



# Where do you draw the line?

Ensuring a culture of dignity and respect

*Gina Warren*



# University Statement

## There is no place for any form of harassment or sexual misconduct at the University of Cambridge

- All members of the University community must be able to **thrive** in a safe and supportive environment; one that welcomes and celebrates diversity and acts collectively to tackle unacceptable behaviour.
- The University will **continuously work to improve** the prevention, response, support and investigation of all instances of harassment and sexual misconduct; and to **empower staff and students** to make disclosures.
- Staff and students have an **individual and a collective responsibility** to ensure a zero tolerance approach to harassment and to foster a culture of mutual respect and consideration.
- We will work together with **all universities across the UK** to solve this

# Definitions

## Bullying

- Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behavior, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient
- *Usually targeted, repeated and persistent*

## Harassment

- Unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person
- *Related to a protected characteristic, can be a single incident or repeated*

## Sexual harassment or misconduct

- Unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that is committed without consent or by force, intimidation, coercion, or manipulation
- *Related to a protected characteristic, can be a single incident or repeated*

# Just a bit of banter?

Those clothes really show off your figure

You smell good enough to eat

You need to do some exercise

She's having a blonde moment

When is the baby due?

You must be used to this heat

Nice tan! Show me your white bits

I didn't know you had legs

Fancy a drink after work?

Do they have roads in Macedonia?

Don't ask him now, men can only do one thing at a time

Change is always difficult at your age

I'm a sex addict

So, how's the love life then?

I'm not working with anyone who wears a Burkha

We work well together don't we?

You look smart today - nice suit!

Is there a number I can contact you on after office hours if I need to discuss this further?

I look forward to you working under me

Ok thanks Yoda

Your hair looks nice when you keep it loose

I dreamt about you last night

It's a Diet Coke Moment

You are not 25 anymore

We don't want part time work

You don't speak the Queen's English

Is that a knock-off shirt?

Blonde, no veil, can't be Muslim

Are you from another planet? Your arse is out of this world

A child of 5 could understand this

You are seen as a little girl

She is fit to burst

# So, is it....

## **Friendly banter**

- There's no intention to hurt and everyone knows the limits

## **Ignorant banter**

- 'crosses the line' with no intent to hurt. Will often say sorry

## **Malicious banter**

- Done to humiliate a person - often in public

If you call it “just a bit of fun”, banter can result in victims feeling silenced. People on the receiving end are made to feel foolish for taking offence because they simply don't “get the joke”.

# Just a bit of banter...

## *'the gentle exchange of teasing remarks'*

A person's definition of "banter" often depends on whether they're on the giving or receiving end of it: what the former thinks is a joke, the latter may interpret as bullying.

Could be a joke, prank or use of nicknames.

- It's a form of social bonding, but vulnerable groups can become the target of jokes by more socially powerful, or dominant groups, consequently perpetuating structural inequalities
- It's even more precarious at work or study, where professional hierarchies create natural power imbalances between employees/students that render one person more vulnerable than another.

**Everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to them and have their feelings respected by others.**

- Just because someone uses certain language to refer to themselves it doesn't necessarily mean it's acceptable, nor does it make it ok for you to use it
- Just because you think something is banter or a joke doesn't mean other people will
- People won't always feel confident to speak up if they are offended by something. They might even go along with it so as not to draw attention to themselves

## If it's 'grey' or you're not sure, ask yourself:

- Would you want your family member to be the target of this behaviour?
- Would you act in this way if your partner was present?
- Would you act in this way if the parent/partner of the other was present?
- Would you want your behaviour to be seen on social or student media?
- Would you act in this way to someone more senior than you?
- Is the behaviour reciprocated?
- Are there signs that the behaviour is not welcome?

Are there factors specific to higher education that may contribute to Bullying & Harassment?

# Answers may include.....

- Long hours culture, high-pressured, competitive environment
- Hierarchy and power structures:
  - Students and staff
  - 'Status' of different staff groups
- Prized academic staff are perceived to 'get away with it'
- 'Old fashioned' and slow changing culture
- Mix of backgrounds and cultures
- Blurred boundaries:
  - Graduate students and academics
  - Distinction (or lack of) between 'work' and 'life'
  - Technology: open all hours culture, may facilitate harassment

# “Creating a positive and thriving environment”

## **BREAK/NG** THE SILENCE

CAMBRIDGE SPEAKS OUT AGAINST SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

[www.breakingthesilence.cam.ac.uk](http://www.breakingthesilence.cam.ac.uk)

“This work  
looks great”

“Almost as  
good as you”

Think. Don't cross the line.

[www.breakingthesilence.cam.ac.uk](http://www.breakingthesilence.cam.ac.uk)



**Implicit bias  
training**

# Amy - The SAHA Role

## For Students;

Emotional & Practical support

Support to understand and manage the impact of sexual violence and help to re-build self-esteem and trust.

Impartial information and support to explore options for reporting and support through any reporting process.

Signposting and referring to support services.

## For Staff;

Consultation on issues that come up for the students they are supporting.

One off appointments with staff and student to provide information about the service and around options for reporting and for external support services.

Training and workshops on understanding and responding to sexual violence.

# Chris - The Investigator Role

The Investigator enables the University to conduct investigations sensitively and appropriately into student misconduct, including serious sexual misconduct, and other student complaints.

They are able to provide advice to internal stakeholders on relevant University procedures, decisions and risk assessment.

They can provide one off appointments with staff and students to provide information about the service and around options for reporting.



