



Female Academic Role Model Empowerment, Equality and Sustainability at Universities in Mediterranean Region: towards 2030 Agenda – FREE



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Sexual Harassment Policy for Lebanese Higher Education Institutions

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Target Audience of the policy brief



Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education - Lebanese HEIs



Lebanese higher education institutions (HEIs) are committed to the principle of equal opportunity in education and employment.

Consistent with this commitment, it is the policy of these HEIs not to tolerate any kind of sexual misconduct and to provide those who feel they are victims of sexual harassment with adequate mechanisms to address it.

Harassment, and dealing fairly and firmly with offenders. Creating a safe campus environment and a culture of respect is the shared responsibility of all members of the HEIs community, individually and collectively.



Outline

- Background on Sexual Harassment
- Sexual Harassment Criteria
- Sexual Harassment Type
- Recommendations & Reporting Guidelines
- Conclusion



Background on Sexual Harassment

- The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) has shown that two thirds of women have experienced sexual harassment (2016).
- Sexual Harassment is defined as an unwelcome conduct (verbal, physical, written, graphic, electronic, media or other) of a sexual nature, which is so severe or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with a person's university employment, academic performance or participation in university programs or activities, or creates a working, learning, program, activity or living environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, hostile or offensive.
- Sexual harassment may occur in a single episode or represent persistent behavior. Sexual harassment may occur between people of the same or different gender or of equivalent status.
- Sexual harassment is especially serious when it involves abuse of power or authority, such as by a faculty or staff member over a student, faculty or staff member over subordinate.





Examples of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment include:

Repeated unwelcome flirtation, advances, or propositions. Threats that a person's employment, wages, academic grade, promotional opportunities, classroom or work assignments or other conditions of employment or academic life may be adversely affected by not submitting to sexual advances.



Criteria of Sexual Harassment

For a conduct to be considered “sexual harassment”, it has to **be unwelcome** and has led to creating a **hostile environment**.



Hostile Environment



A hostile environment is created when the conduct is: Severe, or Persistent, and Objectively offensive, such that it: unreasonably interferes with, denies, or limits someone's ability to participate in or benefit from the institution's education or employment programs. Whether the conduct creates a hostile environment may depend on a variety of factors, including: the degree to which the conduct affected one or more person's education or employment; the type, frequency, and duration of the conduct; the relationship between the parties; the number of people involved; and the context in which the conduct occurred.



Unwelcome Conduct

Conduct is unwelcome if a person: Did not invite it, and regarded the uninvited conduct as undesirable or offensive. That a person welcomes communication and/or contact of sexual nature does not necessarily mean that person welcomes other similar conduct. Similarly, that a person willingly participates in conduct on one occasion does not necessarily mean that the same conduct is welcome on a subsequent occasion



CONSENT

There are no blurred lines.

Effective consent cannot be obtained from someone who is incapable of giving consent for any reason, including:

- when the person is asleep
- when the person is unconscious
- when the person is physically helpless
- when the person is incapacitated, including by alcohol or other drugs



Types of sexual harassment

“Quid Pro Quo” sexual harassment occurs when a person’s submission to a sexually harassing conduct is implicitly or explicitly considered a basis for employment decisions, academic and performance evaluation, grades or advancement, or other decisions affecting participation in a University program or services.

“Hostile work environment” sexual harassment occurs when a person is subject to a sexually harassing conduct that is sufficiently severe or pervasive that it unreasonably denies, adversely limits, or interferes with a person’s participation in or benefit from the education, employment or other programs and services of the University and creates an environment that a reasonable person would find to be intimidating or offensive.



Recommendations & Reporting Guidelines

Members of the HEIs community who believe that they have been subjected to any conduct in violation of this policy can fill:

- **Informal Complaints:** submitted without a formal “Notice of Sexual Harassment” in-person, or via phone, email, University post, mail.
- **Formal Complaints:** by submitting the “Notice of Sexual Harassment” inperson, via email, internal post, or by mail to the University’s Equity who will log the complaint and deliver it to the Equity coordinator. If after a “formal complaint” has been filed and has been opened for investigation, the reporting and responding parties voluntarily agree to participate in an informal resolution that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication after receiving a full disclosure of the allegations and their options for formal resolution.



Recommendations & Reporting Guidelines

- **Complaints submitted by third-party reporters:** When a third party (e.g., a faculty member, advisor, friend, or staff) reports a sexual harassment misconduct incident, the Equity Coordinator or a designee will promptly notify the alleged target of the conduct and responding party that a report has been received, and Procedures will apply in the same manner as if the alleged target of sexual harassment had made the initial report.



Conclusion

This policy brief addressing sexual harassment aims at promoting a safe, respectful and ethical work and academic environment in which members of the HEIs community are free from sexual harassment of all types. It also addresses and aims at regulating consensual sexual or romantic relationships that may give rise to a conflict of interest, to actual or apparent favoritism, negative bias, or exploitation.



References

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