campus. This included incidents in private off campus accommodation, and Canterbury and Medway City Centres. 9 incidents were reported as taking place in an 'Other' location not provided. In 8 of the incidents reported, the reporter chose to not provide a location. Finally, 0 reports were submitted as being located at one of the European Centres.

NB multiple options can be selected on an individual report.

Data Pertaining to Reported Party

Of the 183 reports submitted to Report + Support, 130 incidents (71%) documented that the reported party was a current or previous Kent student. Where the reported party was identified to be a student, the most reported incident category was harassment (68, 52.3% of all reports where students were identified as the reported party). 26 reports (14.2%) documented that the incident was perpetrated by a member of staff. Where a member of staff was identified as the reported party, discrimination was the most reported

incident category (14, 53.9% of all reports where staff were identified as the reported party). 20 reports (10.9%) submitted could not be described as perpetrated by either student, staff or visitor and were labelled as 'none of the above'. In this category, harassment was documented as being the most reported incident category (9, 45% of all reports where a third party was identified as being the reported party). 2 (1.1%) reports were made about an incident being perpetrated by a visitor to the university. 3 reports (1.6%) were made about a person at someone's placement. 2 reports (1.1%) were submitted, and the reporter chose not to provide an answer to this question.

TABLE 3. A breakdown in the roles of reported parties

Role of Reported	Number of Reports 2022-2023	Number of Reports 2023-2024
A student	90	130
A staff member	10	26
None of the Above	9	20
Prefer not to Say	< 5	0
Someone at Placement	< 5	< 5
A visitor	< 5	< 5
Not Answered	< 5	< 5

Equality monitoring data of the reporting party

Answering equality monitoring questions when reporting through Report + Support is optional. However, when shared, it does help the university to identify if certain groups of students are experiencing negative behaviours to a greater extent and helps us to understand how the university community is being impacted. It enables the University to identify any trends in relation to discrimination or targeted behaviour to specific people with protected characteristics. EDI data taken from Report + Support is also included in the annual report which is reviewed by EDI Opps, EDI Strategy, People Committee, JSCNCC and Council, who have overall responsible body for ensuring the University is meeting its legal obligations under the Equality Act.

Equality monitoring data is only requested from individuals who stated that they had been the one to whom the incident occurred.

Data note: individuals may have withheld equality monitoring data on university systems, and/or Report + Support.

Ethnicity

TABLE 4: Proportion of reports by declared ethnicity

Ethnicity	Number of reports
Another Asian Background	< 5
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	< 5
Asian or Asian British Chinese	4.4%
Asian or Asian British Indian	3.3%
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	< 5
Black or Black British African	7.7%
Black or Black British Caribbean	< 5
Another Black Background	< 5
Mixed or multiple background Asian and White	< 5
Another Mixed or Multiple Background	< 5
Not answered	24.6%
Prefer not to say	6%
I don't know	5.5%
White British, Northern Irish, Scottish, Welsh	25.1%
Another White Background	9.8%
Another Ethnic Group	2.7%

Data note: University of Kent Report + Support only collects Jewish as a religious identity.

Gender

TABLE 5: Proportion of reports by gender

Gender	Number of reports
Man	19.7%
Non-Binary	< 5

Not answered	20.8%
Other	< 5
Prefer not to say	3.8%
Transgender Man	< 5
Transgender Woman	< 5
Woman	51.9%
I Don't Know	< 5

Age

TABLE 6: Proportion of reports by age group

Age Group	Proportion of reports
Under 18	< 5
18-21 years	43.2%
22-25 years	21.3%
26-35 years	8.2%
36-45 years	3.3%
46-55 years	< 5
Not answered	18.6%
Prefer not to say	3.3%

Religion

TABLE 7: Proportion of reports by faith/religion

Faith/Religion	Proportion of reports
Buddhist	< 5
Christian	14.2%
Hindu	< 5

Jewish	4.9%
None	26.8%
Not Answered	27.3%
Muslim	4.9%
Prefer not to say	14.2%
Other	4.4%

Sexual identity

TABLE 8: Proportion of reports by sexual identity

Sexual identity	Proportion of reports
Asexual	< 5
Bisexual	10.4%
Gay man	0
Gay Woman/Lesbian	< 5
Heterosexual	38.3%
I don't know	3.8%
Not answered	24.6%
Other	3.8%
Pansexual	< 5
Prefer not to say	14.8%

Disability

TABLE 9: Proportion of reports by disability

| Disability	Proportion of reports
A long-standing illness	3.8%
A mental health difficulty	24%
A physical impairment or mobility issues	< 5
A social/communication impairment/difference	3.3%
A specific learning difficulty/difference	8.7%
Blind or Visual impairment	< 5
D/deaf or have a hearing impairment	0
An impairment, health condition or learning difference that is not listed above	3.8%
No known impairment, health condition or learning difference	23%
Prefer not to say	14.8%
Not answered	31%

NB multiple options can be selected on an individual report by the student themselves.

Perceptions of factors influencing incident

Reporters are asked in their report whether they feel as though any protected characteristics played a role in what they had experienced. The following data will provide an insight into the factors that were discussed for each incident type.

