



Case Study: Integrating online training into a wider sexual violence & misconduct programme at Durham University

Background

As part of Durham University's commitment to tackling sexual violence and misconduct, they have developed and introduced a range of prevention and response training materials, including an online course for staff. Epigeum's *Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence (RDSV)* online course is a new tool helping the University to train staff in how to respond appropriately when students disclose sexual violence and misconduct, and now forms one part of their institution-wide training and education package.

Response training

Durham University recognises that sexual violence is a broad societal issue requiring a culture change. Therefore training has become a key component to tackling this issue and changing culture within the institution.

Epigeum's *Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence* course forms part of a larger core training programme for staff and students and is one of four options available to staff. The core training for staff includes the online and three face-to-face courses:

1. Awareness & Disclosure Training or Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence (Level 1)
2. Disclosure & Support Workshop (Level 2)
3. Investigations Training (Level 3)

Staff have the opportunity to choose to participate in the online course or the Level 1 face-to-face course and then continue to the Level 2 and 3 courses as appropriate.

The key drivers for adding the online course into the wider educational programme were:

- Allowing more staff to access training
- Opportunity for staff to take the course at a time of their choosing and to return to the course material later
- Offering different opportunities for learning to staff, as some people learn better working alone at their own pace, while others prefer face-to-face learning environments.



Implementation

Approach

The online course has been launched on Blackboard and made available to all staff. All staff have been encouraged to take the course, by promoting it through internal communication channels and presentations at University committees.

It has not been made mandatory, but all staff are encouraged to engage with the core training available in this area. Durham has also seen the benefit of making this course available to student leaders and are looking at ways to pursue this.

Integration

The course has currently not been customised, but Durham-specific information has been made available to staff on Blackboard before entering the course. This includes the following resources:

- Durham's Sexual Violence & Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- A link to the University's Sexual Violence & Misconduct Disclosure Recording Form for staff
- Information on the core training programme for staff
- Signposting to the University's *Sexual Violence & Misconduct: Prevention and Response* webpage, where staff can learn more about what the University is doing in this area and access student-facing handouts for information on support resources and reporting options.

Promotion

The promotion of *Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence* across the institution has been led by the Responsible Executive Member, Owen Adams, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Colleges and Student Experience). This has included presentations about the core training programme to key committees to encourage members to disseminate the information to their departments, and encourage their staff to participate. The university has also taken a 'lead by example' approach with Heads of Departments, Heads of Colleges, and Senior Leaders engaging in training and then encouraging their staff to participate, based on their personal recommendation of finding the training useful.



Results

Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence was launched in October 2017 and **190 staff completed it in the first month.**

So far the course administrators have received some verbal feedback from staff who have reported being impressed with the course. One academic department said it felt the course was 'worth everyone's time and had strongly encouraged all its academic and professional support staff to participate'.

Durham have also added a feedback survey to the course on their Blackboard and measurement is conducted through evaluation and direct feedback.

Key recommendations:

Following the launch of the course, Durham University have indicated three methods of successful integration of online response training:

1. Connect the course to university policy and procedure so staff understand the boundaries of their role
2. Make online course widely available as a resource
3. Use multi-channel communication for promotion

