



The University of Ibadan

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY



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UI, creating a gender-friendly space for all

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Acronyms

GMO	Gender Mainstreaming Office
GP	Gender Policy
SDC	Staff Disciplinary Committee
SDC	Student Disciplinary Committee
SH	Sexual Harassment
UI	University of Ibadan



Foreword

Universities as centres for knowledge creation and dissemination are conceived as a democratising space which should enable both female and male staff and students to realise their full potential. However, complaints of sexual harassment are believed to be rampant in many Nigerian and African universities. They are deeply troubling and constitute a violation of human rights and academic freedom. Sexual harassment dampens self esteem, hampers social interactions and discourages other students. It is a form of corruption. The Nigerian Government and Non Governmental Organisations like *Women Against Rape and Sexual Harassment and Exploitation* have attempted at various times to curtail sexual harassment.

The University of Ibadan, in line with its commitment to transformative processes in higher education has worked to produce a sexual harassment policy. Its objective is to cultivate and maintain a working and learning environment that reflects respect for the dignity of all members of our community, thereby stimulating and supporting an environment free of sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

This Sexual Harassment Policy is the product of a highly participatory process, involving all segments of the university in

extensive discussions about its purpose, expected outcomes and strategies for ensuring its implementation and sustainability.

The University is very proud of the rigorous work of the Gender Mainstreaming Committee, the commitment of the whole University community, the financial support of the John D and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the encouragement of the Association of African Universities. The pioneering work of our Women's Research and Documentation Centre is hereby acknowledged. I also wish to pay tribute to the pioneer Principal Investigator of the University of Ibadan Gender Mainstreaming Programme, Prof. Abiola Odejide. The main credit for this work goes to her and her successor, Dr. Stella O. Odebode, who continued with the complex work, undaunted.

We hope this Sexual Harassment Policy; a flagship document will be of tremendous value to other Nigerian universities willing to adopt a similar participatory approach which will give their university communities a sense of ownership of the policy. It is my prayer and hope that the policy will be an instrument of progress and facilitate the creation of a gender-friendly space for all.

Prof. Isaac Folorunso Adewole

Vice-Chancellor

1.0 Preamble

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) prohibits discrimination on the ground of gender. The section on Fundamental Human Rights states that a citizen of Nigeria of a particular community, ethnic group, place of origin, circumstances of birth, sex, religion or political opinion shall not by reason only that he or she is such a person, be discriminated against.

Sexual harassment (SH) is a form of gender discrimination that poses serious concerns for the Nigerian university system, threatens the well-being of entire institutions and detracts from the university's efforts to provide a conducive learning environment. Sexual harassment weakens the dignity of the victim as well as the perpetrator. It can threaten the career, educational experience and well-being of members of the university community. SH is a feature of discrimination and it exploits unequal power structure in professional relationships. Sexual harassment may occur between people of the same sex, different sex, and among staff and students. SH is illegal; it contravenes the University of Ibadan's vision and mission and constitutes an infringement of fundamental human rights.

The University of Ibadan (herein after referred to as the University) will not allow any behaviour that interferes with peaceful coexistence among members of different sexes, ethnic groups, religions, disciplines and classes. It will promote an environment where staff and students alike relate to one another with mutual respect and operate in a setting which promotes sound scholarship.

2.0 University of Ibadan SH Policy Statement

The University shall cultivate and maintain a working and learning environment that reflects respect for the dignity of all members of its community, thereby stimulating and supporting an environment free of sexual harassment.

3.0 University Vision and Mission on Sexual Harassment

The University is committed to ensuring a safe space for members of the community – students, staff, service providers and all persons through clearly stated policies and guidelines that shall inform the conduct of personal, professional and corporate activities on its campus.

The University considers any act of sexual harassment as gross violation of the fundamental human rights of the victim and academic freedom in the case of students. Such actions affect the integrity of the University culture, and serve as potential threats to the attainment of academic excellence and institutional goals. The University is therefore committed to eliminating every form of SH and dealing promptly and decisively with all cases of sexual harassment.

3.1 Vision of the Policy

To establish UI as an ideal, safe and secure place of work and learning, where the dignity of everyone is ensured.

3.2 Mission

Towards the attainment of the vision, the University shall be obliged to:

- 3.2.1 Adopt a SH policy as part of gender mainstreaming.
- 3.2.2 Create awareness and disseminate information on what constitutes SH.
- 3.2.3 Investigate allegations and reports of incidents of SH and/or attempted SH.
- 3.2.4 Enforce rapid redress mechanisms to incidents of SH.
- 3.2.5 Educate staff and students about their right to seek redress in cases of SH.
- 3.2.6 Ensure that victims of SH suffer minimal setbacks and are integrated back into University life as quickly as possible.
- 3.2.7 Ensure that victims who report cases of SH are not discriminated against or stigmatised.
- 3.2.8 Encourage decorum, appropriate dressing and proper comportment by staff and students.
- 3.2.9 Discourage dual relationships which may involve conflict of interest such as dating between a staff and a student. If they exist, the University shall encourage disclosure by either of the parties.

