



# CASE STUDY

## Implementing *Consent Matters* and *Tackling Harassment* at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

### Background

The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine launched their Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion action plan in July 2021, aiming to provide an inclusive community that is safe, respectful and supportive. One of the focuses of this plan was to tackle bullying and harassment. Part of their approach to dealing with this uses the *Tackling Harassment: Promoting Cultural Change in Higher Education* and *Consent Matters: Boundaries, Respect, and Positive Intervention* programmes.

For this case study, we spoke to Clare Matysova, LSHTM's Head of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, about the university-wide approach to EDI and how the Epigeum programmes supplement it.



### Implementation

LSHTM provided interactive workshops on a range of EDI topics such as tackling bullying and harassment and challenging microaggressions, but there was a need for a refresher and ongoing additional training and resources. Students approached Clare's team to request additional gender-based harassment training specifically. They worked with the EDI staff to assess various options, leading the process.

Once the programmes were selected, they were embedded into pre-arrival materials on Moodle, available to both students and staff. These modules are currently not mandatory; however, on students' first days, they have an additional EDI workshop immediately after the director's welcome. An in-person marketplace is used as a further follow-up. Clare found that students had a highly positive response to this, with many remarking on the importance of these issues being prioritised.



The EDI team has run communications campaigns to promote the programmes available to students, particularly through newsletters. However, the LSHTM students also drafted messaging to promote the content and emphasise its importance to their peers:

**“This issue is important to us as the majority of the female population in the UK is subject to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) within their lifetime. [...] Consent workshops are an initial and essential step in educating the community on issues pertaining to SGBV, empowering victims to report and seek support for instances of SGBV, and preventing SGBV by demonstrating a zero-tolerance stance.”**

### **Efficacy**

Given the focus of LSHTM’s studies, many students were pleased to see this prioritised and reiterated the importance they felt this training held in shaping their futures as public health practitioners and researchers. They thought that this training would allow them to support individuals who may have experienced harassment better and address these issues within their workplaces.

Clare noted that learners thought the content was very good, highlighting in particular the situation scenarios, interactive elements, and the provided training materials.

### **Future**

Currently, LSHTM utilise a blended approach of online and in-person activities, and the modules within the EDI selection are not compulsory. For example, staff are required to take one module and then take a refresher every two years.



In the future, LSHTM plan to expand this blended learning approach and to review and refine how and when modules should be undertaken.

As the students of LSHTM said, having *Consent Matters* and *Tackling Harassment* available to staff and students is important “in order to be at the forefront of this necessary movement, and to encourage other institutions to do the same.”



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