

Press Release

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London Metropolitan University joins ground-breaking Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse

London Met's Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit has been announced as part of a consortium to bring about significant change in how child sexual abuse is responded to.

London Met's Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit (CWASU) has been selected to form part of a consortium to bring about change in child sexual abuse, it has been announced this morning by the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd.

The ground-breaking £7.5 million Centre of Expertise, led by Barnardo's, will become the authoritative source of research and innovation on tackling child sexual abuse and exploitation, as part of a wider project to protect children and pursue offenders.

Dr Maddy Coy, Deputy Director of CWASU, said: "CWASU was set up to develop knowledge on sexual abuse of children and take this into professional practice. Thirty years later, with sexual abuse and exploitation of children in the policy and public spotlight, we are delighted to be consortium partners in the new Centre for Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse and look forward to contributing our research, practice and teaching knowledge."

The Centre of Expertise is part of a wider £40m package of Government measures to protect children and young people from sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking, and to crack down on offenders.

In addition to the launch of the new Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse, an extra £20 million will be awarded to the National Crime Agency to tackle online child sexual exploitation, £2.2 million provided for organisations working to protect children at risk of trafficking and Independent Child Trafficking Advocates (ICTAs) will be launched in three early-adopter sites across the UK.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said: "Children should be able to grow up free from the horrors of sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking. Something that should go without saying, but sadly that's not the case.

"This Government has done more than any other to tackle these horrific offences. We have increased support for victims of sexual abuse, invested in training and technology to improve law enforcement's response to abuse both on and offline, and brought in a tougher inspection regime to ensure all front-line professions are meeting their child protection duties.

"But there is more to do, the measures I am announcing today will further improve

our ability to protect children, and under my watch I am determined to bring those that would try to steal their childhood to justice.”

-Ends-

Notes to editors

The Centre of Expertise consortium is led by Barnardo’s and includes a diverse range of academic, practitioner, and statutory partners and a range of universities.

London Met will work alongside a range of other universities including Newcastle, Cardiff, Coventry, Birmingham, Durham and Lincoln.

The Centre of Expertise, a consortium of health, law enforcement and social care professionals, charities and academics, will receive £7.5m until 2020. It will become the definitive source of information and guidance to those tackling child sexual abuse and exploitation on the front line.

Established in 1987, The Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit (CWASU) at London Metropolitan University is recognised as a centre of excellence, with an international reputation for research, evaluation, training and consultancy. With three decades of experience in conducting independent feminist research that creates useful knowledge for policy makers, practitioners, survivors, supporters and activists, CWASU is the only research unit in Europe that integrates a focus on all forms of violence against women and child abuse.

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Contact

Charlotte White | PR & Internal Communications Officer
External Relations | London Metropolitan University

+020 7133 2467

c.white1@londonmet.ac.uk

About London Metropolitan University

London Metropolitan University has been providing education to people from all backgrounds since 1848, with the creation of the Metropolitan Evening Classes for Working Men. Six schools teach cutting-edge, relevant courses across the arts, sciences, business, law and humanities. Accelerator – London Met’s specialist business incubator – helps graduates get their enterprises up and running and was named among the Top Five ‘Most Active’ accelerators in Europe in 2015, highlighting its contribution to London’s booming start-up industry.

London Met is home to world-leading academics who regularly give expert comment to the media. The University scored well in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, being ranked 4th in the country for Area Studies and performing strongly in Education and Social Studies.

The University is strongly focused on employability. In 2016, London Met recorded its highest ever graduate employment score, with 93% of all 2014/15 graduates in work or further study six months after graduation. It was also ranked above all five Russell Group universities in London for teaching quality in 2016.

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