



Survivor Handbook
SOAS Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy
November 2020
Approved by the Executive Board

This handbook is for those in the SOAS community who have experienced any form of sexual or gender-based violence (henceforth referred to in this document as SGBV). This document outlines the way you can expect to be treated by SOAS, explains some of your options and a little on how investigations work. There is an additional handbook for those that support survivors that can be found here:

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/admin/governance/policies/file151214.pdf>. This handbook accompanies SOAS's Sexual and Gender Based Violence Policy

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/admin/governance/policies/file151215.pdf> which sets out expectations of staff, students and visitors to the School and how SOAS will respond and prevent incidents of reports of SGBV.

What you can expect from SOAS

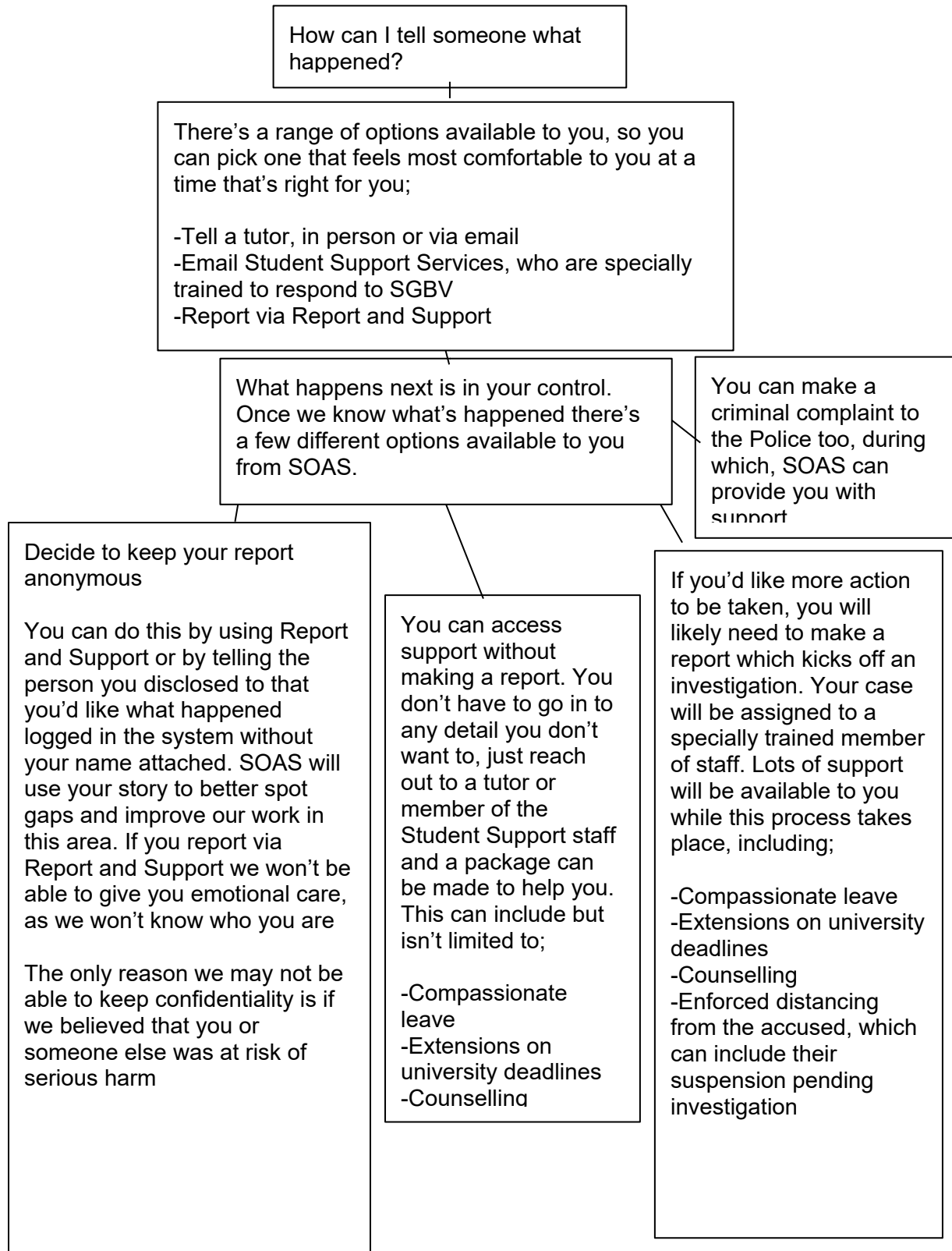
- We will believe you, take you seriously, treat you compassionately and work to understand how we can best support you to take the next steps that are right for you
- SOAS encourages people to inform someone if they experienced sexual violence, harassment and/or misconduct.
- SOAS understands the importance of minimising the number of times you have to disclose information or tell your story.
- SOAS processes are designed to limit the burden on you as the victim/ survivor - that means limiting the burden on your time, resources and your emotions too. We will fast track you to the support you need, which includes things like counselling
- There are lots of options for you to get support or make a report. You don't have to report what happened in order to access support; however, we may not be able to take action against another student unless a proper report is given. We are limited in what action we can take against alleged perpetrators that aren't students, but we will do everything that is in our power to support you.

How to Find the Right Next Step for You

It's essential that you feel equipped to make decisions that are right for you, at the right time. It's our job to talk you through these options and support you with whatever it is that you decide to do next. If you'd like a meeting to discuss this, please email

studentadviceandwellbeing@soas.ac.uk to set up a meeting or call. From there we can talk this

through, this conversation doesn't commit you to take any particular action and can remain anonymous (so long as we don't believe you or anyone else are in imminent danger).



Investigations

You don't have to go to the police for SOAS to use our own disciplinary procedures. The Student Disciplinary Procedure includes sanctions up to and including expulsion from the School. The Staff Misconduct Procedure includes the categories of gross or serious misconduct, and sanctions include a first and final warning, a period of suspension without pay and dismissal.

When a report is made, the person who has been accused will be made aware as they need to have a right to defend themselves through SOAS's procedures if they choose to. Both you and the accused have the right for the case to be considered by an impartial party.

An investigation will begin, in which evidence is gathered in order for SOAS to make a decision on the necessary outcomes. Throughout the investigation SOAS will:

- Treat you fairly and compassionately, keeping you as up to date as possible with the progress of your case.
- Provide you with a support package that can include; counselling, flexibility on university commitments, compassionate leave and enforced distance from the accused (which can include their suspension)
- Ensure those that work on your case are specially trained to do so

Throughout the investigation process, we may become aware of intelligence that indicates to us that someone is in imminent risk of harm. We may have to involve external services (which may include the police). If this did happen, we would seek to keep you (the survivor) informed of our decision if it's safe to do so.