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## Sexual Harassment Policy

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### A) INTRODUCTION

- 1) All members of staff are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect in our place of work. This means freedom from sexual harassment, feeling safe and supported, and having access to redress if such behaviour does arise.
  - 2) Sexual harassment takes many forms but whatever form it takes; it is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 as amended. We will not tolerate it.
  - 3) The law requires employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their
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against anyone outside of a work situation where the incident is relevant to your suitability to carry out the role.

#### F) WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE SUBJECT TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR VICTIMISATION

- 1) We are committed to ensuring that there is no sexual harassment or victimisation in our workplace. Allegations of sexual harassment and victimisation will be treated as a disciplinary matter, although every situation will be considered on an individual basis and in accordance with the principles of our disciplinary procedures, a copy of which is included in the Staff Handbook.
- 2) Informal complaint  
We recognise that complaints of sexual harassment or victimisation can be of a sensitive or intimate nature and that it may not be appropriate for you to raise the issue through our normal grievance procedure. In these circumstances you are encouraged to raise such issues with a suitable colleague of your choice (whether or not that person has a direct supervisory responsibility for you) as a confidential staff member. This person cannot be the same person who will be responsible for investigating the matter if it becomes a formal complaint.
- 3) If you experience sexual harassment and you feel comfortable to do so, you should make it clear to the harasser on an informal basis that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask the harasser to stop. If you feel unable to do this verbally then you should hand a written request to the harasser, and your confidential staff member can assist you in this.
- 4) In addition, you may also choose to raise concerns during your regular communication with your manager, for example, in a 1-2-1 meeting. Your manager will listen to you and take your concerns seriously if you do this but may encourage you to follow the reporting procedures set out below.
- 5) Formal Complaint  
Where the informal approach fails or you do not wish to use the informal procedure, you should bring the matter to the attention of your Line Manager, The Home Bursar or HR Manager as a formal written complaint and again your confidential staff member can assist you in this. Alternatively, you can report instances by emailing [hr@new.ox.ac.uk](mailto:hr@new.ox.ac.uk)

Academic staff may choose to

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- e) any action already taken by you to stop the alleged harassment.
  - 6) On receipt of a formal complaint, we will take action to separate you from the alleged harasser to enable an uninterrupted investigation to take place. This may involve a temporary transfer of the alleged harasser to another work area or suspension with contractual pay until the matter has been resolved.
  - 7) The person dealing with the complaint will invite you to attend a meeting, at a reasonable time and location, to discuss the matter and carry out a thorough investigation. The meeting will normally be held within five working days of receipt of your complaint. You have the right to be accompanied at such a meeting by your confidential staff member or another work colleague of your choice and you must take all reasonable steps to attend. Those involved in the investigation will be expected to act in confidence and any breach of confidence may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.
  - 8) On conclusion of the investigation, which will be dealt with as quickly as possible after meeting with
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- 1) Third-party sexual harassment occurs when one of our employees' is subjected to sexual harassment by someone who is not part of our workforce but who is encountered in connection with work. This may include our customers, suppliers, members of the public, clients, service users, friends and family of colleagues, delegates at a conference, audiences, self-employed contractors etc.
- 2) Third-party sexual harassment of our workforce is unlawful and will not be tolerated. The law requires employers to take steps to prevent sexual harassment by third parties.
- 3) The law does not provide a mechanism for individuals to bring a claim of third-party harassment alone. However, failure for an employer to take reasonable steps to prevent third-party sexual harassment may result in legal liability in other types of claims.
- 4) In order to prevent third-party sexual harassment from occurring, we will:
  - a) Display signage at the Porters Lodge and other prominent places in college where customers are present to warn that sexual harassment of our staff is not acceptable
  - b) inform third-parties i.e. suppliers of our zero-tolerance sexual harassment policy within our supplier documentation (e.g. on quotations for conferences, control of contractors information)
- 5) If you have been subjected to third-party sexual harassment, you are encouraged to report this as soon as possible to your Line Manager
- 6) Should a customer sexually harass a member of our workforce, we will warn them about their behaviour and/or report them to their employer
- 7) The warning will be followed by a ban from all college premises if behaviour is repeated
- 8) Any criminal acts will be reported to the police.
- 9) We will not tolerate sexual harassment by any member of our workforce against a third party. Instances of sexual harassment of this kind may lead to disciplinary action including termination of employment

#### I) DISCIPLINARY ACTION

If the decision is that the allegation of sexual harassment or victimisation is well founded, the harasser/victimiser will be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with our disciplinary procedure up to and including summary dismissal. An employee who receives a formal warning or who is dismissed for sexual harassment/victimisation may appeal by using our disciplinary appeal procedure.

- 2) When deciding on the level of disciplinary sanction to be applied, we will take into consideration any aggravating factors affecting the case. One example of aggravating factors is an abuse of power over a more junior colleague.
- 3) If, due to the investigation, it is concluded that your complaint is both untrue and has been brought with malicious intent, disciplinary action will be taken against you.

#### J) TRAINING

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