**What is Sinophobia? How to tackle it and how to support ESEA students**

[Sinophobia](https://www.anewseducation.com/post/guide-sinophobia) is the fear, intense dislike or hatred of China and anything or anybody from China, with a history dating back centuries.

2020 brought about a resurgence of Sinophobia that affected not only people of Chinese descent or origin but also other East Asian communities. The Covid-19 pandemic has seen a dramatic, worldwide increase in reported cases of verbal, physical and [online](https://l1ght.com/Toxicity_during_coronavirus_Report-L1ght.pdf) attacks against Chinese and other ESEA (East and Southeast Asian) people.

Police departments across the UK have said they have seen significant increases in reports against ESEA people. And our partners such as the [University of Warwick](https://prezi.com/i/view/uz9wTiyyOGMjTATHCq8F) and [UCL](https://d2gppjca7iyv2p.cloudfront.net/e1303899-3626-4c3d-9bd0-9ed0a16b14cc/2fda728e-78cd-4317-affa-e8c397a21ace) have published reports showing there was a disproportionate increase in reports from Chinese students and staff during the pandemic. Further research from the University of Manchester about Covid-19 related racism also reported shocking [findings](https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/files/212334199/COV19_Chinese_and_East_Asian_Students_in_the_UK_Safety_Security_and_Communication_British_Academy_Report_Lim_et_al_2022.pdf).

However, the reported figures may likely still pale in comparison to the true numbers. Attacks more often than not go unreported for a variety of reasons, which include a lack of trust in authorities to do anything, the language barrier or a fear that their report will not be taken seriously - either if they think what happened isn’t “serious” enough or they think they will face further racial bias against them. Another reason is that among the Chinese there is a culture of [“standing aside from troubles”](https://inews.co.uk/opinion/comment/chinese-hate-crime-157111), wanting to keep their head down and not attract further attention or problems.

While we can encourage victims of these attacks to come forward and report them, there is something more you can do to stop them from happening. In a current society that aside from the increase in Sinophobia has been plagued by other racial inequality issues, it is now no longer enough for people to just claim they are not racist. They must also be actively anti-racist.

[144,000 Chinese students](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-60587499) are currently in higher education in the UK with there being many reasons why it is such a popular place for them to come and study. But unfortunately, some victims of attacks and other students have [questioned](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/chinese-students-uk-report-increased-racism-and-discrimination) their original views of the UK as a safe and tolerant place to live due to the Sinophobia and [“maskaphobia”](https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/mar/17/chinese-students-flee-uk-after-maskaphobia-triggered-racist-attacks) they have experienced or heard about.

Some students feel alone or are unsure about what to do if they feel afraid or have been a victim. And sadly, too often public physical or verbal attacks happen without any intervention. You can read more about being an active bystander here (insert link to your own page or alternative here).

Ways to tackle Sinophobia when you see or hear it happen:

* Intercept the perpetrator if possible
* Call or send for help from authorities, security or someone else who may be able to help
* Call out remarks and slurs, including microaggressions, comments based on negative stereotypes, and “banter” or “jokes” as unacceptable, bullying and racist
* Use Report + Support to either make anonymous or named reports. If you are comfortable doing so, report incidents to university officials or authorities, including ones you see online/on social media.
* Reach out to ESEA students to show your solidarity and support, whether or not they have been victims of hate crimes
* Offer help to students who may not be comfortable speaking about an incident or reporting it, mentioning Report + Support as an avenue they can utilise

Thankfully, some universities are taking action with public statements to students and a [petition](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EPqFhavfnsL-Gx4yvnuPkYg7FO6BVUUR_zBdrHKdhNA/edit?usp=sharing) that called for more of them to do more to tackle the anti-Asian racism. Net Natives also gives advice to universities themselves on [other ways](https://netnatives.com/en_gb/blog/covid-fueled-racism) they can help