

University Sexual Misconduct Risk and Needs Assessment Tool

Case Study Examples

Background and introduction

Overview and Purpose

1. In December 2019, LimeCulture launched an open-access Sexual Misconduct Risk and Needs Assessment template and supporting document for Universities across the UK to use in their work tackling sexual misconduct, and supporting their student survivors. This Case Studies Guide should be read in conjunction with those documents, found here (<https://limeculture.co.uk/universities/>).
2. The Sexual Misconduct Risk and Needs Assessment (SMRNA) is designed to be used to identify risks and needs for both reporting and responding parties, whether they are students or members of staff. Sometimes parties in sexual misconduct cases will be both a student and a member of staff.
3. The purpose of this document is to provide developed examples of how the tool can be used in two different scenarios. This document will assume a level of prior understanding and work in this area by the reader, as the tool is designed to work most effectively when implemented as part of a whole-organisational approach to tackling and responding to sexual misconduct. We appreciate that Universities will always feel as though there is more to do in this area, and LimeCulture is able to support in developing a response to sexual misconduct, including through using this tool and supporting guides.

Terminology

4. Although it is the role of each University/ Higher Education Institution to determine what and how terminology is used, there are some suggestions provided below.
5. The reporting party: the person reporting themselves to be a victim of sexual misconduct (for ease, this term will also be used to refer to students who have disclosed sexual misconduct, but have not formally reported e.g., to the University or Police – some Universities may refer to this individual as the ‘disclosing party’).
6. The responding party: the person who has been reported to have perpetrated sexual misconduct (some Universities may refer to this individual as the ‘disclosed party’ (see point above) and/ or the ‘reported party’).
7. Collectively, the reporting and responding party can be referred to as supported parties.
8. Disclosure: making new or secret information known – this could be to, for example, to any member of staff of the University.
9. Report: formally reporting the incident(s) to the University (to be processed through the University’s disciplinary regulations and procedures) and/ or the Police (some Universities may refer to this

as making a 'complaint' or 'formal report'). Making a report inherently involves the act of making a disclosure, but making a disclosure does not necessarily always lead to making a (formal) report.

10. University Support Worker (USW) as a generic term for designated staff undertaking the role of support worker (in universities that have adopted the Sexual Violence Liaison Officer model this can be read as SVLO).
11. The Sexual Misconduct Risk and Needs Assessment Tool (SMRNA) itself also referred to as the Tool.
12. The Support and Risk Management Plan referred to as the Plan.
13. Sexual Misconduct Risk Management Panel is referred to as the Panel (this is not to be confused with any University disciplinary panel). Some Universities may have something similar in the form of a Cause for Concern/ Students at Risk Group.
14. The Sexual Misconduct Risk Management Committee is referred to as the Committee.

Case Studies and Completed Templates

Case Study 1

Serina is 19 years old and reports that she was raped last night in her University accommodation after attending a party. She does not want to tell her parents because they will worry. She tells the support worker that she has self-harmed in the past and does not feel like she wants to live. She says her attacker was not from the University.

It is important to identify the possibly risks and needs from the information gathered or presented so far, and consider how that information may have been collected, and how more information may be collected, if needed, in the future.

Serina is likely to have risks and needs related to:

- Mental health
- Sexual health
- Emotional well-being
- Accommodation

Other risks and needs the Support Worker could identify include:

- Campus security
- Evidential risks
- Academic impacts

In this instance, there is no University Risk Assessment 2 as the responding party is not a student or related to the University in another way. Risk Assessment 1 (the reporting party) can be completed.

The Sexual Misconduct Risk Management Panel will meet to review the USW risk assessment (Risk Assessment 1), and complete the wider organisational risk assessment (Risk Assessment 3).

Other risks the Panel may identify would include:

- Third party safety
- Communications
- Reputation

Below are examples of completed risk assessments for this fictional case study using the word templates provided.

RISK ASSESSMENT 1 – REPORTING PARTY

Assessment completed/ reviewed by:	University Support Worker	Date of completion/ review:	01/01/2021
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Type of risk/ need	Summary of Risk or Need	Action Taken/ to be Taken (including personnel responsible)	Score/ 'RAG' Rating	Review Date/ Period
Category of risk/ need: Personal and Individual Risks and Needs				
T1: Personal and Individual Requirements	Student does not want parents to be made aware.	None at this time. Plan for USW to consider needs in relation to gender identity, sexuality, cultural and religious, and other personal needs as support relationship develops.	1	1 month
T2: Harm from others	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
T3: Health and Medical	Student alleges rape within last 24 hours.	Advice given by USW regarding SARC, and/ or sexual health check-ups, and contact facilitated	3	2 days
T4: Mental Health & Psychological Wellbeing	Student says that she does not want to live. Self-reported history of self-harm.	High-priority referral made to (internal and/ or external) Mental Health/ Wellbeing Team.	3	2 days
T5: Coping Mechanisms, Social & Cultural Support	Not known at this time.	Need to identify possible support networks and establish coping skills. Discussion about sources of support.	1	1 month
T6: Alcohol and Drug Use	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
T7: Safeguarding	Alleged rape took place in University campus accommodation. Any	Further questions required to establish any third-party awareness. Follow local processes around	3	2 days

	concerns identified in relation to third parties.	informing Accommodation and/ or Security Services.		
T8: Immigration and Residence	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
Category of risk/ need: University/ Academic Life Risks and Needs				
T9: Employment and Education	Not known at this time.	Need to explore issues relating to university education (USW). Submit/ share appropriate information depending on local mechanisms (USW).	1	1 month
T10: Accommodation and Housing	Alleged rape took places in student's accommodation.	Explore safety and need for alternative temporary/ permanent accommodation depending on student's current support network and preferences where possible – within 1 day (USW). Liaise with student life/ Welfare services and/ or Accommodation Services according to local processes. Explore whether student feels safe to leave accommodation or not.	2	1 week
T11: Finance	N/A / none identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
T12: Out of Term Time/ Following Graduation	N/A / none identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
Category of risk/ need: Disciplinary/ Criminal Justice Risks and Needs				
T13: Risk(s) to University Community	Alleged rape took place in University campus accommodation and therefore potentially wider impact on more students.	USW to follow local processes around referring to Accommodation/ Security Services.	2	1 week

T14: Risk to Supporter	N/A / none identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
T15: University Disciplinary Processes	N/A / none identified at this time.	None at this time. To be discussed with student.	0	1 month
T16: Criminal Justice System Processes	N/A / none identified at this time.	None at this time. To be discussed with the student – potentially dependent on attendance at SARC/ conversations with ISVA.	0	1 month
T17: Professional Judgement	N/A / none identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month

RISK ASSESSMENT 3 – RISK MANAGEMENT PANEL

Assessment completed/ reviewed by:	Students of Concern Group (see minutes for membership)	Date of completion/ review:	02/01/2021
Review of Risk Assessments for Reporting & Responding Parties (if required):	RA1: assessed as high risk with urgent actions. Panel agrees assessment given nature of report and timing plus location. RA2: none completed. External (non-University) party.		

Type of Risk/ Need	Summary of Risk or Need	Action Taken/ to be Taken (including personnel responsible)	Score/ 'RAG' Rating	Review Date/ Period
Category of risk/ need: Organisational Risks and Needs				
D1: Third Party Safety	Incident reported as within University accommodation last night.	Follow local processes around informing Accommodation and/ or Security Services – SOC group to follow up immediately.	2	1 week
D2: Similar Incidents	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D3: Academic Adjustments	Not known at this time.	To be discussed with the reporting party.	2	1 week
D4: Planned Communications	Not known at this time.	Need to establish need to inform other students in accommodation to maintain safety, and/ or carefully manage conversations and support with the other students if they are already aware. Potential for other witnesses or affected students.	3	1 day

D5: Social (and other Media) Issues	None identified at this time. (However, see above and below)	None at this time.	0	1 month
D6: Reputational Issues	Owing to time/ location of incident, information about the incident may be shared out with the University processes.	Need to consider concerns regarding safety of University accommodation – consider greater Security presence if required.	1	2 weeks
Category of risk/ need: Disciplinary/ Criminal Justice Risks and Needs				
D7: Disciplinary Investigation Issues	None identified at this time. (Alleged perpetrator not from the University)	None at this time.	0	1 month
D8: Disciplinary Panel Issues	As above.	As above.	0	1 month
D9: Precautionary Action/ Necessary Precautionary Measures	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D10: Legal Risks	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D11: Evidential Risks	Quality and quantity of evidence not known at this time, considering the University's responsibility Vs the SARC's responsibility.	Need to secure any physical evidence that might exist (recent disclosure/ report including date/ time stamp) –depending on what the reporting student wants to do, for example. Might involve reviewing and saving CCTV footage if it automatically wipes after a certain period of time.	2	1 week
D12: Risks Associated with University Systems/ Processes	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month

D13: Timeline	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D14: Record Keeping and Information Sharing	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D15: Fitness-to-Practice Issues and Placement	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D16: Criminal Justice System Processes	Not known at this time.	Conversation around options needed with USW.	1	1 month
D17: Professional Judgement	High risk recent incident in University accommodation.	Notify Senior Leadership as per existing protocols.	0	1 month

Case Study 2

Max is a male student who reports being subject to unwanted sexual touching by another student on his course that he names whilst they were both on a field trip as part of their studies. He says he has not been attending classes for three weeks in order to avoid the other student. He's also stopped going onto campus completely but he has a job at the University book shop on campus. He says he is coping but looks unwashed and is wearing dirty clothes. He wants the University to take action. A small group of close friends know what happened.

Max is likely to have risks and needs related to:

- Self-care (potentially indicating some mental health needs)
- Emotional well-being
- Academic studies
- Possible employment/ financial concerns
- Making a formal report under the relevant University disciplinary regulations/ policies/ procedures – and/ or (depending on identified factors) making a report to the Police

Other risks and needs the Support Worker would identify include:

- Third party awareness / actions, and potential risks to others (possible other affected parties)
- Evidential risks

All 3 Risk Assessments are to be completed. Risk Assessment 1 to be completed by Max's Support Worker, Risk Assessment 2 completed by a different support worker, the Panel will meet to review the USWs' Risk Assessments, and complete the wider organisational risk assessment. The SMRMP should also be responsible for determining whether the responding party should be made aware of the report or whether a risk assessment should be undertaken without involving the responding party at this time.

Other risks the Panel may identify would include:

- Third party safety
- Communications
- Reputation

Below are examples of completed risk assessments for this fictional case study using the word templates provided. All templates have been completed as if a formal report has just been made under the University's policies and regulations.

RISK ASSESSMENT 1 – REPORTING PARTY

Assessment completed/ reviewed by:	University Support Worker	Date of completion/ review:	02/02/2022
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Type of Risk/ Need	Summary of Risk or Need	Action Taken/ to be Taken (including personnel responsible)	Score/ 'RAG' Rating	Review Date/ Period
Category of risk/ need: Personal and Individual Risks and Needs				
T1: Personal and Individual Requirements	Student potentially not looking after hygiene.	More information needed (from USW) to determine risk and wider impacts/ causes e.g. mental health (below). Plan for USW to consider other personal needs as support relationship develops.	1	2 weeks
T2: Harm from others	Responding party is also a student on the same course so there might be a higher chance of unwanted contact. However, reporting student is currently avoiding shared spaces (campus) meaning this particular risk is reduced.	USW to consider possibility of interaction with reporting student.	1	2 weeks
T3: Health and Medical	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
T4: Mental Health & Psychological Wellbeing	See T1, student appears to not be looking after personal hygiene which could be caused by mental ill-health, and may have physical health affects if it continues.	Need to consider causes and potential impacts of staying away from campus in relation to mental health. USW to discuss (internal and external) mental health referrals, and monitor reporting student's coping mechanisms.	2	1 week

		Consider referral to SARC/ sexual health for check-up/ evidence gathering.		
T5: Coping Mechanisms, Social & Cultural Support	Small group of close friends are aware so assume positive support network. Unaware of support from other University staff (academic and employment).	USW to discuss talking to those staff with the reporting student/ on his behalf if he wishes.	1	3 weeks
T6: Alcohol and Drug Use	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
T7: Safeguarding	Alleged rape took place on University field trip.	Further questions required to establish any third-party awareness. Follow local processes around informing the Academic department.	3	2 days
T8: Immigration and Residence	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
Category of risk/ need: University/ Academic Life Risks and Needs				
T9: Employment and Education	Impact of not attending campus for past 3 weeks, on academic and employment, currently unknown.	Need to consider applying for mitigating circumstances/ extensions to deadlines etc. Student and/ or USW to submit appropriate information, and discuss with appropriate staff, depending on student's wishes and local mechanisms. Need to consider longer-term affects if student continues to stay away from campus.	3	2 days
T10: Accommodation and Housing	Assumed that reporting student spending the majority of his time at home.	USW might want to consider discussing whether this is adequate and comfortable for the student.	1	3 weeks