Sexual misconduct

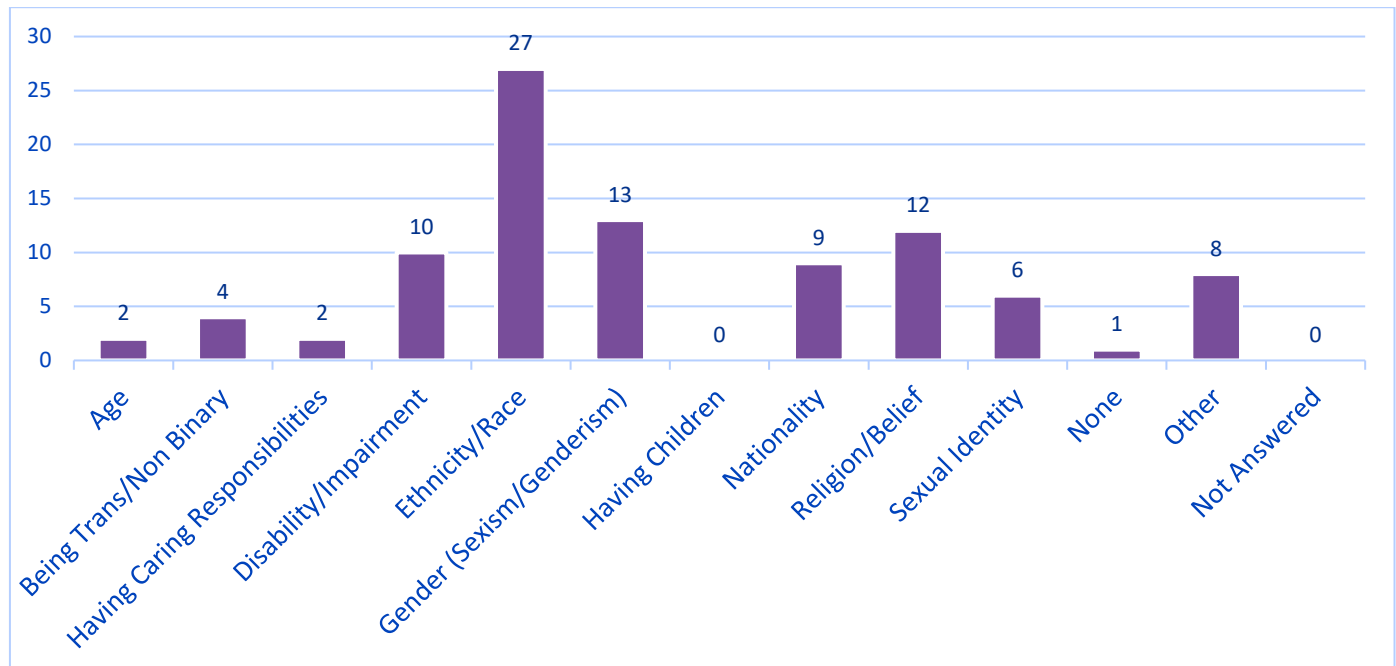**FIGURE 8: Perceived factors in sexual misconduct reports**
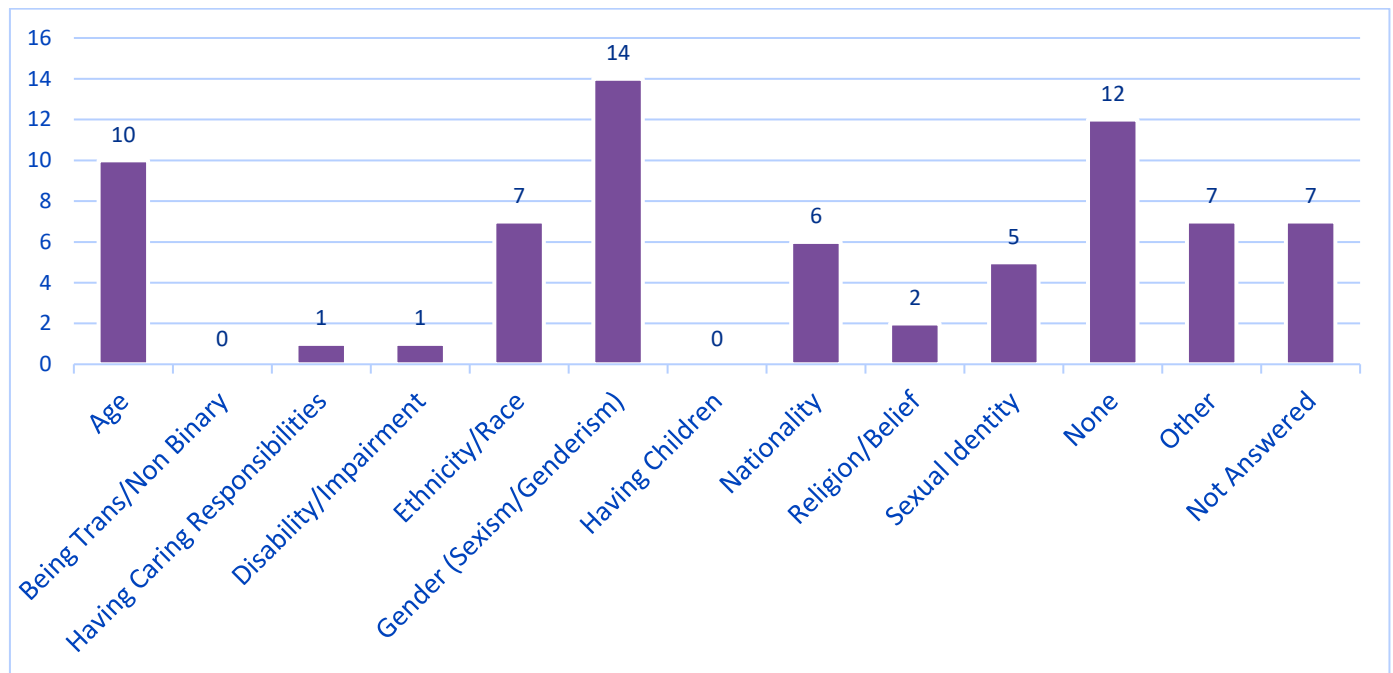
A total number of 44 sexual misconduct reports were submitted to Report + Support within the 12-month period. 14 times, reporters felt that their gender was a contributing factor to the cause of the incident reported. The second most reported category was that reporters didn't feel that there were any factors contributing to the incident. This was reported 10 times.

