

POLICY On Protection Against Harassment (RCoD)



**RAHBAR COLLEGE
OF DENTISTRY**

**PRINCIPAL
PROF. DR. MUHAMMAD NASIR SALEEM
RAHBAR COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY**

No.102/RCoD ^{MB6} Dated: 22 July 2024

To: Director Admin

Info: Medical Branch

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Nasir Saleem
BDS (Hons), FCPS, MSc, ICMT,
FDS RCPSG, PhD (Scholar),
Principal
HOD Operative Dentistry,
Rahbar College of Dentistry, Lahore

POLICY ON PROTECTION AGAINST HARASSMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Focal person (at least one of them should be a woman); the contact information of the focal person should be displayed on the website and on campus.
- Inquiry committee (Appointed for two years' terms) shall be constituted in the following manner:
 1. Three members (Dr. M. Saadullah, Dr. Hira Anjum, Dr. Bushra Mazhar)
 2. One of the three members should be a woman.
 3. Member from the senior management of the institution.
 4. All members should be employees of the institution.
 5. Members cannot be appointed for more than two years.
 6. Committee members cannot have two consecutive terms.
 7. Committee members can repeat their term after a seven-year gap.
 8. Committee members must have HR/management representation.
 9. Committee members should receive training on laws and proceedings.

1) Principles and Purpose of the Policy:

- Members of the institution possess several vital rights and privileges, foremost among which is the right to pursue inquiry and the search for knowledge without impediment from unlawful or otherwise unacceptable constraints.
- Protection against harassment is crucial not only because it undermines the freedom and conducive environment of the institution but, more fundamentally, because such conduct is unacceptable and violates personal dignity. Therefore, it shall not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- In accordance with the terms of this policy, harassment is prohibited and constitutes a punishable offence. Rahbar College of Dentistry affirms the right of every member of the institution to live, study, and work in an environment free from harassment.
- The policy's objective is to prevent harassment and to act promptly, fairly, judiciously, and confidentially upon complaints of harassment for all parties concerned.
- All administrators, deans, faculty, department chairs, and others in supervisory or leadership roles have an obligation to be familiar with and to uphold this policy and its procedures, as well as to inform members of their staff about its existence.
- To educate students in recognizing and preventing harassment and to provide effective means of eliminating harassment from the learning environment to the extent possible.
- To foster zero tolerance for sexual or any other kind of harassment and to ensure that all complaints of sexual harassment are taken seriously, thoroughly investigated with transparency, and appropriately addressed.
- All administrators, deans, faculty, department chairs, and others in supervisory or leadership roles have an obligation to be familiar with and to uphold this policy and its procedures, as well as to inform members of their staff about its existence.

2) Definitions:

No policy document can provide an exhaustive description or definition of behaviors that fall within the ambit of harassment. These definitions are meant to serve as a guide for acts that contravene the spirit and intent of the University's guiding principles.

Harassment

Any unwelcome conduct, verbal and/or physical, directed at a student due to their age, level, marital status, national/ethnic origin, sex, creed, caste, color, religion, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other reason when such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment.

Targeting students because of physical or mental challenges also constitutes harassment. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Ridicule, derogatory comments, inappropriate jokes, and insults.
- Unwarranted behavior that makes a student feel their respect and dignity have been violated.
- Display or circulation of materials and/or pictures, physically or electronically (e.g., via email, SMS, social media, etc.) which are degrading, sexually promiscuous, and intimidating.
- Shouting at a student, using insulting and abusive language, or publicly condemning/criticizing their competence.
- Quid pro quo - "something for something" (demanding a favor, act, or service that the recipient states they will repay in some way).

Sexual Harassment

- Elaboratively, sexual harassment includes any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors by verbal, written, or other means of communication, physical conduct of a sexual nature, or a sexually demeaning attitude that interferes with the victim's work/academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive work/study/learning environment in which the continuation of a course of study is conditional on compliance, and refusal results in punitive action.
- Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate gazing at a person's body and unsolicited physical contact, including but not limited to touching, patting, or pinching.

Verbal conduct of a sexual nature may include, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome verbal advances, sexually oriented comments about physical appearance, requests for sexual favors, and continued suggestions for private social activity after it has been made clear that such requests and suggestions are unwelcome.
- Offensive verbal conduct, including jokes of a sexual nature, offensive flirtation, or lewd remarks of a sexual nature, such as expressions of sexual interest addressed directly to the student.

