

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Purpose of Policy

The University of Ghana is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which all persons who participate in the University's programmes and activities do so in an environment free from intimidation, exploitation and abuse. The University seeks to provide an atmosphere of work and study in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. For the purpose of this policy, sexual harassment shall be defined to include acts or behaviour constituting sexual abuse and sexual assault which occur within the definitional scope of this University's policy in relation to members of the University community. Any act by the University's employees or students of reprisal, interference, or any other form of retaliation, whether direct or indirect, against a student or employee for raising concerns covered by this policy is also a violation of this policy

1.1 Aim

The aim of the policy is to strongly oppose sexual harassment and sexual abuse in any form and by this policy communicating zero tolerance of any action that may be construed as sexual harassment or sexual abuse in the University

1.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of the policy are:

- To take steps to prevent sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the University.
- To respond promptly and effectively to reports of sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the University.
- To administer appropriate disciplinary measures when a violation is found to have occurred as provided by this policy

2. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition (with examples If required)
Sexual Harassment	Interaction between Individuals of the opposite or same sex that is characterized by: (a) unwelcome sexual advances; or (b) unwelcome requests for sexual favours; and (c) other verbal or physical conduct or behaviour of a sexual nature where i. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or participation in an educational programme or activity; or ii. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions affecting that individual; iii. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or working environment.
Abuse of authority sexual harassment	A demand by a person in authority for sexual favours in exchange for work or academic related benefits for example, a wage increase, promotion, higher grades, a training or scholarship opportunity, etc). In determining whether abuse of authority has occurred, factors to consider include: Whether the harasser had actual supervisory authority over the employee The alleged harasser demanded sexual favours in exchange for an academic or employment-related benefit and
Hostile environment sexual harassment	Unwelcome sexual conduct that is sufficiently severe or pervasive that it alters the Conditions of education or employment and creates an environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, hostile or offensive. These circumstances could include the frequency of the conduct, its severity, and whether it is threatening or humiliating.
	A person who is subject to alleged sexual harassment and has filed-a complaint under this policy.
Committee	The Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee established by the University to address sexual harassment matters and investigate grievances.
Members of the University Community	Means all employees and students of the University
Policy	Policy on Sexual Harassment for the University of Ghana
Respondent	A person whose alleged conduct is the subject of a complaint

3. Application & Scope - Exclusions or Special Conditions

This Policy is applicable to all members of the University community. These include officers and employees of the University, students, and persons who serve the University as its agents and are under the control of the University in all its locations and facilities, including vehicles.

4. Implementation and Compliance Institutions

4.1 The University Council

The University Council will have the overall responsibility for ensuring that the University complies with the Sexual Harassment Policy. It includes ensuring that:

- (i) The Sexual harassment Policy should not be the only document that indicates that the university seeks to provide an atmosphere of work and study in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. The principles of the Sexual Harassment Policy should be referenced and put into specific action in other University documents such as the University Statutes, Strategic Plan, Student Handbooks, Conditions of Service, Code of Conduct and other policies and regulations (and in particular, the Gender Policy).
- (ii) The Sexual Harassment Policy should be made available to students and employees in various forms, as a handout at orientation programmes for these groups and on the University's website, among others.
- (iii) Measures in place to ensure the creation and maintenance of an environment that seeks to provide an atmosphere of work and study in which all employees and students of the University are treated with respect and dignity regardless of gender.
- (iv) An effective anti-sexual harassment and responsive organizational framework is established by integrating objectives of the Sexual Harassment Policy into the University's Strategic Plan.
- (v) Steps are taken to prevent sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the University.
- (vi) Steps are taken to respond promptly and effectively to reports of sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the University.
- (vii) Steps are taken to administer appropriate disciplinary measures when a violation is found to have occurred as provided by this policy.
- (viii) All policies, statutes and regulations of the University are in compliance with the Sexual Harassment Policy.

4.2 The Office of the Vice-Chancellor

The Office of the Vice-Chancellor will take the lead role in ensuring compliance with the Sexual Harassment Policy and will be responsible for.

- (I) Constituting the Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee established under this policy and appointing its chair.
- (II) Receiving reports of findings and recommendations of the Anti-Sexual harassment Committee and following up on recommended actions.

4.3 CEGENSA

- (I) CEGENSA shall facilitate and support the Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee in the implementation of the Sexual Harassment Policy.
- (II) Establish a well-equipped sexual harassment crisis and counselling unit to support University staff and students who have been victims of sexual harassment or assault cases.

4.4 Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee

(I) Membership

The Committee shall be composed of thirteen (13) persons nominated from among members of the University community, comprising employees and students drawn from the list set out in Appendix II of the Policy. There shall be gender parity in the composition of the Committee. Competent external members from other institutions may also be nominated to serve on the Committee as *ex-officio* members, or to act as technical advisers.

