

BRIEFING NOTE 30 – STALKING AND HOW TO SEEK ADVICE AND SUPPORT

1.0 What is stalking?

1.1 The Suzy Lamplugh Trust¹ (The Trust), which runs the National Stalking Helpline, defines stalking as ‘...repeated, unwanted contact from one person to another which causes the victim to feel distressed or fearful. It differs from harassment in that a perpetrator of stalking will have an obsession with or fixation on the individual(s) they are targeting.

1.2 The Crown Prosecution Service² gives examples of stalking as ‘... following a person, watching or spying on them or forcing contact with the victim through any means, including social media. The effect of such behaviour is to curtail a victim’s freedom, leaving them feeling that they constantly have to be careful. In many cases, the conduct might appear innocent (if it were to be taken in isolation), but when carried out repeatedly so as to amount to a course of conduct, it may then cause significant alarm, harassment or distress to the victim.’

2.0 Examples of stalking

2.1 Stalking can be physical, digital and cyber. The Trust gives the following as examples of stalking behaviour:

- Nuisance telephone calls

¹ Source Suzy Lamplugh Trust A Guide for Employers on Dealing with Stalking in the Workplace <https://www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/FAQs/Category/anti-stalking>

² Source CPS http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/s_to_u/stalking_and_harassment/#a02b

- Being followed
- Sending excessive emails
- Sending unwanted or inappropriate gifts or letters
- Death threats
- Monitoring behaviour
- Making false complaints to employers/police etc.
- Abuse of and through social networking sites
- Criminal damage
- Visiting home/place of work
- Blackmail
- Physical assault
- Sexual assault
- Computer hacking

2.1 Cyberstalking is where a stalker uses technology to stalk an individual on-line, for example, through the use of social networking sites.

2.2 Digital stalking is where a stalker uses technology to track the location and activity of the individual they are stalking, for example through the use of spyware, mobile phone, geolocation.

3.0 Facts and Figures

3.1 The Office for National Statistics (2013) stated that 1 in 6 women and 1 in 12 men will experience stalking at some point in their life.

3.2 The National Stalking Helpline states that that 80% of people stalked are women and 20% men and 80% of people are stalked by someone that they know:

- an ex-partner (45%)
- acquaintance (22%)

- ex-colleague (5%)
- Family member (4%)

3.3 77% of people experience 100 incidents or more before contacting the police. (Sheridan 2005).

4.0 University's Legal Duty

4.1 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the University has a legal responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its staff. This 'duty of care' means that the University must make every effort, so far as is reasonably practicable, to provide a safe working environment.

5.0 The Legislation – Stalking and the Law

5.1 Stalking is a criminal offence and can be covered under a range of legislation³ including, but not limited to the Protection from Harassment Act 1997⁴, amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012⁵.

6.0 Where can you seek support, advice and further information in the University?

6.1 The University does not tolerate any form of harassing behaviour, which includes stalking, and individuals do not have to tolerate such inappropriate behaviour or believe that it is their fault.

6.2 The University encourages individuals who have experienced or witnessed stalking, whether on the UEA campus/Norwich Research Park or off campus, including when visiting placement sites or other sites, to report it to the University as detailed in paragraphs 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5, and/or to the Police.

6.3 Your line manager or a member of the [Human Resources team](#) can provide

³ Source CPS <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/stalking-and-harassment>

⁴ Protection from Harassment Act 1997 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/40/section/2A>

⁵ Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 section 2A and 4A
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/9/contents/enacted>

advice and support, including the identification of appropriate support mechanisms, which may include undertaking a risk assessment and helping individuals develop a personal safety plan.

- 6.4 If it relates to a student(s) or you are a student and not an employee, contact Student Support Service for advice and support.
- 6.5 The University also provides a [reporting form](#) as part of Never OK for individuals to report incidents of harassment that is experienced by employees, students and visitors at UEA. The information shared is used to offer support and guidance to individuals.
- 6.6 You can contact your Campus Trade Union representative ([UCU](#), [UNISON](#), [UNITE](#)) for advice and representation.
- 6.7 Signposting advice can be provided by
- A UEA [Staff Pride Dignity & Respect Champion](#)
 - A member of the [Equality & Diversity Team](#)
- 6.8 You can self-refer to UEA's [Staff Counselling Service](#).
- 6.9 The following documents also contain information and advice for staff and managers:
- [UEA Code of Practice for Staff – Dignity and Respect in the Workplace](#)
 - [UEA Briefing Note 26: Guidance for staff who believe they are being subjected to inappropriate behaviour](#)
 - [UEA Briefing Note 27: Guidance for staff who believe they have witnessed inappropriate behaviour](#)
 - [UEA Briefing Note 28: Guidance for staff who have had a complaint of inappropriate behaviour made against them](#)

- [UEA Briefing Note 29: Guidance for managers on how to deal with a complaint of inappropriate behaviour](#)

7.0 Help in an emergency

7.1 If you are in an emergency situation on campus dial 999 or 112 for the Police and dial 01603 592222 for Security.

7.2 If you are in an emergency situation off campus dial 999 or 112 for the Police.

8.0 Confidentiality

8.1 As a general principle confidentiality will be agreed and maintained wherever possible during and after any complaint of stalking.

8.2 There may be situations where confidentiality cannot be kept, and this will be made clear to complainants at the time. For example, if a complainant tells, in confidence, something which puts the health and safety of the complainant or others at risk, this will need to be drawn to the University's attention.

9.0 Links to specialist organisations that can offer expert advice and support

- [National Stalking and Harassment Helpline](#) (0808 802 0300), which is run by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust
- [Victim Support](#)
- [Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#)
- [Leeway](#) (0300 561 0077) offer telephone support and hold [weekly appointments](#) on the UEA Campus, where UEA staff and students of all genders can speak confidentially to an outreach worker.

- [Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service](#) (020 3866 4107)
- [Women's Aid](#)
- Leeway (0300 561 0077)

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