Data note: Multiple factors could be recorded for each individual incident reported.

Discrimination

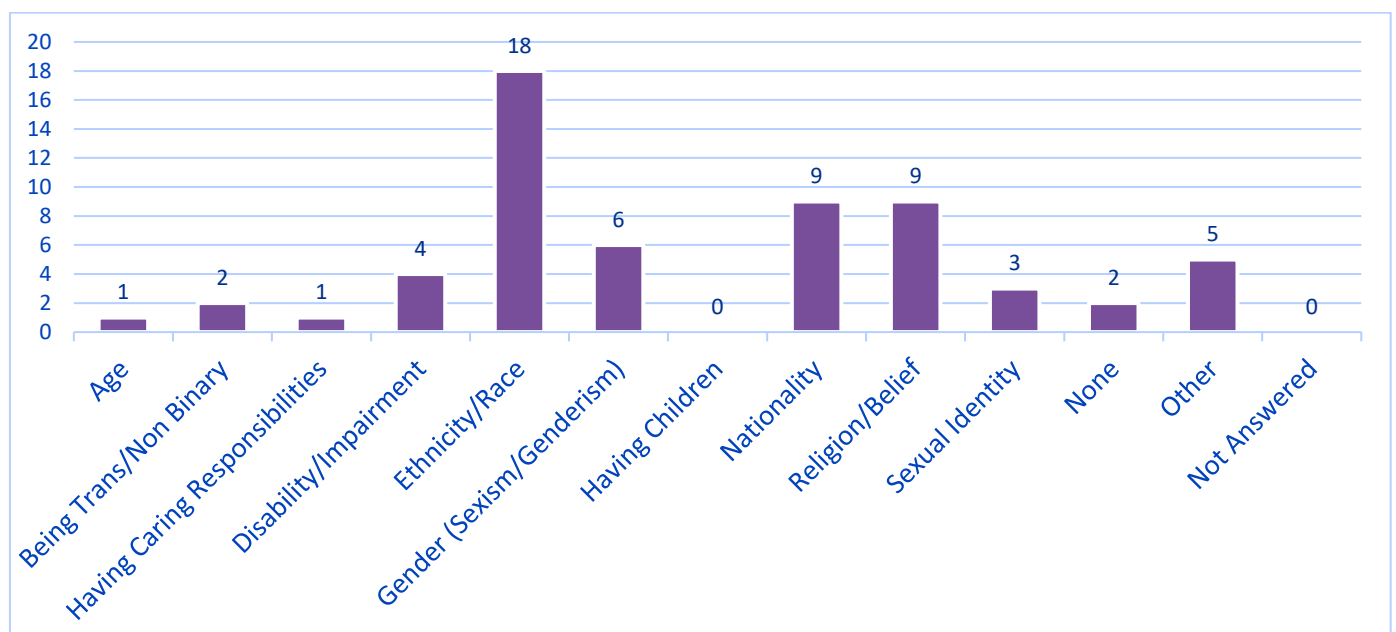**FIGURE 9: Perceived factors in discrimination reports**

A total number of 48 discrimination reports were submitted to Report + Support within the 12-month period. Ethnicity/race was documented 27 times as being the factor that the reporter felt was influencing the incident that they reported. In addition, gender was documented as the second highest factor in reported discrimination reports. 12 reports also documented religion/belief as being a factor in discrimination.

Data note: Multiple factors could be recorded for each individual incident reported.

