

## Domestic Abuse Policy

### Scope

This policy applies to all students currently registered at the University and all staff who experience domestic abuse, including domestic violence, and the staff who are called upon to respond to incidents. If a report involves a member of staff or a student, then the University will take action as appropriate.

### Policy Statement

#### 1. Policy statement and purpose

1.1 Everyone has the right to work, live and study in a safe, respectful and inclusive environment, and at the University of East Anglia, we are committed to ensuring that the campus is a welcoming and supportive place for all students and staff. The University does not tolerate any form of domestic abuse, sexual violence, stalking, coercive control, honour-based abuse and forced marriage. Individuals do not have to tolerate such inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour nor should they believe that it is their fault. The University recognises that the responsibility for domestic abuse lies with the perpetrator.

1.2 The University is aware that there are students and staff who will be affected by domestic abuse, either currently or historically, for instance a survivor of domestic abuse, living with domestic abuse, impacted by domestic abuse or as a perpetrator of domestic abuse. As such, the University is working to reduce the risks related to domestic abuse and create a safer studying and working environment for all.

1.3 The University is committed to enabling students and staff to disclose that they are experiencing, or have experienced, domestic abuse, coercive control, sexual violence, stalking, honour-based abuse and/or forced marriage.

1.4 The University is committed to providing students and staff who make any such disclosure with support, wherever possible, in a confidential manner.

1.5 In accordance with the [UEA Code of Practice for staff – Dignity and Respect in the Workplace](#), and for students [General Regulations - University Governance - About \(uea.ac.uk\)](#), and [University Disciplinary and Investigative Procedures and Powers - About \(uea.ac.uk\)](#) and [Safeguarding \(uea.ac.uk\)](#) UEA will thoroughly investigate all reports of inappropriate behaviour and conduct and will take appropriate action to address the situation that is proportionate to each case in line with the relevant University policy and procedure. In rare cases, this may involve the University taking action in accordance with its safeguarding obligations even if the person making the allegation does not want the University to do so. However, in such a situation the University will consider the position extremely carefully before coming to a decision.

## **2. Definitions**

2.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 creates a statutory definition of domestic abuse based on the existing cross-government definition.

2.2 Abusive behaviour consists of physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, or psychological, emotional, or other abuse. (Economic abuse is behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on your ability to acquire or use money, goods, or services, such as taking your earnings or sabotaging a job).

2.3 Domestic Abuse may be a course of conduct or a single incident and what makes it domestic is that the persons involved must be 'personally connected'.

2.4 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as affecting those aged 16 years or over. Those aged under 16 would instead be considered victims of child abuse. The Children Act 1989 which relates to all those under the age of 18, recognises witnessing harm to another as a form of harm to a child. The University hosts children on school visits and other events and it has enrolled students aged 16 or 17. The University will comply with its safeguarding obligations in relation to all children and where there is a conflict between the University's policies and its statutory safeguarding obligations, the latter will prevail.

2.5 'Personally connected' is defined in the act as parties who:

- are married to each other
- are civil partners of each other
- have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- are or have been in an intimate personal relationship with each other
- have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- are relatives (this is a defined list)

2.6 Domestic abuse is not restricted to women and can affect individuals of all genders and sex.

### **2.7 Examples of domestic abuse**

The following extract from P Morgan, Family Law (OUP 2021) provides examples of domestic abuse:

- Physical abuse may include kicking, punching, slapping, dragging, pinning, or pinching the victim; scratching or biting; scalding or burning

them; and choking or strangling them. Violence may be used or threatened towards other family members and pets. Physical abuse may also involve controlling access to food; withholding or forcing medication or drugs; and female genital mutilation.

- Sexual abuse may involve rape or other forced sexual activities, exceeding or ignoring the limits of the victim's consent. It can involve forced prostitution or sexual exploitation; using sexually degrading language or forcing the victim to watch or make pornography; revenge porn (the release to others of intimate photographs of the victim); rough sex contrary to the victim's consent; and tricking or forcing the victim into having unsafe sex. This can include refusing or sabotaging contraception or lying about using contraception or having a clean bill of sexual health.
- Violent or threatening behaviour may include threats to property or to the life or safety of the victim or someone they care for, including pets. The abuser may threaten to harm themselves if the victim leaves or say that the victim will not be able to see their children again if they leave. They may send harassing or abusive messages or encourage others to do so.
- Controlling or coercive behaviour occurs when one person engages in a range of acts designed to make the victim dependent on them or subordinate and regulates their day-to-day life. These can include economically abusive acts that deprive the victim of the financial or practical means of escape, isolate them from sources of support, or exploit the victim in financial or other ways. It may involve behaviour such as controlling where the victim goes, who they see, using spyware to monitor their whereabouts; reading their emails or text messages; controlling how they dress, and forbidding them from doing certain things or leaving the house without the perpetrator; or removing their passport or other essential documents. The perpetrator may use threats,

humiliation, punishment, or intimidation as well as or instead of physical violence to ensure compliance. The perpetrator may also force the victim to engage in criminal acts such as shoplifting and use the fear of prosecution as a way of enforcing compliance.

- Economic abuse is defined in s1(4) of the Act as ‘behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on [the victim’s] ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or obtain goods or services. Specific acts of economic abuse may involve taking or hiding money; putting assets into their name only; interfering with the victim’s ability to work or acting in a way that gets them into trouble at work; refusing access to necessities; using the victim’s credit or causing them debt; and requiring them to account for every purchase.
- Psychological and emotional abuse may involve humiliating or criticising the victim; verbally abusing them; criticising them; threatening to keep or take their children from them if the victim leaves; threatening to commit suicide if the victim leaves; threatening to ‘out’ them if they are gay; behaving jealously or possessively; and stalking or harassing the victim online or in person.
- Forced marriage
- Honour-based violence
- Abandoning a partner in another country without the resources to return to the home country.

Governance	Detail
Policy owner	Senate
Underlying University strategy or plan	<a href="#">UEA Code of Practice for staff – Dignity and Respect in the Workplace</a> , and for students <a href="#">General Regulations - University</a>

	<a href="#">Governance - About (uea.ac.uk)</a> , and <a href="#">University Disciplinary and Investigative Procedures and Powers - About (uea.ac.uk)</a>
<b>Underlying legislation</b>	<a href="#">The Domestic Abuse Act 2021</a>
<b>Recommended by</b>	Student Experience Committee, June 2023
<b>Approved by</b>	<i>Approved by Senate – July 2023</i>
<b>Effective working date</b>	<i>Immediately after Senate approval</i>
<b>Review date(s)</b>	August 2024
<b>Future review date</b>	<i>Normally 3 years, and no more than 5 years after last review date</i>
<b>Supporting regulations</b>	<a href="#">UEA Code of Practice for staff – Dignity and Respect in the Workplace</a> , and for students <a href="#">General Regulations - University Governance - About (uea.ac.uk)</a> , and <a href="#">University Disciplinary and Investigative Procedures and Powers - About (uea.ac.uk)</a>
<b>Supporting operational processes</b>	The operational processes and guidance will follow once the policy is approved.
<b>Supporting guidance for those running the process</b>	Will be created following approval
<b>Supporting guidance for this using the process</b>	Will be created following approval
<b>Enquires</b>	Queries on this policy should be addressed to: Jane Amos, Associate Director of Student Services (Life and Learning)
<b>Key web search terms</b>	Domestic Abuse