

# Frequently asked questions

## What is this service?

An online tool where you can report issues of concern anonymously or by providing contact details enabling a member of the People & Culture team to contact them to discuss.

It is also home to information about support and policies and procedures.

## Who can make a report?

Employees, workers, contractors, customers, clients, suppliers and visitors can make a report through **Unity Matters**. Visitors, clients, suppliers and customers are encouraged to report complaints through the public complaints process but can use this service should they wish to report anonymously.

## What happens when someone makes an anonymous report?

The report will be viewed by a member of the People & Culture team. They will first review the report to identify any risks that relate to duty of care. If no immediate risk is identified, no further, direct action will be taken. If any identifiable information is provided, they will then remove the identifiable information.

The information kept as per the current GDPR regulations and guidance will be for trend analysis and inform proactive prevention.

## What is the difference between anonymous and in person reports?

We will not know who has made an anonymous report, and therefore cannot reach out and provide support to that individual. Therefore if you want to receive support or consider informal or formal options to address a concern, you would complete a named report and speak to a member of the People & Culture team.

## What information will I be asked to share?

If you're not reporting anonymously, you will be asked to indicate your relationship to the Group, for example, whether you are an employee, worker, contractor or a member of the public. You will be asked to give a

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description of what happened or is happening, this can be as brief or detailed as you like. You will be asked if you think the behaviour was directed at you or another individual due to sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, age or class and, if appropriate, what action you would like us to consider taking.

## What if I don't know the name of the person I want to report?

You can still make a report if you don't know the name of the person(s). Provide as much information as you can – this could include a description of how you know the person(s), for example, as a member of the Group, or someone you regularly work with.

## Will the person I'm reporting be informed?

Your identity and your other personal data will only be disclosed within the Group on a need-to-know basis only and will not be disclosed to any third parties without your consent unless there are legitimate reasons requiring us to do so – for example, where the information you have provided highlights a potential risk to an individual or relates to a possible criminal offence. In these circumstances, we may have to disclose the information to the police and / or other members of staff within the Group.

## What if I'm not sure if the matter is serious enough to report?

This is a common and natural response to experiences of bullying, harassment, hate incidents and sexual violence. If someone else's behaviour has left you feeling uncomfortable, confused, threatened, scared or violated, then it is likely that what they did wasn't okay. If you feel in any way that your experience was a form of discrimination, sexual violence or harassment we would invite you to make a report so that we can respond appropriately.

## What happens if I want to report in person?

If you prefer, you can report an incident in-person rather than reporting it online.

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By talking to someone, you can access additional support as you go through the reporting process.

You may also choose to speak to someone about your experiences without making a formal report.

## Who can I speak to?

Line managers and the People & Culture team offer confidential sign posting. They will be able to listen, refer to other services and help people decide if they would like to report their experience to the Group

You can also disclose your experiences to someone you deem to be a safe contact as way to access support and tell the Group what has happened, without making a formal report yourself.

Line managers and the People & Culture team will make a report on your behalf - anonymously if you wish - unless you ask them not to do so.

### Other people within the Group you can speak to

- Mental Health First Aider (employees only)
- Employee Assistance Programme (employees only)
- Data Protection Officer (DPO@e-q-s.com)

## What action can you take from anonymous reports?

In accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, the information you provide will be held confidentially and will be accessible only by restricted staff for the purpose of processing and monitoring the data. No information will be published or used in any way that identifies individuals. Information provided within anonymous reports will be used as statistical data to understand what is happening and to inform proactive prevention work. The People & Culture team will work with areas identified to address any concerning trends.

## Does reporting to eQS mean that I shouldn't report to the police?

Any experience of sexual violence, harassment or hate crime can be reported to the police. If the person who behaved abusively to you is another Group

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employee, you can also choose to report this to the Group through one of our reporting methods or by talking to your line manager. Reporting to the police and to the Group are entirely separate processes with different procedures and possible responses and outcomes. The Group and external organisations can support you in considering whether or not you want to report to the police and/or the Group.

## **Is there a time limit on reporting?**

There is no time limit for you to report any incident of sexual violence, discrimination, bullying or harassment that you experienced or witnessed. The Group takes all reports extremely seriously and will investigate to the best of our ability, no matter when an incident took place.

## **How will the Group manage malicious complaints?**

If any report made by existing members of staff are found to be malicious or vexatious, for such reports, this will be investigated and will be addressed under existing disciplinary procedures. For persons external to the organisation a thorough investigation will take place, and a decision made with regard to further action with the support of our legal team.

## **What do you do with the information gathered from anonymous reports?**

The Group will do trend analysis reporting and use this data to inform policy, support options and campaigns.

## **What do you do with the data gathered from advisor reports?**

The data collected from Report + Support is used to produce anonymised annual reports. These reports may include the number of cases, most reported types of harassment and location. Data gathered from anonymous reports may also be used as part of annual reporting.

## **How secure is the data and information sent through the system?**

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Data held from reports via **Unity Matters** is GDPR compliant and further information about how data is collected and stored is outlined in the Privacy Notice.

## How long is data sorted on the system?

We will only retain personal data for as long as necessary to fulfil purposes we collected it for. We will keep records of reports one year from case closure on the **Unity Matters** system as outlined in the Privacy Notice. All personal data will be kept according to the Records Retention Schedule.

## Who are the administrators on the system?

The People & Culture Team