Hate incidents

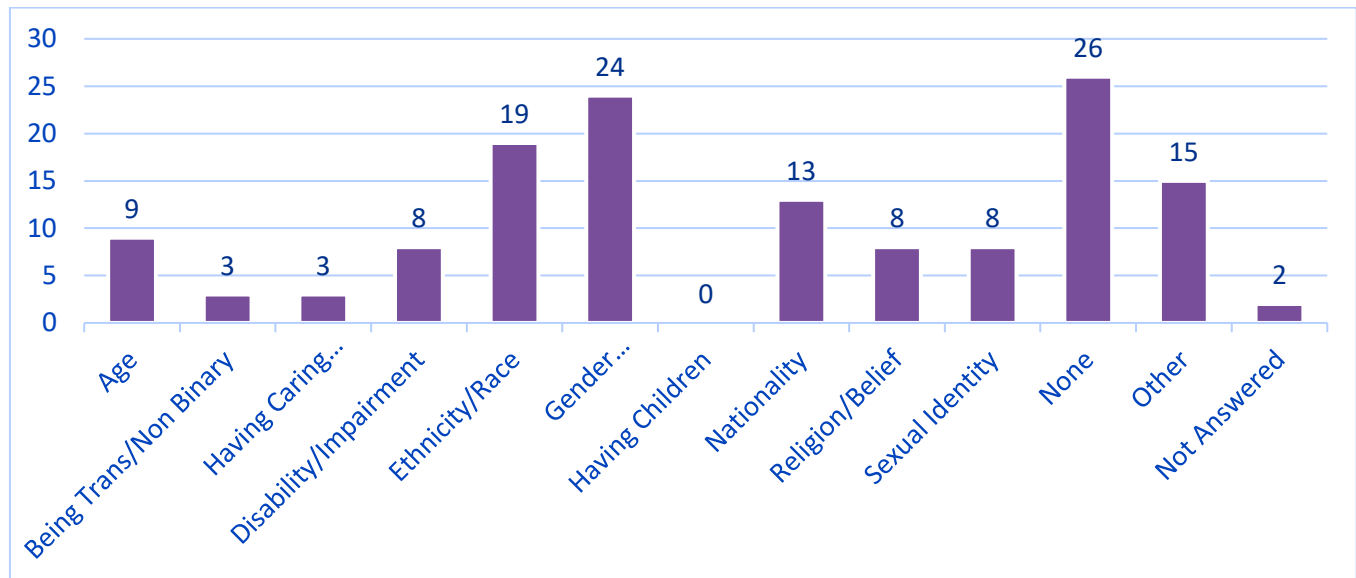**FIGURE 10: Perceived factors in hate incident reports**

A total number of 32 hate incident reports were submitted to Report + Support within the 12-month period. Ethnicity/ race was cited as the factor most impacting incidents of hate. Nationality and religion/belief were both cited as the second most impacting factor.

Data note: Multiple factors could be recorded for each individual incident reported.

Harassment

**FIGURE 11: Perceived factors in harassment reports**

A total number of 84 harassment incidents were submitted to Report + Support. 26 times reporters felt that there were no influencing factors in an incident of harassment. Gender was documented 24 times as the factor second most impacting the incident of harassment.

Data note: Multiple factors could be recorded for each individual incident reported.

Physical harm and/or verbal abuse

FIGURE 12: Perceived factors in physical harm and/or verbal abuse reports
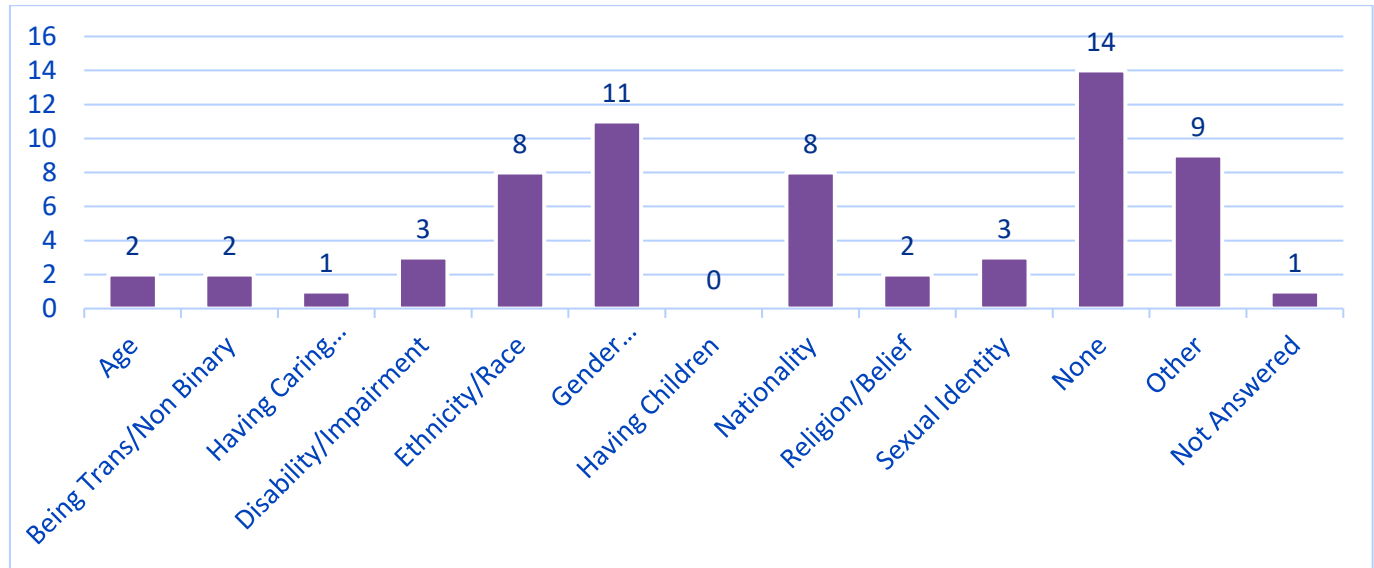

A total of 43 reports of physical harm and/or verbal abuse were submitted to Report + Support within the 12-month period. 14 times people felt that there was no contributing factor to the physical harm and/or verbal abuse that took place. Gender was reported 11 times as being the factor influencing the incident.