(ii) Responsibilities

The Committee shall address sexual harassment and sexual abuse issues relating to the University community:

- (a) Planning and managing the University's sexual harassment education and training programs.
- (b) Maintaining records of reports of sexual harassment and actions taken in response to reports.
- (c) Preparing and submitting an annual report to the Vice-Chancellor and/or the University Council on its work.
- (d) Dealing with specific complaints of sexual harassment as an investigative body.
- (e) Delineating and designing appropriate sanctions or disciplinary measures to be applied to persons who violate this Policy.

(III) Leadership

- (a) The Vice-Chancellor shall appoint a Chair, of the Committee. The Committee at its first meeting will appoint a vice-Chair and Secretary from among its members. The Vice-Chair shall act in the absence of the Chair and the Secretary shall ensure that all records of the Committee's meetings and proceedings are properly taken and documented.

- (b) The Chairperson shall be instrumental in summoning meetings, initiating enquiry processes and ensuring the integrity of all proceedings relating to investigation of grievances.
- (c) An adjudication committee, made up of any five members of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee, including a lawyer, will be selected by the Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee, to adjudicate cases on its behalf. There shall be gender parity in the composition of the adjudication committee
- (iv) **Qualities**
All members of the Committee shall have high credibility, gender sensitivity and technical competency to handle grievance procedures.
- (v) **Term of office**
Members of the Committee shall serve for a term of two years, after which they can be nominated to serve for a further two year term.

(Vi) **Review of Policy**

This Policy shall be reviewed periodically by (he Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee and other relevant slllkeholders of the University community.

5. Formal reporting of Violation/Complaint Mechanism

5.1 Procedure

Reports of sexual harassment or sexual abuse shall be brought as soon as possible after the alleged conduct occurs, optimally within one year. Prompt reporting will enable the Committee to investigate the facts, determine the issues, and provide an appropriate remedy or disciplinary action.

5.2 Role of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee

The Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee will have the following responsibilities under complaints mechanism:

- (a) **Education and Training:** The Committee shall plan and manage the University's sexual harassment education and training programs. The programs should include wide dissemination of this policy to the University community; providing educational materials to promote compliance with the policy and familiarity with local reporting procedures; and training of other University personnel who may be responsible for responding to informal reports of sexual harassment.
- (b) **Documentation:** The Committee shall maintain records of reports of sexual harassment and actions taken in response to reports, including records of investigations, voluntary resolutions, and disciplinary action, as appropriate.
- (c) **Reporting:** The Committee shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Vice-Chancellor and/or the University Council on its work.
- (d) **Investigation:** The Committee shall deal with specific complaints of sexual harassment as an investigative body in accordance with the grievance procedures outlined under this Policy.
- (e) **Sanctions/Disciplinary actions:** The Committee shall delineate and design appropriate sanctions or disciplinary measures to be applied to persons who violate this Policy.

5.3 Rights of the complainant

Any member of the University Community who believe that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment in violation of this Policy is urged to pursue the matter and utilize the procedures described under this Policy for redress. The complainant will not be reprimanded, retaliated against, or discriminated against in any way for initiating an inquiry or complaint in good faith.

5.4 Rights of the respondent

A person against whom a complaint is lodged shall be presumed innocent of that charge unless and until there is a final finding of culpability by the Committee or a stipulated admission to the charge by that person.

5.5 Right to representation

A complainant and a respondent in a sexual harassment or sexual abuse matter have the right to representation by counsel.

5.6 False representations

Individuals, who make reports that are later found to have been intentionally false or made maliciously without regard for truth, may be subject to disciplinary action.

6. Promotion of Sexual Harassment Policy

6.1 Dissemination of information on Sexual harassment Policy

This Policy document shall be published and disseminated without charge to all members of the University community. It shall be displayed at conspicuous places in all Faculties, departments, lecture halls and other public areas as far as possible. It shall also be made available to newly recruited staff of the University and newly admitted students.

6.2 Training and capacity development

All members of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee shall receive appropriate training about sexual harassment and sexual abuse and how to apply this Policy and the grievance procedures as to discharge their duties in an efficient and sensitive manner.

7. Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Released	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment

8. Annexes

ANNEX I: EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The following examples are illustrative of conduct or behaviour that, if proven, would be considered under this policy to establish sexual harassment in either an employment or an academic setting:

- Unwelcome, unsolicited advances, and/or propositions of a sexual nature;
- Unwelcome sexual advances whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Unwelcome and inappropriate affectionate gestures;
- Unwanted and persistent propositions for dates;
- Unnecessary and inappropriate touching, such as palling, pinching, hugging, or brushing against an individual's body; grabbing of parts of the body, kisses;
- Excessive and unwanted attention in the form of love letters, telephone calls or gifts, stalking;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies or prowess, sexual innuendos;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, heckling, hooting at an individual, including name-calling;
- Passing on pornographic material in print or electronic form or passing written offensive messages of a sexual nature (including e-mails and text messages);
- Insults, jokes, or anecdotes that belittle or demean an individual or a group's sexuality or gender; Unwelcome sexually-oriented gestures, verbal expressions, or comments of a sexual nature about an individual's body, clothing, or sexual experience;
- Unwelcome references to one's appearance or body where they cause psychological harassment especially if such expressions are persistent;

- Inappropriate displays of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, calendars, books, magazines;
- Sexual assault, which is an unwanted sexual act done without the consent of one party, and/or that occurs under threat or coercion. Sexual assault includes, but is not limited to, attempted rape, indecent assault, forcible anal sex, forcible oral copulation, sexual assault with an object, sexual battery, forcible fondling (e.g., unwanted touching or kissing for purposes of sexual gratification), and threat of sexual assault;
- Suggestions that submission to or rejection of sexual advances will affect decisions regarding such matters as an individual's employment, work assignments, or status, salary, academic standing, grades, receipt of financial aid, or letters of recommendation;
- Disciplining or firing a subordinate who ends a romantic relationship;
- Retaliation from a person in authority due to refusal of sexual favours which may include limiting opportunities for the complainant and generating gossip against the employee or other acts that limit access or change performance expectations after a subordinate refuses repeated requests for a date;

ANNEX II: COMPOSITION OF ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMMITTEE

1. Representative of the Law Faculty (with a human rights/administrative law bias).
2. Representative of the counselling and placement centre
3. Representative of CEGENSA
4. Representative of the psychology department
5. Representative of GAUA
6. Representative of UTAG
7. Representative of the SRC
8. Representative of the Graduate Students Association
9. Representative of TEWU
10. Representative of FUSSAG
11. The Legal Counsel of the University
12. Representative of the School of Public Health
13. Representative of School of Communication Studies
14. Representative of Social Policy Studies (CSPS)

ANNEX III: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The following guidelines shall apply in handling sexual harassment complaints:

(I) Informal Approach to dealing with sexual harassment

- a. Where a member of the University Community feels that he or she is being or has been sexually harassed, such a member may attempt to resolve the matter directly with the alleged offender by advising that the sexually harassing behaviour is unwelcome, must be stopped, or must not occur again.
- b. A Complainant may choose to ask another person whom he or she trusts to Intervene on their behalf. The person who is asked to intervene may provide advice or counselling to the parties involved. This shall be on a strictly confidential basis and only on the specific request of the Complainant.
- c. A Complainant may request through the Committee, that an attempt be made to resolve a sexual harassment matter through mediation. If such a request is made, the Committee member receiving the complaint shall determine whether the Respondent is willing to engage in mediation, and, if so, a mediator shall be selected by mutual agreement of the Complainant and the Respondent. The role of the mediator is to facilitate discussion and to suggest alternative resolutions. The mediator does not investigate the complaint or assign blame. The mediator shall report the outcome of the process to the Committee member receiving the complaint. If the matter cannot be resolved, the Committee member shall advise the Complainant to file a formal complaint before the Committee.
- d. In cases of sexual harassment or sexual abuse that are considered severe or extreme, such as attempted rape, rape, sexual battery, sexual assault with a weapon, non-consensual anal copulation and the like, a Complainant shall be counselled to report to the Police and launch a formal complaint before the Committee instead of utilizing the informal approach.
- e. If a complainant chooses not to use the informal approach to deal with sexual harassment, this shall not be used against him or her or affect the merits of the case when a formal complaint is launched.

(ii) Formal Approach: Launching and receiving formal complaints

- a. A member of the University community who is being or has been sexually harassed, or is dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal approach shall make a formal complaint to the Committee for redress.
- b. The Complainant shall present his/her grievance orally to the Committee member designated to receive formal complaints. The Committee member shall listen to the complaint and discuss all options with the Complainant as well as explain the processes involved in the formal grievance procedure.
- c. The purpose of the discussion is to inform and educate the complainant. The Committee member at this stage shall not dissuade the Complainant from filing the written complaint.
- d. The Complainant shall put his/her complaint in writing and lodge it with the Committee. In the case of a Complainant being unable to write, the Committee shall assist him or her to write the complaint. The written complaint shall be read out and explained in the language he/she understands after which he/she will sign or thumbprint.
- e. The written statement shall give details of the alleged harassing behaviour, and if possible, give details of dates, places and names of those connected with the incidents.
- f. The Committee shall notify the Respondent about the matter, and request that he or she files a written statement in response to the allegations within seven days. In the case of the Respondent's inability to write, the process in subsection d will apply.
- g. The Committee shall conduct verbal hearings with the Complainant and the Respondent and their representatives if available. All proceedings shall be recorded.
- h. The Complainant shall be heard first in the presence of the Respondent. The Respondent may Cross-Question the Complainant before the Committee. The Respondent may then be requested to make his oral statement to state his/her side of the matter.

