



Responding effectively to disclosures

When students or staff are in immediate danger or require urgent medical attention, call emergency services on **000 (112 from mobile phones)** or if the incident occurred on campus, call the Campus Support Team on **1800 800 707 (x7777 from any University phone)**.



SASH Responders are a network of staff who have been trained to assist students and staff to understand their support and reporting options relating to sexual harm and other personal violence including domestic and family violence. You can find a contact list online.



Harassment & Discrimination Contact Officers are a network of staff who have been trained to assist students and staff to understand the reporting and resolution options relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination at the University. You can find a contact list online.

Responding to sexual harm and gender-based violence

Responding to harassment, bullying or discrimination

Safe and supportive environment

Your role is to listen and offer immediate referral options for reporting and ongoing support, not to investigate, or provide counselling.

- ✓ Provide the individual with your full attention
- ✓ Remain calm; remind them that this is not their fault and that support is available
- ✓ Focus on the person's physical and emotional wellbeing.

Listen and believe

- ✓ Show empathy, respect and understanding
- ✓ Acknowledge their feelings
- ✓ **Do not display any signs of judgement or disbelief as this may further traumatise the individual**
- ✓ Allow them to guide the conversation and do not ask questions other than to assess immediate safety
- ✓ Allow them to guide any follow up actions – remember that they may not wish to report the incident at this time.

Refer

- ✓ Only seek information that is necessary to facilitate access to support services. You do not need to know any details.
- ✓ You can seek information and advice from support services anonymously at any time, but must have consent to identify the individual.

Support and wellbeing options

- [Student Safety and Wellbeing](#) –supporting students immediate safety, disclosure and reporting and through whatever process you feel is right for you.
- [Counsellor, Violence Response and Prevention](#) – priority counselling appointments
- [Staff](#) and [Student](#) counselling services including support for LGBTI+ or First Peoples students (see [Student Support](#))
- Griffith Mental Wellbeing Line (24/7) 1300 785 442 or text 0488 884 146

Reporting to Griffith University

- ✓ [Report a Concern Form](#)
 - Online disclosure (reporting an incident, seeking support)
 - Formal report (seeking investigation/resolution)
 - Form can be lodged anonymously
- ✓ Relevant staff e.g. Student Safety and Wellbeing, HR Business Partner, Advocacy (Student Associations)
- ✓ [Student Safety and Wellbeing](#)
 - Discuss options and pathways for resolving your concern
 - Assistance to complete Report a Concern

Other reporting/resolution options

- Police
- National Student Ombudsman
- External agencies e.g. Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland

Look after yourself

- ✓ Seek a confidential debrief (Supervisor; [Counsellor, Violence Response and Prevention](#))
- ✓ Students access support through [Counselling and Wellbeing](#)
- ✓ Staff access support through [Workplace Wellbeing and Counselling](#)



Responding effectively to disclosures of sexual harm

It can be hard to know how to support someone who has been sexually assaulted. Each disclosure is of an individual's own experience, and therefore, no two disclosures will be the same. Because of this, there is no set way to respond, however you may find the following information helpful if someone tells you they have been sexually assaulted.



Remember: Griffith has a network of SASH responders who have been trained in receiving disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment and other personal violence and are able to assist staff and students with these conversations.

Your words are important

- "I'm sorry this has happened to you"
- "I can see that this is really upsetting for you"
- "Here's how I can help..."
- "What can I do to support you with this?"
- "I believe you"
- "This is not your fault" / "You are not to blame"
- "You are not alone"
- "There are options for reporting and getting ongoing support"

Consider these words and the way they are heard by an individual.

Be supportive in your initial response

Supportive actions

- ✓ Listen to them and allow them to talk
- ✓ Acknowledge their courage ("I'm so glad you told me")
- ✓ Comfort them that their reaction or emotions are a normal response to an abnormal incident or situation
- ✓ Let them know that they have options (reporting, medical, support) and provide information to inform their next steps
- ✓ Encourage them make their own decisions
- ✓ Let them know how you can help (stay within your scope)
- ✓ Look after yourself (see over for options)

Not supportive (please avoid)

- ✗ Tell them what to do or take over their response
- ✗ Ask them 'why' questions (this is heard as blame and judgment)
- ✗ Judge or criticise
- ✗ Get angry on their behalf (they have enough to deal with without worrying about you)
- ✗ Assume you know how they feel (everyone experiences things differently)
- ✗ Make promises you cannot keep or do not have control over
- ✗ Make referrals or share their disclosure details without consent

Encourage them to access counselling (now or in the future as needed).

If the assault was recent

- Ensure that they are feeling safe now – if necessary, seek support from the [Campus Support Team](#) (on campus) or Police.
- Highlight the importance of seeking medical attention, including sexual health check-up or for the purposes of collection of forensic evidence to support a report to the police (please note that the opportunity to collect forensic evidence after a sexual assault is time-limited within a week).

Advise them that support is available to better understand their options –see [Safe Campuses](#) for more information

Counselling and Support Contacts

Griffith Mental Wellbeing Support (24/7): Text +61 (0) 488 884 146 or Phone 1300 785 442
 Personal Violence Counsellor priority appointments (Students): (07) 5552 9600
 Student Safety and Wellbeing:
 (07) 3735 5372 / 0422 686 896 or email studentsafetyandwellbeing@griffith.edu.au

Workplace Wellbeing and Counselling (24/7):
 1300 687 327 (Domestic and family violence helpline available)
 External 24/7 Support Services:
 1800RESPECT 1800 737 732 and DV CONNECT 1800 811 811