Data note: Multiple factors could be recorded for each individual incident reported.

Bullying

**FIGURE 13: Perceived factors in bullying reports**
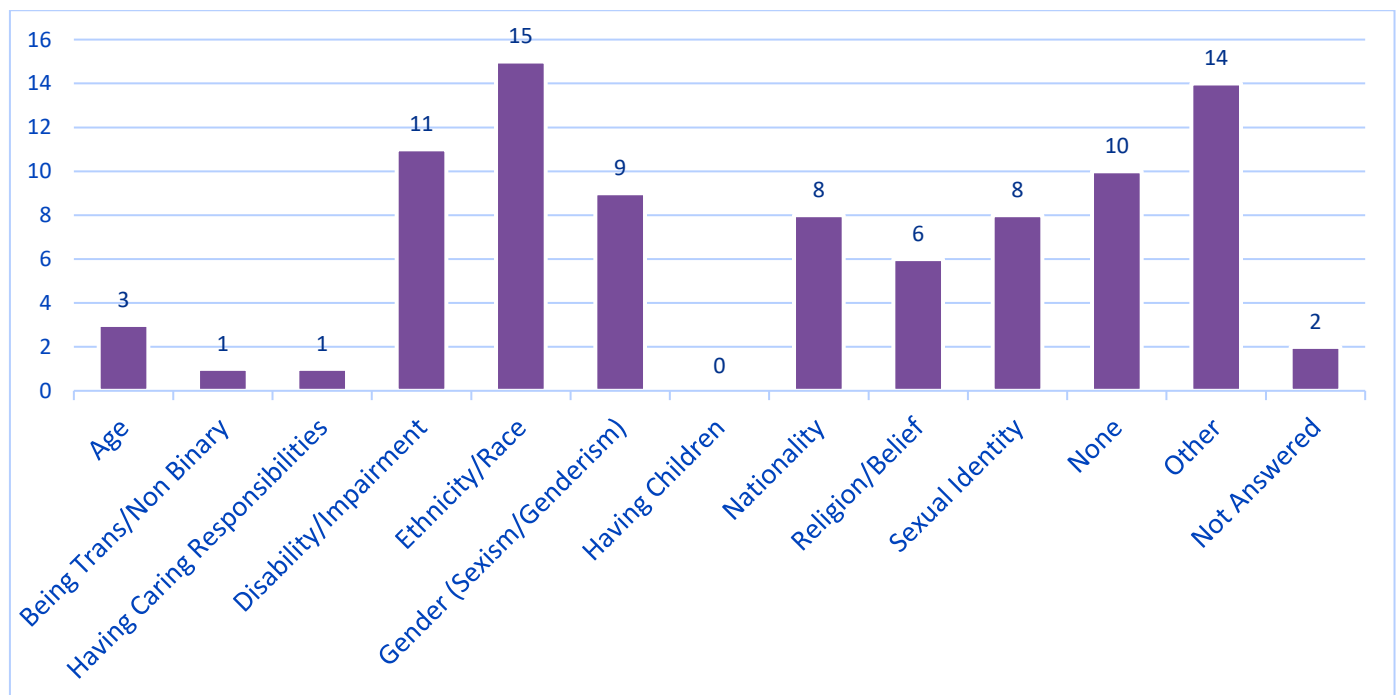
A total of 49 reports of bullying were submitted to Report + Support within the 12-month period. 15 People reporting incidents of bullying felt that ethnicity/race was the factor most influencing the incident of bullying that they were reporting. However, 14 people felt that there was another influencing factor which was not a protected characteristic that had contributed to the incident of bullying.

Data note: Multiple factors could be recorded for each individual incident reported.

