

# Peer on Peer Sexual Harassment

## **Data & Reporting**

Whilst the impact of lockdown and disrupted learning has prompted compassionate concern surrounding certain learner behaviours, UCU Cymru has heard little from our members around peer-on-peer sexual harassment amongst learners in FE.

This does not mean that it does not exist. As one FE Lecturer suggested, "it is so difficult to get data on this as not everyone will report it. We need to think about do people know and recognise the issue when it occurs."

Currently, we are aware of no centrally organised data or standard reporting procedures around this issue. Consequently, it is almost impossible to judge the scale of the problem or identify patterns and trends.

Conclusion: work is required to capture data and collate accounts and stories. This project should also take account of possible underreporting and might be run with simultaneous attempts to raise awareness and provide safe feed-back mechanisms.

## **Response**

In the absence of evidence, it might be considered irresponsible to speculate on the character or extent of peer-on-peer sexual harassment amongst learners in FE. However, depending upon the outcome of further investigation, it is possible to sketch a response across three key axis;

1: Awareness & Response: how staff detect/report harassment and deal with situations as they arise. This can be usefully addressed through collaborative professional learning.

2: Awareness & Education: how (in an FE context) we challenge sexual harassment through the curriculum. Whereas the new school curriculum provides more tools, there is still space in FE to address this issue.

3: Long Term Institutional Intervention: how we change institutional cultures and establish peer-to-peer networks of empowerment. Learners must feel empowered to challenge and speak up!

There might also be scope to examine issues around transition from school to college. Whereas learner intake might differ from college to college, it is feasible that young people arriving in college might need support in building healthy social and support networks. Following on from the shock of the Pandemic, the issue of transition is already an active focus across various Welsh Government plans. Consequently, any response might sit well within some of these existing workstreams.