4.0 SCOPE

The Sexual Harassment Policy shall apply to:

4.1 Persons

- All staff of the University
- All students of the University
- All contractors of and service providers to the University
- All visitors to the University
- Other groups of persons in the University, including but not limited to children, wards, and other dependants of staff.

4.2 Issues

- Teaching - the curricula and use of facilities
- Learning - the curricula and environment
- Research – incorporating gender perspectives in research and innovations
- Service - Gender sensitivity in community, national and international service/outreach

5.0 Objectives of the University SH Policy

The objectives of the UI SH policy are to:

- 5.1 Create for all staff, students and service providers a safe and secure work and learning environment, free of SH;
- 5.2 Ensure among its entire staff, students and service providers, respect for both sexes, and a transparent operating system in academic and other matters devoid of

- demands for sexual gratification;
- 5.3 Eliminate gender-based violence;
- 5.4 Strengthen UI's commitment to individual professional development and well being through enforcement of non-sexist language and actions.

6.0 Definition of Sexual Harassment

The University considers sexual harassment as:

1. Unwanted sexually motivated conduct, comments, touching and expressions capable of prejudicing or undermining a person's freedom, rights and privileges. Such acts could include but are not limited to outright demands, ogling, indecent comments and unnecessary bodily contact which could lead to psychological or physical unsolicited sexual relationships;
2. Unwanted suggestive looks, phone calls or use of other multimedia format and comments intended to lure a person into a sexual relationship.
3. Spousal abuse where one or both partners are members of the university community.

SH may take place over a period of time, may be a single incident and may or may not involve elements of overt coercion. SH may be from a superior to a subordinate or vice versa or among peers. It can be direct or indirect (including procuring or attempting to offer a person to another for sexual activity); and may involve persons of the same or opposite sex.

6.1 Forms of Sexual Harassment

Following from the definition above, forms of sexual harassment in the University include but are not limited to:

6.1.1 Verbal Conduct

- * Unfriendly remarks with sexual connotations
- * Coaxing of females or males by staff and students to have sexual affair.
- * Demanding for sexual favours in exchange for employment, promotion, admission or any other benefits.
- * Denying an individual his or her entitlement for refusal to succumb to sexual advances.
- * Demanding for sexual favours in exchange for grades
- * Sexually motivated booing and ogling of a person(s).
- * Sexist comments and dirty talk directed at someone or persons.
- * Asking personal questions about sexual life.
- * Targeting a person with sexual comments.
- * Making a sexual comment about a person's clothing, body or shape.
- * Turning academic and occupational discussions into sexual discussions without precluding or restricting appropriate teaching methods and research.
- * Compelling persons to narrate sexual fantasies, preferences or history.
- * Unsolicited, sexually explicit or suggestive electronic and mobile messages.
- * Directly or indirectly procuring or attempting to offer a person to another for sexual activity.

6.1.2 *Visual and Audio Conduct*

- * Taking and sending unwholesome pictures and making recordings (videos, CDs, camera phones etc) for the purpose of blackmail or any other purpose.
- * Being forced or induced to watch pornography or X-rated movies.
- * Seductive postures and indecent dressing and exposure by males or females that offend public morality. Any form of dressing that exposes vital parts of human body constitutes indecent dressing. The University shall encourage a 'dress sense' culture among males and females.
- * Indecent and inappropriate public show of sexual intimacy

6.1.3 *Physical Conduct*

- * Sexual assault and Battery
- * Repeated, unwelcome and unwarranted brushing against a person's body.
- Unwelcome caressing or fondling

7.0 Strategies to Prevent and Eliminate SH in UI

1. Widely publicize the University's norms, values and principles including respect for all persons.
2. Include in the staff and students' handbooks the University's Policy Statement, Vision and Mission on Sexual

Harassment.

3. Develop, publish and circulate the University's SH policy.
4. Organize periodic orientation and re-orientation programmes for students and staff about the University's SH policy.
5. Establish victim support and counselling centres in appropriate academic, Student Affairs and health centres within the University.
6. Handle SH complaints with natural justice, transparency and timeliness.
7. Provide adequate human and material resources to the Gender Mainstreaming Office to handle SH grievances and complaints.
8. Provide "Safe Houses" for victims of sexual harassment

8.0 Guidelines for the University Community

8.1 Confidentiality and Protection of Parties' Privacy

Procedures and processes connected with the investigation of complaints under the University SH policy shall be conducted with proper regard to and under strict compliance with the privacy of all parties. Mediators, counsellors and other persons connected with such processes shall maintain confidentiality of all information provided and/or collected in the course of their duties.