Spiking

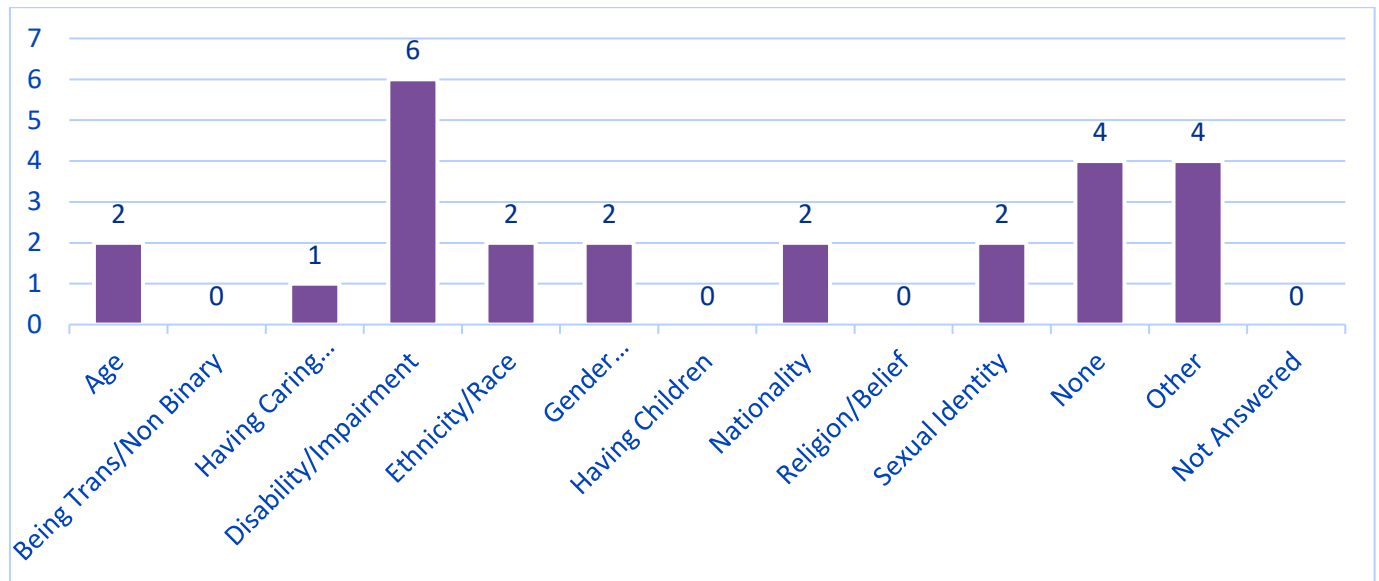**FIGURE 14: Perceived factors in spiking reports**
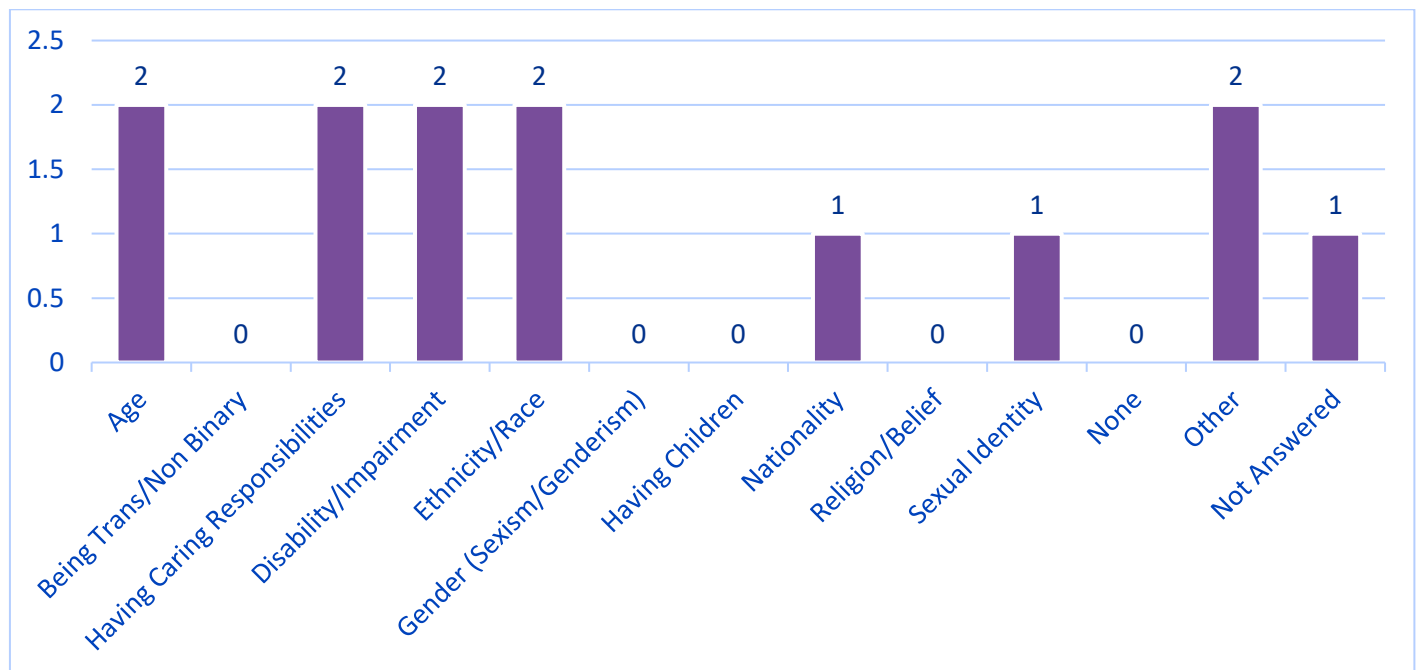
A total of 7 reports of spiking were submitted to Report + Support within the 12-month period. Age, having caring responsibilities, disability/impairment, ethnicity/race and 'other' were the factors reported as being the influence behind the incident of spiking.

Data note: Multiple factors could be recorded for each individual incident reported.

