Purpose of the role

The aim of the role of dignity advisors is to facilitate informal resolution in harassment and bullying in line with UCL's Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy. Advisors are provided with extensive training which will covers the law in relation to harassment, UCL's policies and the skills required for their role. A dignity advisors network has been established and meets once a term to facilitate mutual support and the sharing of experience. The network and meetings are co-ordinated by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team.

Main elements of the role

1. To actively listen to members of the UCL community who believe they are being bullied or harassed, to clarify the options open to them and to assist them in resolving the matter informally where possible. The service is not open to temporary workers and contractors, who should alert their HR contacts of any harassment and bullying in the first instance.
2. Where requested, to support individuals throughout the resolution of their concerns at an informal level. This may include discussing with the individual what they may wish to say or write to the person who they consider has harassed or bullied them; where appropriate, accompanying the individual to speak to the alleged harasser or accompanying the individual to seek guidance from a senior manager. This list is not exhaustive, and emphasises empowering and supporting the individual rather than representation or advocacy. However, it is not appropriate for dignity advisors to represent or accompany individuals at any formal stage of the process.
3. To act as 'buddy' to new dignity advisors for the purposes of mutual support, to act as a sounding board and for troubleshooting solutions to difficult situations.
4. To contribute, where possible, to UCL-wide initiatives aimed at combating problem behaviours and changing cultures.
5. To deal with all cases with the utmost confidentiality except in cases where there is an unacceptable risk of harm to a member of staff, student or UCL. Dignity advisors can speak to the equality, diversity and inclusion team member leading the dignity network as they will acts in a supervisory role to dignity advisors providing 1:1 meetings if needed.
6. To access assigned cases through the UCL Report + Support online plaform.
7. To maintain summary records of any action taken in relation to cases and to store them in conditions of strict confidence in keeping with Data Protection principles and the General Data Protection Regulation.
8. To support the annual monitoring and gathering of insights related to the number and type of cases, what advice/support was given and whether the situation was resolved.
9. To refer individuals onto another dignity advisors where necessary - e.g. due to time or other commitments, conflicts of interest - or to other support systems as appropriate.
10. To attend re training in relation to the role and to participate in the regular sharing of experience and good practice in order to develop relevant skills and expertise.

Person Specification

* No particular seniority, status, educational, or professional qualifications are required.
* A clear commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.
* An understanding of the nature of harassment and bullying and the impact this may have on someone’s ability to work, study or live at UCL.
* The courage, confidence and empathy to provide support for people in difficult situations.
* Well-developed interpersonal and active listening skills and an approachable and non-judgemental style to conflict resolution.
* The ability to advise colleagues in an unbiased way.
* Communication skills that will enable effective communication with people from a wide range of backgrounds and at all levels across UCL.
* The ability to treat all disclosures in a confidential and sensitive manner.
* To inform people of their options and empower them to make informed decisions

Benefits of the role

The role is voluntary and there is no remuneration for these duties. However, UCL greatly values the contribution of dignity advisors to the life of UCL and the welfare of its staff students. The work should be given appropriate recognition in the appraisal process. Previous dignity advisors have said that this role has increased their communication and negotiation skills and has given them useful experience in managing difficult situations and insight and knowledge regarding good management practice.