

Speak Up Student Guidance

If it matters to you, it matters to us.



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Faculty of Medicine and Health: A Safe Place to Learn

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If it matters to you, it matters to us.

This guidance is for **all our students** registered to study within the **Schools of Dentistry, Healthcare, Medicine and Psychology**. This includes foundation, undergraduate, and all post-graduate students whatever level or programme. It includes both part-time and full-time students and students on industry placements. All our students, regardless of which programme they are part of, will benefit from learning in an environment that supports speaking up.

For students who also learn within the NHS or social care settings, responsibility for speaking up in relation to patient safety is part of their professional standards.

We want all our students to feel safe to speak up for themselves or others and have the support to do so.

This guidance aligns with the University policies including the Policy on Preventing and Addressing Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct¹, Freedom of Expression protocol² and the University Code of Practice on whistle blowing.³

Speak Up: we will Listen and Follow Up

We welcome **Speaking Up**. We will **Listen** carefully to your concerns and **Follow Up** where appropriate. By speaking up you will be playing a vital role in helping the Faculty of Medicine and Health create safe places to learn, which are necessary to support success for all our students.

Unfortunately, some students do experience bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct and discrimination including racism in the learning environment (campus, clinical or industrial placement). We also know that students experience exclusion related to practice, systems and processes. We know some students from marginalised or minoritised groups feel reluctant to speak up and some feel unheard if they do.

This guidance is for everyone, no matter what your lived experience or background.

¹ <https://students.leeds.ac.uk/harassment-misconduct>

² https://secretariat.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/109/2022/12/freedom_of_expression_protocol.pdf

³ https://secretariat.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/109/2022/12/whistleblowing_procedure.pdf

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What can I speak up about?

You can speak up about any concern, big or small. You may not be sure if your issue is big enough to speak up about, but if it matters to you, it matters to us.

This includes discrimination of any kind, including issues related to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010⁴ (such as race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and others).

If something is getting in the way of your studies, affecting your student experience, or putting patient safety and care at risk, it's okay to raise it. Speaking up isn't just for serious issues - it's also for sharing ideas or positive feedback. You might have noticed something on campus or during placement that worries you. You could be concerned about a fellow student or feel that something isn't quite right - like a way of working that excludes you, behaviour that feels discriminatory, a microaggression⁵, or anything that impacts your wellbeing or that of others.

Examples of things you can speak up about:

- Sexual misconduct, harassment, or bullying
- Discrimination including racism or microaggressions
- A process that feels unfair or confusing
- Something that's going well and you want to share
- A positive idea for improvement
- Concerns about patient safety or wellbeing
- Anything that impacts your wellbeing or that of others

If you've experienced or witnessed sexual misconduct, bullying, harassment or any type of hate incident please know you can speak to us in confidence. We understand this can feel difficult, and we'll support you throughout.

Speaking up means raising anything that feels wrong or causes concern - whether it affects you, your peers, or patients.

We may not be able to change everything you ask for, but we will listen and follow up.

For many of our students, speaking up is a professional duty where there are concerns related to patient or practitioner safety. The following public bodies identify the obligation of students to raise these concerns:

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

⁵ A microaggression is a comment or action that subtly expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalised group, such as a minoritised ethnic group.

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- The General Medical Council (GMC)
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
- Social Work England
- British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)
- UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP)
- National Counselling Society (NCS)
- Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- General Dental Council (GDC)
- British Psychological Society (BPS)
- Schools have their own policies for raising concerns:^{6,7,8}

If your degree involves work with patients or service users and you believe you have heard or seen something that may compromise their safety, you must raise this by speaking up.

Ways of Speaking Up

Your speaking up is a gift because it helps the Faculty of Medicine and Health identify opportunities for improvement as well as concerns that we might not otherwise know about.

It is important that you feel safe and confident to speak up and that we take the time to really listen and understand what is important to you. We will not tolerate anyone being deterred from speaking up and we will follow up any reports of negative impact on students who have spoken up. If you feel you have been negatively impacted after speaking up please contact the Faculty [Freedom to Speak Up Guardians](#).

The most important aspect of speaking up is the information you can provide. You have a choice about how you speak up:

- **Openly**

Share your name and allow us to follow up

If you are happy that the person you speak to knows your identity and that they can share this with anyone else involved in responding to you.

⁶ School of Healthcare: Raising Concerns <https://practiceplacements.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/27/2020/12/Raising20concerns20about20poor20practice20-20Revised20August202020-1.pdf>

⁷ School of Dentistry: Raising Concerns https://minerva.leeds.ac.uk/auth-saml/saml/SSO/alias/_120_1

⁸ School of Medicine Reporting Tool <https://leeds365.sharepoint.com/sites/SchoolofMedicineTaughtStudentGuide/SitePages/Clinical%20Placement%20Reporting%20Tool.aspx>

- **Confidentially**

Share your name but ask us not to pass it on without consent

If you are happy to reveal your identity to the person you speak to, on the condition that they will not share this without your consent. Please be aware there are some specific scenarios where we may not be able to uphold your request. These are:

- a) If there is good reason to believe that you or someone else may be at risk of serious harm.
- b)
- c) Where we identify any conduct that may have an impact on fitness to practice We are occasionally legally bound to disclose personal details e.g. under a Court Order, the Safeguarding and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and the Drug Trafficking and Money Laundering Act.

Unless the situation is an emergency, or we think otherwise inappropriate, we will always try to discuss things with you and obtain your consent before making the disclosure.

- **Anonymously**

If you prefer not to share your name at all

If you do not want to reveal your identity to anyone this is still OK. We would rather you spoke up anonymously than not at all.

However, speaking up anonymously may mean you cannot access the support we offer, and it can make it harder to resolve the issue or provide feedback on the outcome.

You don't need to take things further if you're not ready - we're here to listen, support you, and help you explore your options.

However you choose to speak up, you will be treated with respect, and your concern will be handled sensitively.

We're committed to listening and acknowledging what you share, and we'll help you explore the best next steps for your situation. We understand that speaking up can be difficult, and we'll support you throughout the process. Finding a resolution - where possible - is in everyone's best interest, and we'll work with you to try and achieve that.

Who can I Speak Up to?

If you wish to report violence, abuse, blackmail, fraud, bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, or any form of hate crime or discrimination you can contact the University's **Harassment and**

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Misconduct Team through the [‘Report and Support’](#) service. The Team supports students and staff who have experienced or witnessed an incident of concern. You can also report **anonymously** via Report & Support using an electronic form. You can also report anonymously to the [Freedom to Speak up Guardians](#).

Within the Faculty of Medicine and Health

Speaking up can happen through conversations with FMH staff in various roles, including personal or other tutors; placement supervisors; Module, Programme or Year Leads; or any staff member you feel comfortable speaking to. We want a culture where speaking up is normal and comfortable, enabling issues to be resolved quickly. Speaking up can be an informal process it doesn't have to lead to any action and options will be discussed with you.

There are several people within the Faculty you can speak to. The following sections outline who they are and how they can support you.

Directors of Student Education

Each School has a Director of Student Education (DSE). They are also committed to ensuring you can thrive on your degree programme. You can speak up to your School DSE and raise any concerns to support them to further enhance the student experience. The following is a list of each School DSE:

- **Dentistry:** Jane Wardman (M.J.Wardman@leeds.ac.uk)
- **Healthcare:** Helen Convey (H.M.Convey@leeds.ac.uk)
- **Medicine:** Katherine Paradine (K.Bridge@leeds.ac.uk)
- **Psychology:** Richard Harris (R.J.Harris@leeds.ac.uk)

Student Support

We know that students do not always feel able to discuss concerns with members of staff. Therefore, you could also talk to the student representative(s) for your degree programme.

Every School also has a Student Support Team. Their details are within Taught Student Handbooks. Students can seek support for anything from personal to academic challenges. The team is available to listen and find the appropriate support mechanisms for you.

- [Dentistry Student Support web page](#)
Email: dentistrystudentsupport@leeds.ac.uk
- [Healthcare Student Support web page](#)
Email: healthcaresupport@leeds.ac.uk

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- [Medicine Student Support web page](#)
- Email: medicinstudentsupport@leeds.ac.uk

- [Psychology Student Support web page](#)
- Email: psycstudentsupport@leeds.ac.uk or visit the Student SharePoint site: [Support and Wellbeing](#)

Faculty Freedom to Speak Up Guardians

There are two Freedom to Speak Up Guardians within the Faculty **specifically for students including all post-graduate students** who can support you to speak up if you feel unable to do so by other routes. The Guardians will listen to you in confidence, ensure that the issues you raise are responded to and that you receive feedback on any actions taken. They will discuss options open to you including personal support.