Domestic Abuse

FIGURE 15: Perceived factors In Domestic Abuse reports
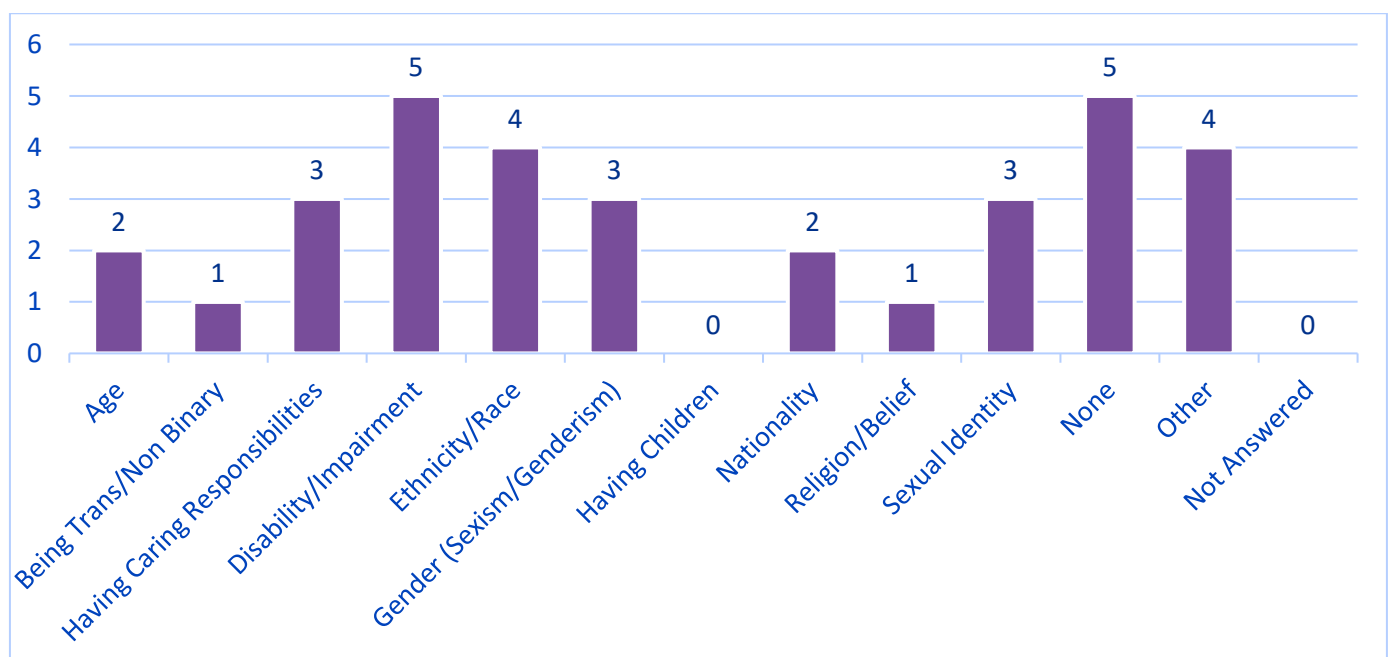

A total of 13 reports of domestic abuse were submitted to Report + Support within the 12-month period. Disability/Impairment was reported as the most influencing factor of the incident that they were reporting.

Data note: Multiple factors could be recorded for each individual incident reported.

Stalking

FIGURE 16: Perceived factors In Stalking reports

A total of 18 reports of stalking were submitted to Report + Support within the 12-month period. Disability/Impairment was reported as the most influencing factor of the incident that they were reporting. Equally, other reporters felt that there were no other factors influencing the incident of stalking that they were reporting.

Data note: Multiple factors could be recorded for each individual incident reported.

Description of outcomes of disciplinary cases

The University of Kent is committed to improving transparency of processes and outcomes within the bounds of the law. Therefore, the data presented adhere to the General Data Protection Regulation.

The average time for a report to be triaged, opened and closed was 39 days (guidance recommends within 30 days working days). The average time for a report to be triaged to support services was one day. However, there are several factors that can increase the time in which a report can be referred to the Student Conduct and Complaints Office, including the wishes of the reporting student and any specialist support required. The Student Support and Wellbeing team will often work with a student to discuss reporting options including reporting to the Police. No action to refer a case for investigation by the Student Conduct and Complaints Office is taken without consent (there are exceptions for risk mitigation). Once a report is received by the Student Conduct and Complaints Office the officers aim to investigate any allegations as quickly as possible and within 30 working days.

The following data provides an insight into the number of formal cases considered by the Student Conduct and Complaints Office received via Report + Support.   This section of the report provides the figures in relation to the outcomes of these cases only and does not include reports made via different methods, such as directly to the Student Conduct and Complaints Office. It should be noted that anonymous reports received via Report+Support cannot be taken forward under university procedures but are used for analysis purposes and to identify any areas of concern or trends.

It should also be noted that there are some students who wish to access support only for a variety of reasons, such as historical cases or cases that do not involve other students. Support-only reports are not included in further outcome figures.

Students who have reported staff misconduct are considered under the Student Complaints Procedure and/or referral to HR procedures. These figures are also not included in this report.

TABLE 10: Reports passed to Student Conduct and Complaints for Investigation 2023-2024

Allegation made through Report + Support	Total Number of Reports (NB Students can report more than one issue)
Sexual Misconduct	15
Discrimination	10
Bullying	10
Harassment	13
Domestic Abuse	2
Physical Harm/Verbal Abuse	8

Hate incident	3
Stalking	2

In the 23-24 Academic year, a total of 35 student reports were received by the Student Conduct and Complaints Office for investigation following reports made by Report + Support. On two occasions a student submitted two reports.

Of the 35 allocated to investigation by the Student Conduct and Complaints Office, 4 reports were referred to alternative procedures such as the Student Complaints Procedure or HR processes.

Below is a table of outcomes for 31 cases considered under the Student Discipline Procedure and their outcomes. As each element of an allegation can be considered as a potential breach of the Student Discipline Procedure, the figures below indicate the outcomes rather than case numbers.