- Invasion of personal space (standing too close).
- Non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature may include the display of or forced viewing of sexually suggestive pictures, objects, or written material, or sexually suggestive gestures. Verbal or non-verbal conduct that creates a sexually offensive learning environment also constitutes sexual harassment.
- Demanding sexual favors or sexually directed remarks/behavior constitutes sexual harassment when submission to or rejection of such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly, a basis for an academic decision.

Bullying/Ragging/Hazing

- Bullying refers to offensive, abusive, intimidating, or insulting behavior, abuse of power and/or unfair punitive sanctions which make the student feel upset, threatened, humiliated, and/or vulnerable, thereby undermining the student's self-confidence and/or reducing the student's feelings of self-esteem and self-worth, and causing the student to suffer stress.
- Ragging and/or hazing refers to the practice of using rituals and any other acts, conduct, or practices by which the dominant power of senior students, former students, or alumni, is brought to bear on students who are in any way considered junior by other students. Ragging and/or hazing includes individual or collective acts or practices which include, but are not limited to:
 - Involvement in physical or psychological assault or threat or use of force or wrongful confinement or restraint.
 - Violating the status, dignity, and honor of such students.
 - Exposing students to ridicule and contempt, affecting their self-esteem.
 - Verbal abuse and aggression, indecent gestures, and obscene behavior.
 - Breaching the confidentiality of any information related to the student (e.g., grades, health issues, fees, etc.).

Cyber-bullying

- Cyber-stalking is the use of the internet and mobile technology, such as email, SMS text, social media, or other electronic communications, to stalk, and generally refers to a pattern of threatening or malicious behaviors, including communicating a credible threat of harm.
- Cyber-harassment usually pertains to unconsented conduct such as threatening or harassing email messages, instant messages, or to social media and blog entries or websites dedicated solely to torment an individual. Cyber-harassment differs from cyber-stalking in that it is generally defined as not involving a credible threat.

3) Jurisdiction:

This policy applies to actions by students, faculty, staff, and other members such as interns, residents, etc., or third parties such as service providers and visitors when the misconduct occurs:

1. On campus.
2. Off-campus if (i) the conduct occurs in connection with a university-recognized program or activity, or (ii) the conduct may create a hostile environment on campus.
3. Using university computing or network resources accessed from an off-campus location.

4) Designated Resources

- Focal person (at least one of them should be a woman); the contact information of the focal person should be displayed on the website and on campus.
- Inquiry committee (Appointed for two years' terms) shall be constituted in the following manner:
 10. Three members.
 11. One of the three members should be a woman.
 12. Member from the senior management of the institution.
 13. All members should be employees of the institution.
 14. Members cannot be appointed for more than two years.
 15. Committee members cannot have two consecutive terms.
 16. Committee members can repeat their term after a seven-year gap.
 17. Committee members must have HR/management representation.
 18. Committee members should receive training on laws and proceedings.

5) Complaints and Reporting:

- The University assures that all complaints that are reported will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly and expeditiously, and that all parties will be treated with respect.
- As harassment usually occurs when individuals are alone, it is often difficult to produce evidence. It is strongly recommended that members of the University community report any offensive behavior immediately to someone they trust or seek guidance/help.
- Students who believe they have become victims of harassment or have witnessed harassment should immediately report their concerns through any of the following routes:
 - Report to the Principal of their academic entity.
 - Report to the director/coordinator/academic head of their program, who will immediately contact the committee within 24 hours.
 - Report to any committee member.

6) Resolution Procedures:

Informal Resolution:

Informal resolution aims to bring together the parties to discuss and resolve the complaint. A student who believes that they have been harassed may choose to discuss the matter with the person who has engaged in the behavior and/or request that a member of their academic entity act as a liaison for an informal discussion with the involved student or member of the faculty to resolve the matter.

Formal Resolution

Where a student does not wish to pursue the informal resolution procedure or where the informal resolution procedure is unsuccessful, the formal resolution procedures should be undertaken. Students may lodge a formal complaint with the Principal.

