



Counselling & Wellbeing

Sexual Violence Advocate (SVA)



arul.ink/sva

Confidential Non-judgemental Information Support

What is the Sexual Violence Advocacy (SVA) service?

Support is available for all students at ARU, who have ever experienced any form of sexual violence. A Sexual Violence Advocate (SVA) can provide both practical support and advocacy for you in a confidential*, safe and non-judgmental space.

We understand that it can be difficult to know what support might be helpful. An SVA can support in various ways, and can work with you to figure out what support might be helpful for you.

**subject to limitations outlined in our confidentiality policy*

What can the SVA service support me with?

Your SVA will be led by you and you'll meet to explore the different options available to you. The support is completely voluntary, and if you decide that it doesn't feel helpful for you right now, that is ok too. Your SVA will never try and tell you what to do, but will offer information and a safe place to talk. Some of the things we can offer are:

- Up to 6 initial emotional support sessions.
- Initial information about reporting to the police.
- Information around reporting to the university including the Formal Complaints and Informal Reporting Procedures at ARU.
- Advocating for your rights.
- Helping you to access other forms of support that might be helpful for you, such as counselling.

What can the SVA not do?

The SVA is here to provide practical information and support. Please be aware, the SVA service is not the same as counselling, but your SVA can support you to get counselling in place if this is something you would like.

An SVA is an advocate and will be by your side. While your SVA may not always have the answers, they will always try to find out the answer for you, or signpost you to somewhere that can help.

An SVA will not give you advice as we recognise that everyone has different needs however an SVA can present you with your options, and help you come to a decision that is right for you.

Who can access the SVA service?

We can provide support for any student who has experienced any form of sexual violence, whether it happened recently or before you were a student at ARU.

We understand that there might be additional barriers in accessing support for students who are from ethnic minority backgrounds, LGBT+, have insecure immigration status and/or are living with a disability and we know this means it's extremely important for us to work in an intersectional way. We will always do our best to take steps to address barriers and make this service as inclusive as possible.

We use the term 'Sexual Violence,' to cover all forms of unwanted sexual acts, behaviours or intent. This includes, but is not limited to rape, attempted rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault, revenge porn, catcalling, sexual harassment, Child Sexual Abuse, touching, upskirting, stealthing, honour based abuse, trafficking and drug-facilitated sexual assault.

You will hear different words for sexual violence and at the University we refer to this as sexual misconduct as we have

a code of conduct. We define sexual misconduct as any unwanted or attempted unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. This includes, but is not limited to:

- sexual harassment
- sexual assault
- rape.

You can find more information in the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy (within **ARU's Rules, Regulations and Procedures**) which outlines the University's commitment to a supportive, trauma-informed, victim focussed approach where students can continue to study, and are treated with dignity, courtesy, and respect.

How is this service confidential?

The ARU SVA service follows the ARU Counselling and Wellbeing Confidentiality Statement. This means that any information you give your SVA will stay within the Counselling and Wellbeing Service.

Your records or notes that we store are kept separately from other university records, however your SVA works closely within the SVA team and with others, including Counselling and Wellbeing managers, service administrators and internal and external clinical supervisors. In line with the requirements of the GDPR, your personal information will be treated respectfully and sensitively and only shared with the wider Counselling and Wellbeing team on a "need to know" basis to help us to manage risk and deliver a better service.

sva@aru.ac.uk

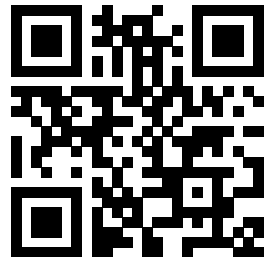
Personal information conveyed to us will not be disclosed to other university staff or external organisations without your explicit and informed consent other than in exceptional circumstances outlined in our Confidentiality Statement. Such an example would be if your SVA believed either yourself or others were at risk of harm. You will have an opportunity to speak with your SVA about this when you begin your support and you can go through the confidentiality Statement together.

Your SVA can meet you in person at an ARU campus, or they can meet you online or via phone.

How can I access the SVA service?

If you would like to reach out for support, you can refer yourself here. You can also find out more information about the SVA service on this page.

arul.ink/sva



We understand that reaching out for support is not an easy thing to do and we are always happy to answer any questions about the support. If you would like to contact us directly, you can email the SVA team at **sva@aru.ac.uk**. Please be aware that we can answer any questions about the support, but in order to begin offering support, we will need to have received a completed referral form from you. You will be contacted within 3 working days once the form is recieved.

The SVA service is not right for me, how else can I get support?

Receiving SVA support is completely your choice, and it is ok if you do not want to speak with the ARU SVA.

There are various other forms of support available for you, both within and outside of the university

- If you feel like you're unable to keep yourself safe, you can access emergency mental health support by calling **111 Option 2**, contacting your **GP**, or calling **999** in an emergency.
- ARU has a free and confidential Counselling and Wellbeing service: **wellbeing@aru.ac.uk**.
- Harassment support for students at ARU - **arul.ink/student-harassment-support**
- Report and Support - **reportandsupport.aru.ac.uk**
- Rape Crisis - **rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/want-to-talk**
- Survivors UK - **survivorsuk.org**
- Galop - **galop.org.uk/get-help**
- NAPAC - **napac.org.uk**
- NHS: Help after rape and sexual assault - **nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault**