

## Supporting Friends & Reporting

It's not your decision to report an assault or rape that did not happen to you. You must always talk to the person involved and respect their decision for how they want to proceed, even if their decision is to do nothing.

**However, there are some things you can do to help support that person...**

**Do** Listen. Believe them. Reassure them that they are not alone.

**Don't** Judge them or blame them for what happened. The blame should only be placed on the person who committed the assault.

**Do** Encourage them to get help. This could be seeking medical attention, talking to a qualified counsellor or joining a support group. Offer to drive them or go with them.

**Don't** Pressure them. It's their decision if they want to report the assault or not. Respect their decision and let them know that you'll support them whatever they decide.



In some cases, you might know the perpetrator and not the victim. Perhaps a friend confided in you about what happened and you recognised it as sexual assault or you saw sexual images posted in an online group.

Again, it's not up to you to report the assault if you were not the victim. However, if you feel safe to do so, you could speak with the person who is alleged to have committed the assault and encourage them to come forward or try to resolve the issue themselves.

If you are feeling affected by the situation, you should seek support yourself. Check our listed support services at the end of this guide.



## What should I do if I was raped or sexually assaulted?

1. Remember that it's not your fault. You may be feeling a range of emotions but whatever you feel, just know that what happened is not in any way your fault. You shouldn't blame yourself for anything you did or didn't do.
2. Make sure you're safe. If you're in immediate danger, call 999. Otherwise, get to somewhere you know that you're safe or call a friend who can help.
3. Try not to do anything to change your appearance, including washing. If you do have to change your clothes, then pack the clothes you were wearing in a clean bag so that they can be inspected. You need to make sure that any evidence can be collected, including evidence on your body. Also if possible, don't go to the bathroom, comb your hair, eat, smoke, drink or take any drugs before step 4.

4. Get medical care. You'll need to get to the hospital or a sexual assault referral centre (such as [The Shores](#)) right away if you have any physical injuries or want to collect evidence from your body (you don't need to decide right away whether to press charges if you do have evidence collected.) You might then want to think about getting a HIV test or STI/STD tests. If you require it, you can also take a morning after pill (you can take this up to 5 days after unprotected sex).
5. Get further support. Dealing with the aftermath of rape or sexual assault can be overwhelming. But you're not alone. It may help to talk to a trusted friend, family member, or counsellor. Our listed Support Services are confidential and will not pressure you into reporting if you do not want to. You can find some support links on the last page of this guide.
6. Think about talking to the police. It's completely up to you if you report the crime or not but it's your right to do so. Support services can assist you in reporting to the police and support you throughout this process.

## What action can AUB take?

If you have been raped or sexually assaulted by another AUB student, you can report this to AUB. The University can't investigate an allegation of rape or sexual assault, and it won't have access to forensic evidence – but AUB's student disciplinary policy can investigate an allegation of sexual misconduct and make a judgement based on the balance of probabilities.

Whilst the University can suspend or even terminate a student's studies, AUB has a duty to support all students, and wherever possible will look at what can be done to enable both students to continue their studies.

If you are thinking about submitting a formal complaint or make an allegation of sexual misconduct, contact Heidi Cooper-Hind, Head of Academic and Student Services.

Email: [hcooperhind@aub.ac.uk](mailto:hcooperhind@aub.ac.uk)

You can also speak to someone at Student Services Reception.

Students and staff can report an incident using the AUB's [Report and Support system](#). You can choose to do this anonymously or you can request support from a Wellbeing Officer. If you choose to talk to a Wellbeing Officer they will be able to talk through the options and support available to you, in confidence, or refer you to other sources of support. See [here](#) for further information.

## AUBSU

Visit our AUBSU [advice page](#) for more information about local support services.

If you have any questions or issues, you can get in touch with the AUBSU team:

### AUBSU (Students' Union)

[studentunion@aub.ac.uk](mailto:studentunion@aub.ac.uk)

### SU Activities & Communities Coordinator

Nuala: [nclarke@aub.ac.uk](mailto:nclarke@aub.ac.uk)

### SU Democracy Coordinator

Beth: [bdovey@aub.ac.uk](mailto:bdovey@aub.ac.uk)

### SU President

Ellie: [egrant@aub.ac.uk](mailto:egrant@aub.ac.uk)

### SU Vice-President

Judith: [jallen@aub.ac.uk](mailto:jallen@aub.ac.uk)

## Further Support & Resources

- [AUB Student Support](#): provide on-campus wellbeing and counselling support with staff who have received training in sexual assault
- [STARS Sexual Trauma And Recovery Service](#): offers specialist emotional and practical support to survivors who have suffered sexual violence of any kind at any time, including ongoing counselling
- [The Shores](#): Dorset Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) will collect evidence and can provide an ISVA to support through any criminal investigation and prosecution
- [Over The Rainbow](#): provides sexual health services and support for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community

## Further Support & Resources

- [Dorset Mind](#) provide support, advice and information on mental health and can connect you with local support groups
- [Samaritans Helpline](#) offer a safe space for you to talk at any time and can help you explore your options, understand your problems better, or just be there to listen
- [Sexual Health Dorset](#) offers advice and information on sexual health and can provide STI screenings, pregnancy testing, contraception and emergency contraception

Check [our calendar](#) for on-campus sexual health drop-ins with [Sexual Health Dorset](#)