Although the Freedom to Speak Up Guardians are employed by the Faculty, they are independent of academic programmes or staff or School student support services. The role of a Guardian is:

- To help build an inclusive culture where students feel safe to learn and confident to raise issues, big or small.
- To provide confidential advice and support to students on how to raise concerns, make an informed decision about what is the best next step for them.
- To ensure concerns are followed up sensitively and in confidence (some exceptions to confidentiality are given above).

You can find out more about our Freedom to Speak Up Guardians by watching this [Freedom to Speak up Guardians explanatory video](#) or going to the [Freedom to Speak Up Guardians webpage](#).

You can email the Guardians at: medfsug@leeds.ac.uk.

Text messages, voice messages and phone calls can also be sent openly or anonymously to:

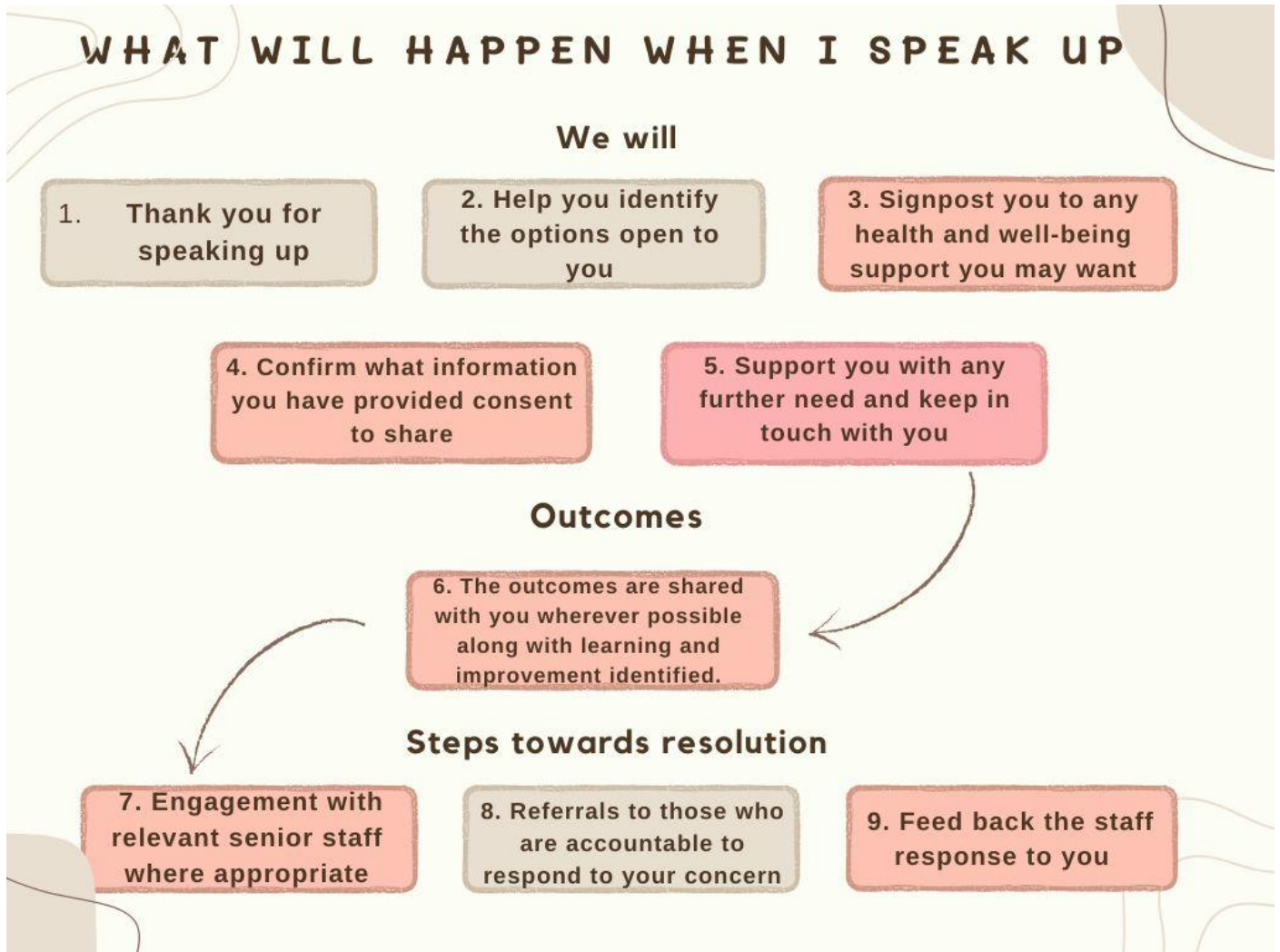
Robina Mir: 07541207278

Farhana Mulla: 07541207279

There are also Freedom to Speak Up Guardians (FSUG) in the NHS. You can find the FSUG at your NHS placement on the [NHS Freedom to Speak Up page](#).

What will happen when I speak up?

You can see a diagram of what happens next below. If you have provided contact details, we will communicate with you and feedback the response to your concern directly to you, or through your Freedom to Speak Up Guardian if that is who you have spoken to.



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At any time, students can contact the Executive Dean of the Faculty, (Mark Kearney), the Deputy Dean for EDI (Louise Bryant) and the Deputy Dean for Student Education (Laura Smith). They are committed to Speaking Up and will listen to your concerns:

- Professor Mark Kearney
Executive Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Health
Email: M.T.Kearney@leeds.ac.uk



- Professor Louise Bryant
Deputy Dean, Equity Diversity & Inclusion, Faculty of Medicine and Health
Email: L.D.Bryant@leeds.ac.uk



- Professor Laura Smith
Deputy Dean, Student Education, Faculty of Medicine and Health
Email: L.E.Smith@leeds.ac.uk



Other Speak Up options and support within the University

There are also other Speak Up options and sources of support in the University and outside:

- **University support and guidance.** You can find an overview of support and guidance available at the University including Counselling & Wellbeing and Crime support:
