



The Lancaster University Students' Union guide to: **Safety of Women and Girls Survey**

Introduction to the Survey

The Safety of Women and Girls Survey has been commissioned by [Clive Grunshaw, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire](#). The survey is administered by [SMSR Research](#), an independent research organisation.

The Commissioner has launched the survey as part of their key priority to tackle violence against women and girls. They want to build a picture of issues that affect feelings of safety for women and girls, particularly after dark.

The survey is available here: <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/SafetyofWomenandGirlsSurvey>

The survey closes on Friday 15th August.

Contents Notice

The survey asks respondents to describe instances of, and their reactions to, a variety of harassment types, including:

- Sexual harassment
- Domestic abuse
- Assault
- Rape

We would strongly encourage you to read through this guide so you are aware when you may be asked to recall a traumatic or emotionally charged event in your life.

Comment from Leah Buttery, LUSU Wellbeing Officer



"As awareness grows surrounding the sexual violence and harassment faced by women and girls nationwide, it has never been more important for those of us affected to speak out about our experiences. This survey has provided us with an opportunity to do exactly this; our voice as a collective holds the capacity to drive real change in Lancaster."

Although deeply pertinent, the issues discussed in this survey are naturally sensitive, and at times difficult to navigate. The guidance that we have put together looks to make this survey as accessible and impactful as possible. I urge as many people as possible to share their experiences and shine a light on the prevalence of this issue. The more noise we make, the more seriously they will take us"

Leah was elected by members of the Students' Union in March 2025 to represent Lancaster University students and lead the Students' Union alongside our other [Full Time Officers](#).

You can follow Leah on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/lusuwellbeing/>.

Structure of this Guide

We have broken the survey down across all 41 questions.

In the survey, respondents are unable to skip any questions. Not all questions listed in this guide will appear for you, dependent on your answers.

For each question, we have included all question text and response options. We have also provided guidance, where appropriate, on how you may wish to respond (*in purple italics*).

We'd recommend using a laptop and having this guide open whilst you complete the survey. We expect it to take between 30-45 minutes to complete the survey.

The Students' Union is a membership organisation for all Lancaster University students. We welcome and encourage you to respond to this survey, whether you are a member of the Students' Union or not.

If you have any questions about this guide, please email su.insight@lancaster.ac.uk

Section 1: Feelings of safety

Question 1: As a woman or girl have you felt unsafe in any public place in Lancashire, over the last 12 months?

Select one:

- Frequently
- Sometimes
- Once
- Never

Think carefully about your experiences over the breadth of the last 12 months. If you're struggling to remember, that encompasses the whole of the last academic year.

If you select "frequently", "sometimes", or "once", questions 1a and 2 appear:

Question 1a: In which locations have you felt unsafe? Please mention any streets / bars / locations where you have felt unsafe.

Open written response.

We would encourage you to be as specific as possible, so include the names of exact locations (if you can remember them). There is space later on to explain the actions or instances that made you feel unsafe, but you may choose to provide some of that information here too. Remember that they are only interested in locations within Lancashire.

Bear in mind that actions or instances may have happened to others or simply be something you heard from others. The police will want to know about these too.

Question 2: What contributes to your feelings of being unsafe?

Tick all that apply:

- Hearing about experiences of friends and family
- Seeing/hearing about incidents shared on social media
- Seeing/hearing about incidents reported on the local television news and newspapers
- Seeing/hearing about incidents reported on the national news
- Personal experience(s)
- Being in a certain environment (e.g. lack of lighting / overgrown or rundown areas)
- Crime prevention/safety messages aimed at women and girls
- Other (please specify)

You can tick as many (or as few options) as you like.

Question 3: As a woman or girl how safe do you feel at night in each of the following places?

Select your preferred option against each location.

Locations:

- In the street that you live
- Your local town centre - on the street
- Your local town centre - in a bar
- Your local town centre - in a restaurant
- Your local town centre - in a nightclub
- Travelling on a bus
- Travelling on a train
- Travelling in a taxi
- Local railway station
- Taxi ranks
- Bus stations
- Parks and open spaces
- Home
- Workplace
- Place of education

Options:

- Very safe
- Safe
- Neither safe nor unsafe
- Unsafe
- Very Unsafe
- Not Applicable

Though the survey is focused on spaces in Lancashire, we'd encourage you to reflect on your feelings in spaces anywhere in the UK.