T11: Finance	Source of income from employment on campus potentially jeopardised by not being able to come onto campus.	Implications of not attending work previously, and potentially for longer in the future, to be discussed with the student.	2	1 week
T12: Out of Term Time/ Following Graduation	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
Category of risk/ need: Disciplinary/ Criminal Justice Risks and Needs				
T13: Risk(s) to University Community	Alleged sexual assault took place within a University setting, therefore there are potentially other affected students – currently unknown.	Follow local processes around communicating with the Academic Department and potentially Security Services. Consider precautionary measures.	1	3 weeks
T14: Risk to Supporter	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
T15: University Disciplinary Processes	Reporting student has made a formal report therefore making the responding student aware (depending on disciplinary protocols) and having an impact on reporting student's willingness/ ability to come onto campus for the duration.	Supportive precautionary measures may assist the student in accessing the campus again. To be discussed with the Conduct Team.	2	1 week
T16: Criminal Justice System Processes	None identified at this time.	None at this time. To be discussed again with the student, dependent on the University disciplinary process outcome.	0	1 month
T17: Professional Judgement	Score 2 overall – support needs identified as being time-sensitive but potentially not urgent. Given the disciplinary report, some risks will be dependent on that progress.	None at this time.	0	1 month

RISK ASSESSMENT 2 – RESPONDING PARTY

Assessment completed/ reviewed by:	University Support Worker	Date of completion/ review:	03/02/2022
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Type of Risk/ Need	Summary of Risk or Need	Action Taken/ to be Taken (including personnel responsible)	Score/ 'RAG' Rating	Review Date/ Period
Category of risk/ need: Personal and Individual Risks and Needs				
T1: Personal and Individual Requirements	Not known at this time.	To be determined initially based on what information the USW can gather about the responding student, and then to be updated after making contact with the responding party (most likely based on the progress of the disciplinary process)	1	2 weeks
T2: Harm from others	Reporting party is also a student on the same course so there might be a higher chance of unwanted contact. However, reporting student is currently avoiding shared spaces (campus) meaning this particular risk is reduced.	See above.	2	1 week
T3: Health and Medical	Not known at this time.	See above.	1	2 weeks
T4: Mental Health & Psychological Wellbeing	Not known at this time.	See above.	1	2 weeks
T5: Coping Mechanisms, Social & Cultural Support	Not known at this time.	See above.	1	2 weeks

T6: Alcohol and Drug Use	Not known at this time.	See above.	1	2 weeks
T7: Safeguarding	Alleged rape took place on University field trip.	Further questions required to establish any third-party awareness. Follow local processes around informing the Academic department.	3	2 days
T8: Immigration and Residence	Not known at this time.	See above.	1	3 weeks
Category of risk/ need: University/ Academic Life Risks and Needs				
T9: Employment and Education	As above, responding student is on the same course as reporting student.	USW to discuss impacts of this with responding student.	2	1 week
T10: Accommodation and Housing	Not known at this time.	See above.	1	2 weeks
T11: Finance	Not known at this time.	See above.	1	2 weeks
T12: Out of Term Time/ Following Graduation	Not known at this time.	See above.	1	2 weeks
Category of risk/ need: Disciplinary/ Criminal Justice Risks and Needs				
T13: Risk(s) to University Community	Alleged sexual assault took place within a University setting, therefore there are potentially other affected students – currently unknown.	Follow local processes around communicating with the Academic Department and potentially Security Services. Consider precautionary measures.	2	1 week
T14: Risk to Supporter	Not known at this time.	None at this time.	1	2 weeks
T15: University Disciplinary Processes	Reporting student has made a formal report therefore making the responding student aware (depending	Reporting student has made a formal report therefore the responding student will most likely be expected to engage with	2	1 week

	on disciplinary protocols) and having an impact on reporting student's willingness/ ability to come onto campus for the duration.	a disciplinary process. Impact on responding student to be discussed with USW. To be discussed with the Conduct Team. Consider precautionary measures.		
T16: Criminal Justice System Processes	None identified at this time. Possibly dependent on the University disciplinary process outcome.	None at this time.	0	1 month
T17: Professional Judgement	Score 1-2 overall – support needs identified as being time-sensitive but potentially not urgent.	None at this time. Given the disciplinary report, some risks will be dependent on the progress of that.	0	1 month

