Checklist for staff receiving reports of online abuse

If a colleague informs you that they are experiencing online threats or harassment, the following steps may be useful in guiding your response:

☐ If the person is in immediate danger, call 111. Then, if safe to do so, call security so they can guide first responders to the scene.

☐ If the person is not in immediate danger, but there is concern that the situation may escalate to a physical threat—for example if someone has threatened to come on-site, or has asked to locate the person— call security. Wherever possible, make sure you have the affected person's consent to do so.

☐ Connect the person to your institution's staff support specialist.

☐ Provide moral support and validate their emotional response. Reassure them that the harassment is not their fault and that the research organisation has processes for dealing with harassment. Tips for talking to a researcher under attack are available **here**.

☐ Follow up and check that they have made a plan with the staff support specialist and are receiving the IT, security, and wellbeing support services they need to feel safe and navigate the situation.

NB: The above is an example of a checklist for use by any staff member who recieves a report of online harassment. It is designed to be adapted for your organisation's specific circumstances, e.g. to include contact information for security and support staff.

In our guidance for research organisations supporting researchers facing online harassment, we strongly recommend establishing a single point of contact for researchers experiencing online harassment to coordinate the organisation's response. If your organisation does not have an identified single point of contact, you will need to adapt this checklist further to include details of different key contacts involved in the response.

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