- i. The Committee may take testimonies of other relevant persons and witnesses where available and review the evidence.
- j. The Committee may conduct its own investigations into the matter, apart from considering the written and verbal testimonies of the parties.
- k. A decision will be taken after careful review of the circumstances, evidence adduced, statements and all other relevant information before the Committee.
- l. Any dissenting opinion among the Committee members shall be recorded together with the reasons for the dissent.
- m. Where a Respondent is found to have engaged in the sexual harassment behaviour, the appropriate sanctions shall apply

(iii) Other relevant considerations for the work of the Committee

(a) Evidence

The following may be considered as evidence during the hearing of the matter.

- Written detailed account of the Complainant and the Respondent Witness statements (if any)
- Statements of persons with whom the Complainant might have discussed the incident, or from whom advice or may have been sought
- Any other documentary, audio, video, e-mails, phone texts, etc. Expert technical advice may be sought for such submissions
- In appropriate cases, the determination of a sexual harassment case may be based solely on the credibility of the Complainant's allegation if It is sufficiently detailed and internally consistent
- Medical evidence, including DNA, if appropriate

(b) *Withdrawal of a filed complaint*

A Complainant may withdraw a case filed before the Committee any time after filing and during the process of the investigation. In such a case the complainant shall state in writing the reasons for withdrawal of the complaint and append his/her signature to the statement.

(c) *Refusal of Respondent to respond to notice of filed complaint or to participate in enquiry*

The Committee may go ahead and investigate a complaint even where a respondent refuses to respond to the allegations or participate in the enquiry process.

(d) *Complaints against a member of the Committee*

If a complaint is made against a member of the Committee, he or she shall not be part of any of the processes of the Committee relating to the investigation of complaint.

(e) *Record of Proceedings*

The Committee's record of proceedings on a particular matter shall give details of the enquiry. This includes a statement of the allegations and issues, the positions of the parties, a summary of the evidence, findings of fact, and a determination by the Committee as to whether the University policy has been violated. The record shall also contain the sanctions given, where applicable. Other recommendations made to the parties for actions to restore or improve the relationship between the parties where no finding of guilt is made against the respondent may be included. The record may be used as evidence in other related procedures, such as subsequent complaints, grievances and/or disciplinary actions.

(f) *Decision-making*

The investigation procedure shall be completed as promptly as possible and in most cases within 60 working days of the date the request for formal investigation was filed.

(g) *Sanctions*

The Committee shall apply the appropriate sanctions or punitive measures where a Respondent has been found to have engaged in the sexual harassing behaviour. These sanctions include but are not limited to formal apology, leave without pay, suspension, demotions, dismissals and transfers and shall be applied on a case-by-case basis. In serious and repeat cases, the Respondent should be dismissed. These sanctions shall not operate to prejudice criminal action in the case of serious offences tantamount to crime under the laws of Ghana.

(h) Appeal

If the Complainant or Respondent is aggrieved with the outcome of the investigations and/or the decision of the Committee, he or she shall have a right of appeal to the University of Ghana Appeals Board if the appeal is lodged within seven days after the determination of the matter. The University of Ghana Appeals Board Shall hear and determine the appeal in accordance with the Statutes of the University.

i} Non-retaliation

During the process of investigation of a matter, retaliation from either party shall be strictly monitored by the Committee. An individual who is subjected to retaliation such as threats, intimidation, reprisals, or adverse employment or educational actions for having made a report of sexual harassment in good faith, or who assisted someone with a report of sexual harassment, or who participated in any manner in an investigation or resolution of a report of sexual harassment, may make a report of retaliation under these procedures. The report of retaliation shall be treated as a report of sexual harassment and will be subject to the same procedures.

ii} Confidentiality

The Committee shall maintain confidentiality of all matters reported to it and of the proceedings. Parties in an investigation, including their representatives shall be advised that maintaining confidentiality is essential to protect the integrity of the investigation.

k) Referral for counselling or other psycho-social support

In appropriate cases, the Committee may request that either party to the case seeks counselling or support from a designated institution or personnel. The Committee may, at the request of a party to the matter, refer that party to the appropriate institution or personnel for counselling or other psycho-social support