You may need to think carefully about each location as you may need to provide a rough approximation of all your experiences within that type of space. Bear in mind that this question wants your experience "at night", so focus on those experiences.

Question 4: As a woman or girl how safe do you feel during the day in each of the following places?

Select your preferred option against each location.

Locations:

- In the street that you live
- Your local town centre - on the street
- Your local town centre - in a bar
- Your local town centre - in a restaurant
- Your local town centre - in a nightclub
- Travelling on a bus

- Travelling on a train
- Travelling in a taxi
- Local railway station
- Taxi ranks
- Bus stations
- Parks and open spaces
- Home
- Workplace
- Place of education

Options:

- Very safe
- Safe
- Neither safe nor unsafe
- Unsafe
- Very Unsafe
- Not Applicable

This is the same as the last question but asks for your experience during the daytime. For the avoidance of doubt, we would define day/night by the light conditions and not by the time of day.

Question 5: The following have been identified as coping strategies used by women and girls to reduce their fear and limit risk to themselves when travelling in public spaces. Please indicate whether you use any of these strategies:

Tick all that apply:

- I avoid streets or areas I consider to be unsafe
- I stick to main roads or near properties or venues where I could shout for help
- I use routes where there are safe spaces i.e. late night shops
- I pretend to use my mobile phone
- I call someone to talk to whilst navigating unsafe areas
- I cross the road to avoid men/groups of men
- I stick to well-lit routes during darker hours
- I let people know when I start my journey
- I let people know my expected arrival time
- I carry a personal safety alarm/device
- I avoid public transport during darker hours
- I avoid travelling alone by day
- I avoid travelling alone by darker hours
- I use my car to avoid public transport even though it's costly
- I use my bicycle as it's safer
- I change or wear extra clothing to avoid drawing attention to myself
- I choose not to go out at all in the dark to avoid feeling unsafe
- Other (please specify)

Unlike the previous question, this one applies to your experiences at any time of day. You can tick as many (or as few options) as you like.

Question 6: Please indicate how far you agree that the below factors make you feel less safe:

Select your preferred option against each statement.

Statements:

- Poor transport facilities – lack of transport
- Poor transport facilities – lack of safety on board
- Belief that bystanders won't help if I am in trouble
- Anti-social behaviour in an area
- Drunken or rowdy people in an area
- Poor lighting
- An area's reputation
- No obvious places to seek help if needed
- Media reporting of crime in an area
- Poor and unkempt environment (litter, graffiti etc.)
- No or limited CCTV
- No visible police or wardens
- Large groups of men
- Empty streets or limited people around
- An establishment's reputation (including workplaces and places of education)

Options:

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

This kind of question may be used by the Commissioner to inform decisions about where the police in Lancashire prioritise their resources in the future. It may be that you agree with that all the factors listed make you feel less safe. Nevertheless, we would encourage you to show some differentiation for those factors that you feel should be tackled first. You may wish to pick 5 for "Strongly agree" and keep the others in "Tend to agree".

Question 7: Do you think that Lancashire Police and other organisations such as local councils and transport firms, can take action to make you feel safer in any of the following places?

Tick all that apply:

- In the street that you live

- Your local town centre - on the street
- Your local town centre - in a bar
- Your local town centre - in a restaurant
- Your local town centre - in a nightclub
- Travelling on a bus
- Travelling on a train
- Travelling in a taxi
- Local railway station
- Lancashire generally
- Taxi ranks
- Bus stations
- Parks and open spaces
- Home
- Workplace
- Place of education
- Online
- None of the above
- Not sure

If you think action should be taken, to any extent, in any of these spaces it is important that tick them.

If you select any option(s) other than “Not sure” or “None of the above”, question 7a will appear.

Question 7a: If yes to any of the above, please give details on what you think could be done to make you feel safer:

Open text box.

We'd suggest splitting your response up into short statements corresponding to each option ticked in Q7. You may wish to group your suggestions, for instance across all the “Your local town centre” options.

Remember to provide suggestions that are relevant to Lancaster or elsewhere in Lancashire.

Section 2: Levels of concern

Question 8: How worried are you about the following incidents when in public places?

Select your preferred option against each incident.

Incidents:

- Cat calling
- Unwanted comments

- Wolf whistling
- Unwanted sexual comments
- Intrusive staring

Options:

- Very worried
- Quite worried
- Neither worried nor unworried
- Not very worried
- Not worried at all

We understand that you may need some time to fully understand the extent to which you are worried about these incidents. Don't stress too much about being accurate regarding the extent of your worry – if you are worried, answer to the left; if you are not, answer to the right.

Question 9a: Have you personally experienced any of the following in the last 12 months?

Select Yes or No against each incident.

Incident:

- Cat calling
- Unwanted comments
- Wolf whistling
- Unwanted sexual comments
- Intrusive staring

We don't believe any questions are missing, but instead there is a small mistake in the numbering of questions.

As with previous questions, consider the breadth of your experience over the past 12 months. This encompasses the entirety of the last academic year.

If you select "Yes" against any incident a further question will open: one per incident.

Question 9b / 9b1 / 9b2 / 9b3 / 9b4: Did you tell anyone about the unwanted cat calling/unwanted comments/wolf whistling/unwanted sexual comments/intrusive staring?

Tick all that apply:

- Yes, I reported it to the police
- Yes, I told a friend or family member or partner
- Yes, I told a support service for example a local charity
- Yes, I told someone at school/college/university
- Yes, I told someone at my workplace

- Yes, I told a staff member or security (i.e. on public transport, in a bar, nightclub, music venue)
- Yes, I logged it on the Streetsafe app
- No, I did not tell anyone

Please bear in mind that the “Streetsafe app” is distinct from the UniSafe app used by the University.

Question 11: How do you think incidents like cat calling, wolf whistling, unwanted sexual comments or intrusive staring could best be dealt with?

Open text box.

We'd suggest spending some time considering and preparing your answer to this question before submitting. You may wish to write a lot, you can expand the text box by selecting the icon in the bottom right-hand corner.

When providing your ideas, we'd suggest structuring them as clear, unambiguous instructions to the police. What actions should they take? What resources could they produce? The more specific details you can provide, the better.

Question 12: How worried are you about the following crimes when in public spaces?

Contents warning: sexual harassment, abuse, assault & rape.

Select your preferred option against each crime.

Crimes:

- Groping
- Uninvited sexual touching
- Voyeurism
- Rape
- Sexual assault
- Domestic abuse
- Spiking
- Upskirting
- Indecent exposure
- Stalking

Options:

- Very worried
- Quite worried
- Neither worried nor unworried
- Not very worried
- Not worried at all

If the content of this question becomes too difficult, remember that you can save your response and come back to it at another time. Just click "Save response", provide your email address, and you will be emailed the link to allow you to resume the survey.

When answering this question be mindful that it is not asking if you have experienced these crimes, but instead if you are worried about them.

Question 13: Have you personally experienced any of the following in the last 12 months?

Contents warning: sexual harassment, abuse, assault & rape.

Select Yes or No against each crime.

Crimes:

- Groping
- Uninvited sexual touching
- Voyeurism
- Rape
- Sexual assault
- Domestic abuse
- Spiking
- Upskirting
- Indecent exposure
- Stalking

If you select "Yes" against any crime a further question will open: one per crime.

Question 13a/13b/13c/13d/13e/13f/13g/13h/13i/13j: Did you tell anyone about the groping/uninvited sexual touching/voyeurism/rape/sexual assault/domestic abuse/spiking/upskirting/indecent exposure/stalking incident?

Tick all that apply:

- Yes, I reported it to the police
- Yes, I told a friend or family member or partner
- Yes, I told a support service for example a local charity
- Yes, I told someone at school/college/university
- Yes, I told someone at my workplace
- Yes, I told a staff member or security (i.e. on public transport, in a bar, nightclub, music venue)
- Yes, I logged it on the Streetsafe app
- No, I did not tell anyone

Please bear in mind that the "Streetsafe app" is distinct from the UniSafe app used by the University.

If you select "Yes, I reported it to the police", the following two questions appear:

What influenced your decision to report this to the police?

Open text box.

As with other questions like this, we would encourage you to provide as much detail as possible. Tell them exactly what encouraged you to report to the police. You may wish to consider why other people don't.

To what extent were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the response you received from Lancashire Police?

Select one option:

- Completely Satisfied
- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Completely dissatisfied

This question is a useful opportunity to tell the police about your experience reporting to them.

If you select any option other than "Yes, I reported it to the police" in Q13a/13b/13c/13d/13e/13f/13g/13h/13i/13j, the following question appears:

Why did you not report this to the police?

Open text box.

When answering this question, be mindful that you are communicating directly with the police. As such, we'd encourage you to provide detailed accounts of the reasons why did not feel able, comfortable, or confident speaking to the police. Your response here is incredibly important and should provide an important insight for Lancashire police.

As with other text box response option, you can drag the box to make it bigger or paste-in a pre-prepared statement.

Question 14: Would you report any of the following incidents to the police if you were a victim?

This questions only appears if you select "No" to all the options in Question 13.

Contents warning: sexual harassment, abuse, assault & rape.

Select Yes or No against each incident.

Incident:

- Groping

- Uninvited sexual touching
- Voyeurism
- Rape
- Sexual assault
- Domestic abuse
- Spiking
- Upskirting
- Indecent exposure
- Stalking

If you select “Yes” to any option the following question will appear:

Questions 14b: Please tell us what would influence your decision to report Groping, Unwanted sexual touching, Voyeurism, Rape, Sexual assault, Domestic abuse, Spiking, Upskirting, Indecent exposure and Stalking to the police.

Open text box.

We would suggest taking the time to explain the reasons why (or why not) you would be inclined to report any of these crimes. This could relate to feeling of mistrust of the police or other institutions.

If you select “No” to any option the following question will appear:

Questions 14a: Please tell us why you would not report Groping, Unwanted sexual touching, Voyeurism, Rape, Sexual assault, Domestic abuse, Spiking, Upskirting, Indecent exposure and Stalking to the police.

Open text box.

We would suggest taking the time to explain the reasons why (or why not) you would be inclined to report any of these crimes. This could relate to feeling of mistrust of the police or other institutions.

Question 15: If you were to witness any of the following incidents, would you report it to the police?

Contents warning: sexual harassment, abuse, assault & rape.

Select Yes or No against each incident.

Incident:

- Groping
- Uninvited sexual touching
- Voyeurism
- Rape
- Sexual assault
- Domestic abuse

- Spiking
- Upskirting
- Indecent exposure
- Stalking

If you select "No" to any option, the following question will appear:

Questions 15a: Please tell us why you would not report Groping, Unwanted sexual touching, Voyeurism, Rape, Sexual assault, Domestic abuse, Spiking, Upskirting, Indecent exposure and Stalking.

Open text box.

Be mindful that Q14 asked if you would report an incident (presumably if you, or someone you know, was a victim), this question asks if you would take action if you were to witness an incident.

The police are seeking to better understand the reasons why victims and witnesses do not report sexual crimes. We would suggest providing the reasons for non-reporting, as well as suggestions for how the police could encourage more people to report.

Section 3: Online abuse or harassment

Question 16: How concerned are you about online abuse or harassment directed at women and girls?

Select one:

- Very concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Not very concerned
- Not at all concerned
- Don't know

Remember: you can save your response and come back. This is a very long and emotionally draining survey, so this is something we would advise!

Question 17: In your opinion, how safe do you feel the following platforms are for women and girls?

Select your preferred option against each platform:

Crimes:

- Social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok)
- Messaging apps (e.g. WhatsApp, Snapchat)
- Dating apps or websites
- Online gaming platforms

Options:

- Very safe
- Safe
- Not very safe
- Not at all safe
- Don't know

It is less clear how the data from this question will be used by the police, and what actions they can take to make these spaces safer. There doesn't seem to be any way to separate your experience across different social media platforms. You will need to provide a response that represents your experience across all.

Question 18: Have you personally ever experienced any of the following online?

Contents notice: harassment and abuse online.

Select all that apply:

- Unwanted sexual messages
- Threatening or abusive messages
- Sharing of private images without consent
- Persistent unwanted contact or stalking
- None of the above

If you select any option other than "None of the above", the following question will appear:

Questions 19: If yes, did you tell anyone about the experience?

Select all that apply:

- Yes, I reported it to the police.
- Yes, I told a friend or family member or partner
- Yes, I told a support service for example a local charity
- Yes, I told someone at school/college/university
- Yes, I told someone at my workplace
- Yes, I told a staff member or security (i.e. on public transport, in a bar, nightclub, music venue)
- No, I did not tell anyone

We aren't certain what would qualify as "a staff member of security" in this instance. We would only recommend selecting that option if there was a clear instance in-which the person you told was able to take action against the online conduct within their official capacity.