8.2 Responsibility for Implementation of Guidelines

The units, departments, faculties, colleges and institutes in the University shall be responsible for putting in place administrative mechanisms to support the GMO in the prompt and in-depth

investigation of reported matters of SH within their area of control.

8.3 Creation of awareness on Sexual Harassment

The University management shall be responsible for creating and promoting awareness on sexual harassment through periodic advocacy campaigns. Gender sensitisation seminars as well as existing programmes such as activities that prohibit cultism will also be utilised.

8.4 Principle of Neutrality and Objectivity

All officers of the University shall demonstrate a high level of impartiality, neutrality and objectivity in the process of implementing the provisions of the University SH policy.

9.0 Complaint Procedures

9.1.1 All complaints on violation or infringement of SH shall be made at the Gender Mainstreaming Office, (GMO) and where appropriate, referred to the relevant authorities.

9.1.2 Complaints of violation or infringement of the SH policy may be formal or informal.

9.1.3 Informal complaints (i.e. oral complaints) shall be treated administratively. The receiving officer shall however make a record of the complaint.

9.1.4 A formal complaint must be in writing, signed and submitted at the GMO.

9.1.5 A report or complaint can be made by the victim (or anyone who advocates on his or her behalf), or a witness. However, the decision to make such complaint formal or informal lies with the victim (or anyone who advocates on his or her behalf) or a witness.

9.2 Investigation

On receipt of a report from a victim or witness, the GMO shall immediately initiate steps directed at investigating the facts and true nature of the matter.

9.3 Right to Investigate

The University reserves the right to investigate and conclude a SH incident once reported

9.4 Scope of Investigation

The investigating officer shall have the authority to invite for questioning, comments, clarifications and opinions, any person considered relevant for the purpose of facilitating the investigation and offering appropriate redress in the matter.

10.0 Redress and Remedial Mechanisms

The GMO in implementing the provisions of the University SH policy shall in its discretion adopt reasonable measure(s) in response to specific reports or complaints. The information gathered in the course of investigation shall be disclosed strictly on a need to know basis.

10.1 Types of Redress and Remedial Measures

On the establishment of a “prima facie” case of SH by the GMO which has primary responsibility for same, it shall refer the matter to the appropriate Disciplinary Committee or Law Enforcement Agents. Such measures include those stated under Section 12.0 below.

10.2 The University shall take appropriate steps to remedy any disadvantages/loss, excluding financial damage suffered by victims of SH

11.0 Prohibition against Victimization

11.1 The University shall ensure that all processes and procedures related to the implementation of the SH policy are as much as possible corrective and not punitive. It shall not be designed to destroy personalities or undermine character.

11.2 Any form of victimisation perpetrated by staff, student(s) or any other member of the University community against any person who makes a complaint of SH or who exercises in good faith his or her right under this policy is strictly and expressly prohibited.

11.3 Any person who is found victimising any member of the University community in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action(s).

11.4 The University disapproves of false allegation of sexual harassment. It is therefore a violation of this policy for

any individual to report an untruthful or *mala fide* claim of SH. The person(s) who makes the false allegation will be subject to disciplinary action.

12.0 Penalties

Any person found liable of perpetrating SH, falsely accusing any person or instigating the occurrence of false accusation shall be subject to penalty. The penalties for those found to have violated this policy may include, but will not be limited to any of the following:

- * Monitoring
- * Counselling and/or therapy
- * Oral admonition
- * Written warning or oral reprimand
- * Referral to Staff/Student Disciplinary Committee (SDC) as the case may be or
- * Any other disciplinary action which the University may deem fit.

**This policy shall be subject to
periodic review**

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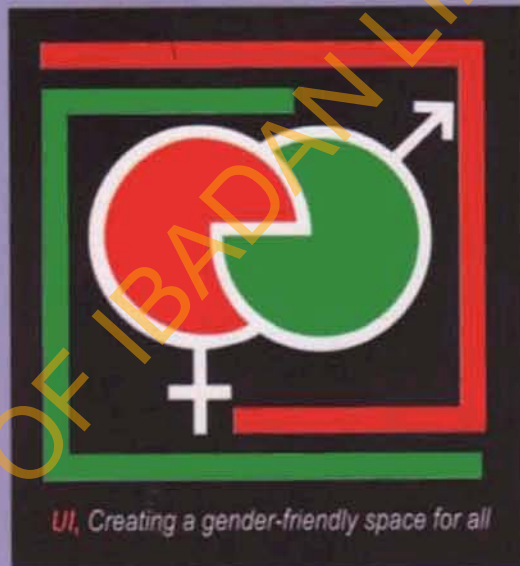
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Sexual Harassment Policy

References

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999

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