TABLE 11: Student Conduct and Complaint Case Investigation Outcomes

	Apology	Formal warning	Restrictions and conditions	Ongoing	Police case	Withdrew complaint	Support only	No Further action
Sexual Misconduct	1	3	3	1	1	2	1	2
Discrimination	-	1	1	-	-	-	3	1
Bullying	-	2	3	-	-	-	3	1
Harassment	-	2	4	-	1	1	2	1
Domestic Abuse	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Physical Harm/ Verbal Abuse	-	2	2	-	-	-	2	1
Hate Incident	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1
Stalking	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-

Staff Reporting

For the academic year 2023-2024, a separate partition of the Report + Support Tool has been available for staff to report incidents relating to other members of staff (Staff v Staff). Reporting of figures regrading staff versus staff cases will be reported on by Human Resources, separate to this report.

Next steps

Action plan for University of Kent

Over the coming year (2024-25), University of Kent will undertake the following new actions to continue to improve on responding to and addressing concerns on our campuses and continue to progress in shaping a safer and more inclusive environment. The main body of the work that will be undertaken in the coming academic year will be dictated by the new regulatory framework published by the Office for Students. This regulation (Condition E6: Harassment and Sexual Misconduct) will ensure that universities and colleges have effective policies to prevent harassment and sexual misconduct, robust procedures to address it if it occurs, and support for students who experience it. Additional details can be found on the OfS website.

- Further promotion and embedding of Report + Support platform into the University community - We plan to promote the guidance documents and videos which explain how to use Report + Support. We also aim to highlight the processes that the system sits within, in order to promote visibility, accessibility and transparency.

- We will continue to raise awareness of the Specialist Wellbeing Team, and the support provided in areas of sexual misconduct, domestic abuse, harassment, discrimination and hate incidents. We will do this through the promotion and support of national awareness campaigns including the International Day for the Elimination of Violence and Abuse against Women, Sexual Assault and Violence Awareness Week, Pride Month, and Hate Crime Week.

- We aim to create a single-source web page where both staff, students and the public can find links to policies, procedures, prevention work and support services. We hope that, with the introduction of this page, it will become easier for both staff and students to be aware of initiatives to keep the University safe from Sexual Misconduct and Harassment.

- In our aim to increase the transparency of our processes, we aim to make amendments to policies and procedures which lay out the steps that are taken when a student reports serious misconduct against a member of staff.

- We aim to introduce a standalone consent and bystander module for students. This module will be a mandatory module for all incoming students from September 2025. We hope that the introduction of this module will ensure that all students have an expectation and understanding of consensual sexual behaviours upon arrival at the University.

- Over the coming year, we aim to train more Appeals, Conduct and Complaints staff in specialist investigation techniques and trauma-nformed investigations. In addition to this, we will aim to train more staff from across the University in sitting on specialist Disciplinary Panels, also considering trauma-informed approaches.

- Over the coming year, we aim to expand the campus awareness of the Sexual Assault Responder (SAR) role and ensure that staff and students are aware of the service. We also hope to further expand the number of SARs, and plan to do so with a recruitment drive and Open Day.

- Over the next year, we plan to gather additional data so that next year we will have comparison data that can further help us to identify areas to focus upon.

Ways to stay engaged with the topics highlighted in this report and get involved in campaigns

The University and Kent Students' Union have developed many campaigns to enable all members of the University of Kent community to participate in changing the culture. Everyone has a role to play in shaping a welcoming and inclusive working and learning environment. Below are some suggestions about how students and staff can get involved as individuals, or within Departments and Faculties.

As an individual

- Practice the four Ds of bystander intervention: direct, distract, delegate and delay

- If you're a member of staff, take the Staff e-learning Module available on Moodle.

- If you are a student, take the Expect Respect module.

- Speak with a peer or colleague about low level unacceptable behaviour. How do they identify it? What do they do to challenge it?

- Join our campaign and share your pledge #ConsentGetIt

- If you are a member of staff, think about becoming a Sexual Assault Responder (SAR)

As an Academic School or Professional Services Department

- Promote the use of Report + Support throughout the year.

- Think about organising an event for all members of the University. This may be hosting a talk, or other type of event to further promote the ongoing campaigns.

- Discuss and distribute resources found on the EDI Resource Bank.

- Promote the different Equality, Diversity and Inclusion focused training opportunities to both staff and students including staff active bystander training, and unconscious bias awareness training and/or attending in house training/information sessions.

- Allow time in team or group meetings to reflect on behaviour, explore support options and consider how you can act. Discuss reporting options that are available.

- Have open discussions about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion between yourselves and your Divisional/Departmental teams. The more we talk, the more we can listen, the more we can improve. Those things can feed into the Race Equality Charter process and our EDI forum.

- Share the findings of the Report + Support trend analysis report and the next steps for your area.

Further information about how to get involved in supporting students and/or campaigns can be found on the student Consent. Get it. Full Stop. Website. Additional information regarding reporting options, and

support articles can be found on the Report + Support webpage.

The University of Kent are committed to being transparent and accountable in our prevention and response to incidents that take place within our community if you have any feedback on this report, please contact KentSSW@kent.ac.uk.

University of
Kent