

**Submission to Stream 9: Gender Based Violence and Social Sustainability: Implications for Equality Diversity and Inclusion**

**Title: Management Perceptions of Sexual Violence on Campus: Implications for the Implementation of Institutional Policy and Legal Requirements**

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**Abstract:**

Sexual violence and harassment on university campuses are not a new concern, but a widespread issue. Universities are significant sites for action for tackling sexual violence, not only because they have a duty to provide safe and positive university experiences during this time, but also because of the paucity of research focusing on campuses within the United Kingdom (Phipps and Smith 2012; Public Health England 2016; UUK Taskforce 2016). Much of the existing research in this area focuses on US colleges, where on-campus sexual violence, harassment and assault are major concerns (Lewis, Marine and Kenney 2016; Phipps and Smith 2012; Giraldi and Monk-Turner 2017; Ministry of Justice Home Office & Office for National Statistics 2013). The prevalence of on-campus sexual violence and assaults within UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is only just becoming apparent in the last decade or so.

This paper uses a Critical Race Theory lens with which to consider the approach taken by university management in a case study institution to the problem of sexual violence. It is contended that there is a ‘gap’ between the requirements of the law and the measures taken by the case study to address the problem. The impact of this gap is that there are inadequate policies, procedures and support mechanisms for victims of sexual violence and harassment and therefore the case study could be in breach of their equality and human rights obligations. Further, university management team narratives appear to locate the problem of sexual violence within particular groups of students, which appeared to absolve the university of obligation to take action. Such apparent classist and racist attitudes and racial discrimination is not only a concern, but could indicate why slow progress has been made to tackle these issues.