Question 20: Do you think the police and other agencies take online abuse of women and girls seriously enough?

Select one:

- Yes

- No
- Don't know

If you select "No", the following question appears:

Questions 21: If no, why do you say that? What more can be done?

Open text box

If we set aside the fairly alarming wording of this question, this is a good opportunity to tell the police what they should be doing. We would encourage you to be clear and exact in your suggestions, bearing in mind that we are discussing online spaces only.

Section 4: Confidence in the police response to VAWG

VAWG stands for Violence Against Women and Girls.

Question 22: Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the below statements:

In the following options, 'other organisations' include local councils and transport firms

Select your preferred option against each statement:

Statements:

- I have confidence the police will take all the actions they can to improve safety for women and girls in Lancashire
- I have confidence other organisations will take all the actions they can to improve safety for women and girls in Lancashire
- I trust the police to prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- I trust other agencies to prevent VAWG
- The police provide sufficient support for victims of VAWG
- Other agencies provide sufficient support for victims of VAWG
- The police share useful information to help women and girls
- The police share sufficient messaging aimed at potential perpetrators
- I think Lancashire police could play a role in educating boys and men on the topic of consent
- I think Partner agencies could play a role in educating boys and men on the topic of consent
- I have confidence in the Criminal Justice System to deliver suitable justice when it comes to VAWG
- VAWG is taken as seriously as other crime types by Lancashire Police
- VAWG is taken as seriously as other crime types by the Criminal Justice System
- If I report a VAWG matter to the police, I am confident they will take me seriously

Options:

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not sure

We feel that some of the statements here are fairly leading, and should be read carefully and critically before a response is selected.

You may disagree that the police and/or "other agencies" do, or should do, any of the things listed but still feel that the issues must be resolved. This is a valid point of view but not one you can easily articulate in this question.

We strongly advise you to carefully read each statement individually and respond according to your feelings, regardless of how your responses look across all statements.

Question 23a: Have you had any positive or negative experiences with an organisation other than the police when it comes to feeling safe or getting support?

Select one:

- Yes – positive experience
- Yes – negative experience
- Yes – both positive and negative
- No
- Prefer not to say

If you select any "Yes -" option, the following question appears:

Questions 23b: Please tell us briefly about your experience.

Open text box

We recommend taking the time to provide an in-depth response to this question. If you have had a positive experience elsewhere, be specific about where and why it was so positive. You want to present a model the police could easily replicate based upon the information you provide.

Section 5: Communication and messaging

Question 24: How would you like to hear about the work Lancashire Police are doing to tackle VAWG?

Select all that apply:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- X

- TikTok
- Local media (local newspapers and radio stations)
- In the Know/Lancashire Talking
- Lancashire Police Website
- Partner websites
- Advert
- Outdoor billboard
- Local policing team
- Leaflets
- Buses
- Taxis
- None of the above
- Other

If you have used this guide, and found it useful, we ask that you respond “Other” to this question and type “I used the LUSU guide” in the text box that appears. This will allow us to monitor the impact of this initiative when we speak to the Commissioner.

Question 25: Please rank the following from 1 to 6 in terms of what should be the key messages for any future media campaigns with 1 being your most preferred message:

Rank the options below from 1st to 6th:

- What the police and partners are doing to tackle VAWG
- Hot to stay safe online
- Staying safe in the nighttime economy
- Educating men about their behaviours and attitudes
- Raise awareness of help available in specific situations
- To help people understand that they may be at risk and support available (e.g explain what coercive and controlling behaviour is)

If you have another idea for key messages for future media campaigns, we would encourage you to email the Commissioner directly on: commissioner@lancashire-pcc.gov.uk.

Demographics

This section is about you and your background. This data should be used to determine how the police target any actions they take as a result of the findings of this survey.

In Question 26, you can only select one option. Based on your previous answers, select the area in which you referenced most frequently in your responses, and most importantly, your open text comments.

We would strongly encourage all Lancaster University students to select “Lancaster” and not “I don’t live in Lancashire”, even if you have now graduated and moved away from the area. We expect your response reflects your time in Lancaster, and it is important that we don’t give the police grounds to dismiss your response.

Don’t forget to click “Submit”!

Thank you for reading this guide and submitting your survey response. We hope this was useful.

If you have any questions about this guide, please email su.insight@lancaster.ac.uk

