

# Frequently asked questions: Reporting a sexual offence at the UFS

## 1. What is the definition of sexual misconduct?

Sexual misconduct refers to any non-consensual, unwelcome, or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature – including sexual harassment, assault, or violation, whether physical, verbal, or non-verbal, by a person of the same or opposite sex – committed without consent or by force, intimidation, threat, coercion, or manipulation.

## 2. Can I report a sexual offence internally if it took place during a period when I was not a registered student of the UFS?

The UFS does not have any jurisdiction regarding incidents which took place prior to being registered, but should it involve a current staff member or an individual who was registered at the time of the incident and is currently registered, the matter will be investigated internally.

You, however, can be provided with the necessary assistance to report a criminal case to the SAPS.

## 3. What happens if I decide to report the matter externally while the internal process is under way?

The internal process will continue. It is important to note that if a criminal case is reported you would be required to ask the SAPS for a copy of your statement for internal proceedings. The UFS only has jurisdiction over currently employed staff and currently registered students.

## 4. Does the internal process allow for me to report the matter internally while also keeping my identity hidden?

No, the case cannot proceed if the complainant wishes to remain anonymous. The basis of a fair disciplinary hearing is that the alleged offender be provided with the details to respond to the allegations made against him/her.

Should you decide to remain anonymous the matter will receive attention, but the UFS will not be able to conduct a disciplinary hearing.

## 5. What happens if I live in a) the same residence or b) have the same classes as the perpetrator?

It is strongly advised that you apply for a UFS No Contact order, issued by the Registrar's Office, or a Protection Order under the Domestic Violence Act or the Prevention of Harassment Act.

A) Make an appointment with Housing and Residence Affairs (HRA) to discuss options. If you live off-campus, try to make arrangements with the landlord. If they have more than one student residence or apartment block, they may be able to accommodate you in a safer space.

Discuss your contract with your landlord. If they agree that you can terminate the contract, make arrangements and schedule an appointment with HRA to discuss your options.

B) Report to the Social Support Office at Student Affairs for assistance and advice.

## 6. What if the incident happened off-campus but we are both registered UFS students?

The **UFS Sexual Offences and Sexual Harassment Policy** makes provision for off-campus incidents of sexual offences/harassment to be investigated and addressed internally by the relevant disciplinary bodies – provided it happened within the borders of South Africa.

**IMPORTANT!** Please note that the UFS Student Disciplinary and Mediation Unit can only open an internal investigation into off-campus incidents of sexual misconduct and gender-based violence when both persons involved are currently registered students at the UFS.

Also read our policies:

[Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy \(June 2018\): \[GBV Policy\]](#)

[UFS rules on student discipline](#)



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