



Sexual Harassment Policy

1. Purpose:

Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association (VUWSA) is committed to fighting and eradicating sexual harassment. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated within the VUWSA offices and workplace, at VUWSA-organised or VUWSA-sponsored events, and action will be taken should sexual harassment occur. This policy;

- (1) Defines sexual harassment;
- (2) Prohibits sexual harassment; and
- (3) Sets out guidelines for dealing with instances of sexual harassment.

2. Organisation Scope:

This policy applies to the following:

- All Executive members of VUWSA
- All employees of VUWSA
- All contractors of VUWSA
- All volunteers of or affiliated to VUWSA.

3. Policies and Guidelines:

a) Sexual Harassment Defined

Sexual harassment is interaction(s) characterised by unwelcome sexual advances or propositions, requests for sexual favours, other verbal or

physical conduct of a sexual nature which creates a hostile environment for people of certain gender or sexual identities, and creating a hostile environment by using sexist/homophobic jokes and remarks.

Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to sexual assault, unwanted touching, verbal abuse or threats of a sexual nature, gratuitous display of offensive material (including, but not limited to materials of a pornographic nature and sexual innuendo, either written or visual), unwelcome repeated sexual invitations, requests for details of a person's sex life, relationships (including, but not limited to that of a sexual nature) and experience, requests or demands for sexual favours or unwelcome and repeated innuendoes or taunting about a person's body, appearance or sexual orientation.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome, rude, and makes people feel uncomfortable, unsafe, unhappy or angry.

Sexual harassment does not necessarily involve certain genders or sexualities, or imbalances of power, and can happen in many situations. However, sexual harassment often operates as a form of control over certain groups, or as an abuse of power.

b) Within VUWSA Offices

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated within any of the VUWSA offices. Staff, Executive members, students, and visitors to our offices all have the right to feel safe and respected. Refusal to tolerate sexual harassment within our offices is an important part of creating a safe and positive environment for our constituents and our staff. Such instances of sexual harassment will be dealt with under the conditions set out in 3.

Anyone caught breaching this policy within the VUWSA offices shall be asked to leave.

c) VUWSA Events

Events organised by or sponsored by VUWSA should all endeavour to be free from sexual harassment, and to have adequate sexual harassment prevention measures in place. A 'safe space' policy, with sober persons trained in dealing with instances of sexual harassment, and in supporting survivors of sexual harassment, is essential in guaranteeing that our events are safer spaces.

Merely prohibiting sexual harassment at VUWSA events is not enough, and as an organisation we must ensure that steps are taken to both prevent and deal with situations of sexual harassment.

d) Sexual Harassment Awareness and Sexual Harassment Contact Training

Responsibility for organising annual Sexual Harassment Awareness and Contact training for the VUWSA Executive, all staff and any appropriate volunteers should be that of the VUWSA Association Manager. This can be organised in conjunction with the VUW Facilitator & Disputes Advisor, and/or with the VUW Counselling Service. Training should be carried out before Orientation each year, in order to best ensure that Orientation events shall be safer spaces. The Association Manager will ensure that, at the minimum, the Vice President (Welfare), the Queer Officer and the Women's Rights Officer are official VUWSA Sexual Harassment Contacts and that their details be displayed in all VUWSA offices.

4. Dealing with Instances of Sexual Harassment

Instances of sexual harassment can be dealt with in a number of ways.

- a) Complaints can be brought, through an official Sexual Harassment Contact if the complainant wishes, to either the VUWSA President, or one of the Vice-Presidents, and/or the VUW Facilitator and Disputes Advisor, if appropriate.
- b) In the case of a complaint against staff, the issue may be brought to the Association Manager. If the complaint is against the Association Manager, the complaint is to be brought to the VUWSA President.
- c) Complaints can also be taken through legal avenues, reported to the Police, or dealt with in other ways.
- d) The ultimate decision for how to proceed is up to the complainant.

5. Freedom from Reprisal

Any complainants shall be protected from reprisals as a result of bringing a harassment charge. Witnesses are also protected from reprisals where they have testified honestly.

6. Approval Dates:

Approved on:	15 July 2009
This version takes effect from:	16 July 2009
Drafted by:	Rachael Wright, Freya Eng, Jasmine Freemantle, and Seamus Brady
This policy will be reviewed by:	30 August 2011