 - Website: <https://students.leeds.ac.uk/support-guidance>
- **The Harassment and Misconduct Team** offers support to **students and staff** who have experienced or witnessed an incident of concern.
 - Email: reportandsupport@leeds.ac.uk
 - Website: <https://reportandsupport.leeds.ac.uk/>
- **The Chaplaincy** provides support whether you have a religious faith or not. You might seek support from a chaplain if you need someone independent and confidential to talk to.
 - Email: chaplaincy@leeds.ac.uk
 - Website: <https://chaplaincy.leeds.ac.uk/>

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- The University's central **Student Complaints Procedure** aims to investigate and resolve, effectively, fairly and transparently, any concern raised by a registered student or postgraduate researcher.
 - Email: Studentcases@leeds.ac.uk
 - Website: <https://secretariat.leeds.ac.uk/student-cases/student-complaints/>
- **Disability Support Services** can recommend academic adjustments to meet your learning needs and support assessments.
 - Email: disability@leeds.ac.uk
 - Website: <https://students.leeds.ac.uk/disabilityservices>
- **The student union (Leeds University Union)** has trained advisors who offer free, confidential, and independent advice and useful resources in areas like academic misconduct and housing issues:
 - Email: helpandsupport@luu.leeds.ac.uk
 - Website: <https://www.luu.org.uk/>
- Some **Student Societies** act as a voice for student members. See https://engage.luu.org.uk/groups?utm_source=luuorguk&utm_campaign=clubsocpage.
- **International students** may also contact the **International Student Office** who can deal with enquiries related to being a student from outside the UK and will work with other teams to resolve issues. Email globalcommunity@leeds.ac.uk
- **Mature students** can also receive support from the **Lifelong Learning Centre**. Email lifelonglearning@leeds.ac.uk

Guidance written by:

Robina Mir, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, Faculty of Medicine and Health (FMH), University of Leeds;

Louise Bryant, Deputy Dean: Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, FMH, University of Leeds; and
Kate Summers, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Officer, FMH, University of Leeds

With thanks to our students who provided feedback on this version.