

# Union Council Motion

## Motion Title: No to Sexual Harassment

Proposed by: Safa-Atiya Ahmed (Vice President Welfare)

Edited by: Ryan Narewal

Motion Passes into Policy on: 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Policy due to lapse by: 12<sup>th</sup> July 2025

## Union Council Notes

1. There is currently no official procedure at Aston University for students to report incidents of sexual harassment. The University have a new Bullying and Harassment policy in place which encompasses rape, sexual harassment, violence and hate crime. In turn, as part of her yearlong anti-sexual violence campaign, Safa is working with the University to produce a Report and Support tool. This tool will allow students to report incidents in relation to sexual harassment, bullying, assault, discrimination and/or get advice.
2. A 'Report and Support System' work group has been set up, co-chaired by Safa with an open invitation to key players within the campus support system to collaborate on building this report system. This is to ensure there is confidence that those involved are sufficiently well resourced, trained and coordinated to deliver appropriate and timely responses and support.
3. That the Hidden Marks report, published in March 2010 by NUS, revealed that 68% of women students had experienced sexual harassment while attending at their current institution. Many women students reported experiencing persistent harassment in pubs, bars and at club nights including ones held by student unions.
4. That sexual harassment is any unwanted and/or persistent behaviour of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Unwanted sexual comments (including comments about someone's body and private life).
  - b. Unwelcome sexual invitations, innuendos, and offensive gestures.
  - c. Wolf whistling, catcalling, and offensive sexual noises.
  - d. Groping, pinching, and smacking someone's body.
  - e. Tugging, pulling, and lifting someone's clothing.
  - f. Exposure of sexual organs.
  - g. Stalking.
5. Sexual harassment is not limited to in person interactions. It can occur digitally through mediums such as PCs, laptops, mobile phones to send or display emails, texts, videos, or images directly to others or publicly through social media channels.

## Union Council Believes

1. Awareness and training are key to battling sexual harassment on campus

2. That all members of Aston Students' Union, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, should be able to take part in our activities and use our services free from the fear of sexual harassment.
3. No student at Aston University should tolerate any form of sexual harassment. Action must be taken to ensure that all students are able to enjoy their time with the University, Students' Union, and any other Aston university institution without experiencing sexual harassment.
4. That sexual harassment should not be tolerated by Aston Students' Union and those who commit acts of sexual harassment should be stopped and disciplined for their actions.
5. That everyone has a joint responsibility to make our Union and University a safe space for all students and staff.
6. That there are several reasons why a student might not want to report their experiences to the police.

## Union Council Resolves

1. To mandate Union Officers to take part in training around the topic of sexual violence, specifically sexual harassment, and abuse. This is so they know what to do when made aware of an incident especially when made aware by a student.
2. To never tolerate sexual violence in any of our spaces or at any of our events.
3. That relevant consent and by-stander trainings should be made available to student leaders if they wish to take part (programme reps, part-time officers and club and society members).
4. To ensure that Security in the Union and University are aware of the 'Report and Support system' tool when it is launched later this academic year so students can be signposted should they wish to report an incident and/or seek advice.