RISK ASSESSMENT 3 – RISK MANAGEMENT PANEL

Assessment completed/ reviewed by:	Students of Concern Group (see minutes for membership)	Date of completion/ review:	04/02/2022
Review of Risk Assessments for Reporting & Responding Parties:	<p>RA1: assessed as medium risk with some relatively imminent actions. Group agrees assessment given all individual and situational factors considered.</p> <p>RA2: assessed as low-medium risk currently, based on limited information at this stage. More information to be collected, and support needs and options discussed with USW.</p>		

Type of Risk/ Need	Summary of Risk or Need	Action Taken/ to be Taken (including personnel responsible)	Score/ 'RAG' Rating	Review Date/ Period
Category of risk/ need: Organisational Risks and Needs				
D1: Third Party Safety	Incident reported as part of a University event.	Follow local processes around informing Academic department and/ or Security Services.	2	1 week
D2: Similar Incidents	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D3: Academic Adjustments	Not known at this time.	To be discussed with both parties.	1	2 weeks
D4: Planned Communications	Not known at this time.	Need to establish need to inform other students on the course, and/ or carefully manage conversations and support with the other students if they are already aware. Potential for other witnesses or affected students.	3	2 days
D5: Social (and other Media) Issues	None identified at this time. (However, see above and below)	Social media team to monitor and notify as per usual.	0	1 month

D6: Reputational Issues	Owing to time/ location of incident, information about the incident may be shared out with the University processes.	Need to consider concerns regarding safety of similar events in the future – consider wider communications around University policies and support structures.	1	3 weeks
Category of risk/ need: Disciplinary/ Criminal Justice Risks and Needs				
D7: Disciplinary Investigation Issues	Not known at this time.	Conduct Team to input depending on the progress of the disciplinary process.	1	3 weeks
D8: Disciplinary Panel Issues	Not known at this time.	Conduct Team to input depending on the progress of the disciplinary process.	1	3 weeks
D9: Precautionary Action/ Necessary Precautionary Measures	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D10: Legal Risks	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D11: Evidential Risks	Consider University's responsibility in saving/ collating evidence (e.g. first disclosure) for the purpose of internal investigations.	Need to secure any physical evidence that might exist (referral to the SARC recommended even based on time frame and nature of the alleged assault). Need to secure any physical evidence that might exist (recent disclosure/ report including date/ time stamp). Might involve reviewing and saving CCTV footage if it automatically wipes after a certain period of time.	2	2 weeks
D12: Risks Associated with University Systems/ Processes	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D13: Timeline	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month

D14: Record Keeping and Information Sharing	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D15: Fitness-to-Practice Issues and Placement	None identified at this time.	None at this time.	0	1 month
D16: Criminal Justice System Processes	None identified at this time.	Conversation around options needed with USW.	1	3 weeks
D17: Professional Judgement	High risk recent incident on University field trip.	Notify Senior Leadership as per existing protocols.	2	1 week

Conclusions

15. As discussed in the introduction, the tool is designed to work when implemented as part of a whole-organisational approach to tackling and responding to sexual misconduct. Given this, there will be additional actions preceding and as a result of the initial information gathering and assessment – this must all be embedded in the University’s work around sexual misconduct and resourced appropriately.
16. Provided above are two scenarios that might occur within a University setting. These may be considered relatively ‘simple’, perhaps given the lack of information provided at this stage, or lack of additional complicating or aggravating factors. These may include one of the reporting or responding parties being a member of staff; the reporting party providing some details of the incident but then disengaging; the reporting party being an individual external to the University; additional disclosed or reported academic or non-academic misconduct.
17. Further complexity arises because there will be different risks to assess and manage depending on different processes – for instance at the disclosure stage compared to throughout a formal reporting process. These ‘complications’ have the potential to be managed within the risk tool framework, as long as this is also supported by the wider organisational structures, staff capacity and expertise, and appropriately followed processes. Building in flexibility to the identified ‘straight line processes’ is crucial to being as effectively responsive as possible.
18. LimeCulture recognises that Universities may not always have the time or internal capacity to address all possible concerns, even with significant expertise already within the University community. Sometimes additional conversations, training and consultation with external expertise may be required, so if you would like to start this process in a way that best suits your needs, please get in touch.

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