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# Overview of support available – student specific

## University support

- University Sexual Assault & Harassment Advisor

<https://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/sexual-assault-and-harassment-advisor>

- The University Counselling Service

<http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/>

- Student Advice Service – listening, support and advice

<https://www.cambridgesu.co.uk/support/advice/>

- College pastoral support (nurses, chaplains, tutors, College counsellors)



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# Change begins with individuals

A **Bystander** is a person who observes a conflict or unacceptable behaviour.

It might be something serious or minor, one-time or repeated, but the **Bystander** knows that the behaviour is destructive or likely to make a bad situation worse.

**Passive bystanders** are people who choose, for whatever reason, to ignore the situation, or to do nothing about it.

An **active bystander** takes steps that can make a difference.

# Choosing to be an active bystander

**There are five steps to being an active bystander:**

1. Notice the event
2. Interpret it as a problem
3. Feel responsible for helping
4. Have necessary knowledge and skills
5. Act.

# Remember the four Ds – direct, distract, delegate, delay.

- **Direct action**

Call out negative behaviour, as a group if you can. Be polite. Remain calm and state why something has offended you. Don't exaggerate.

- **Distract**

Interrupt, start a conversation with the perpetrator. Alternatively, try distracting, or redirecting the situation.

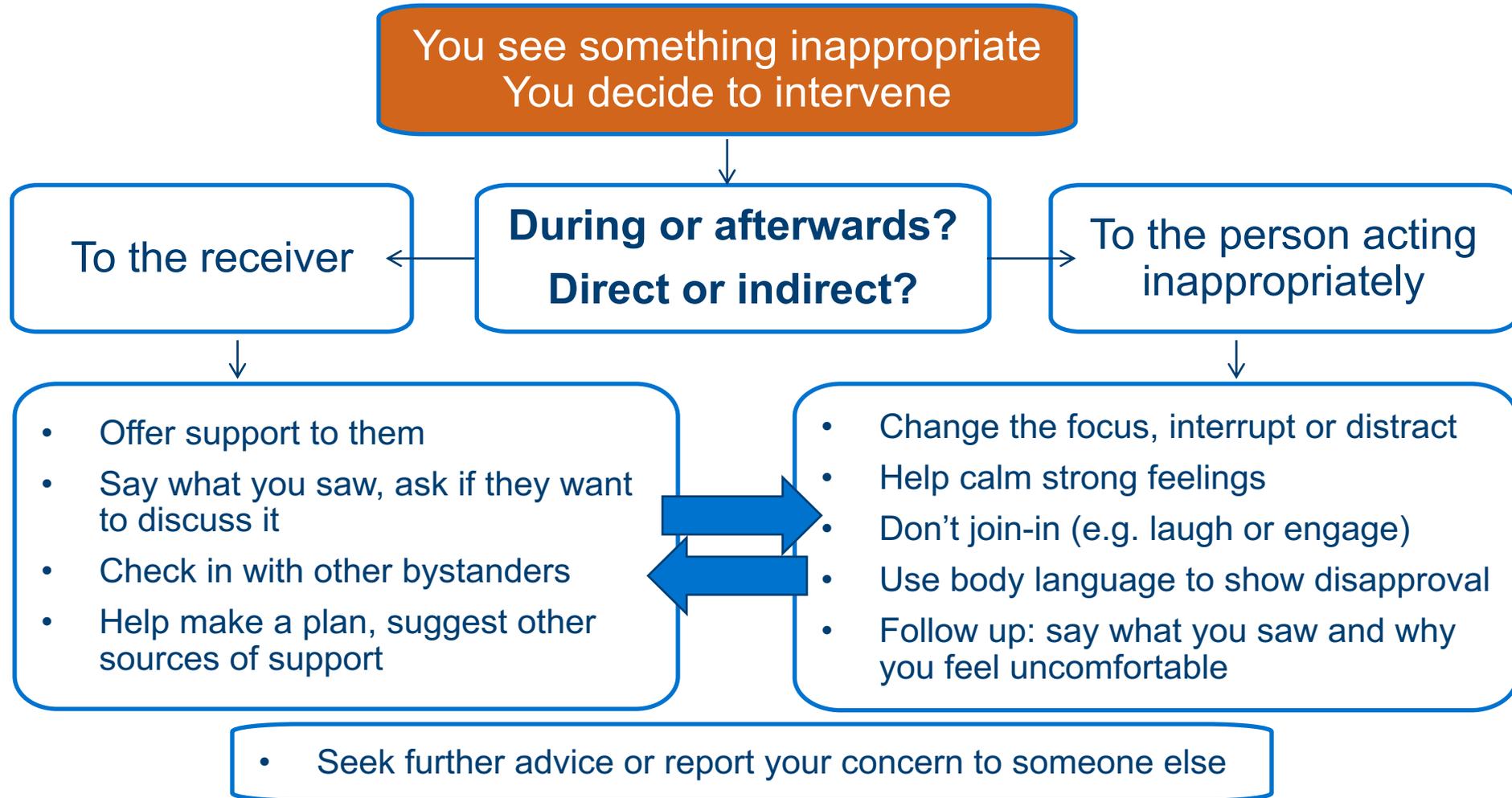
- **Delegate**

If you are too embarrassed or shy to speak out, or you don't feel safe to do so, get someone else to step in.

- **Delay**

If the situation is too difficult to challenge then and there Wait for the situation to pass then ask the victim later if they are OK. Or report it when it's safe to do so – it's never too late to act.

# Active bystander intervention options



# Scenario

- You are in your departmental tea-room over lunch, with a group of friends. One of the people you are with makes a racist and homophobic joke, and while you notice a couple of people laugh, it's clear at least one of your friends looks uncomfortable.
- **In groups of 3:**
  - How would you approach this situation?
  - Which of the 4 Ds would you use?
  - What would you say?

- What if the person telling the joke had been your supervisor?