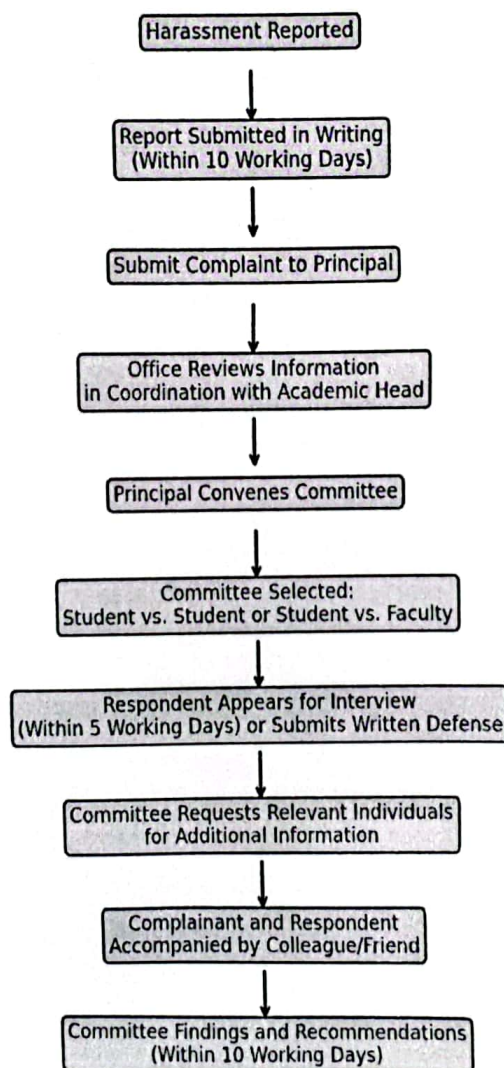
- If a member of the faculty or staff receives repeated allegations of offenses against the same individual, but each student making the allegation is unwilling to file a written complaint or appear as a complainant, that member of the University community shall inform the Principal.
- The Student Harassment Policy Review and Investigation procedures shall be used in cases where a student charges another student with harassment or where a student charges a member of the faculty with harassment.
- The Human Resources "Harassment Policy" shall be used in cases where a student charges a member of staff with harassment.
- The Principal, in coordination with the director/coordinator/academic head of the student's program, or, in the case where a staff member is involved, a Human Resources senior manager, shall attempt to make temporary arrangements so that the accused and the complainant do not have to interact during the investigation period. Retaliation from either party shall be strictly monitored. During the process of the investigation, class and clinic schedules shall be strictly monitored. Any occurrence of retaliation by the accused shall result in suspension from the University.

7) Inquiry Procedures:

This policy section governs the procedures for addressing harassment incidents involving students, faculty, or staff:

- All reports of harassment are handled confidentially to protect the privacy of involved parties.
- Student complaints must be submitted in writing and signed within 10 working days of the incident. They should include a factual description of the incident and quotations of any offending language used. Complaints are submitted to the Principal.
- Upon receiving the complaint, the office coordinates with the academic entity head to review the provided information.
- The Principal then convenes a committee, ensuring student members are from another academic entity in cases involving student-to-student harassment, and faculty members are from another entity in cases involving students charging faculty.
- The respondent is notified promptly and given five working days to appear before the Committee for an interview or to submit a written defense. Failure to respond without reasonable cause may lead to an ex-parte decision by the Committee.
- The Committee has the authority to summon relevant individuals to appear before them to provide information pertinent to the case.

- Both the complainant and the respondent have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or friend from within the institution during any meetings or interviews with the Committee.
- Within 10 working days from the initiation of the inquiry, the Committee delivers its findings and recommendations in writing, providing clear reasons for their conclusions.
- Penalties for student misconduct are determined according to the University's Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. Faculty cases are addressed through recommendations to the faculty member's Principal and Human Resources, who collaborate to decide on appropriate sanctions.



8) Communication and Compliance with the Policy:

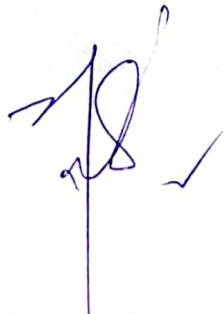
- The Principal, as applicable, in cooperation and coordination with the University's academic entity heads, shall be responsible for the wide dissemination of this policy.
- The Student Anti-Harassment Policy will be available on the Website.

9) Support and First Line of Contact:

- In the unlikely situation(s) in which students who are victims of an attack (sexual or otherwise) should be able to seek help from the Emergency Department in Punjab Rangers Teaching Hospital. Designated emergency helpline numbers should be provided to the students and also displayed in public spaces.
- In the unlikely situation(s) in which students who are victims of an attack (sexual or otherwise) should be able to seek help from the Safety and Security Department in Rahbar College of Dentistry. Designated helpline numbers should be provided to the students and also displayed in public spaces.
- Hostel Manager/coordinator/supervisors: For students in Rahbar College of Dentistry residence, the hostel office should be open 24/7 for students to make a first contact in case of need.

10) Counseling:

- Student counselling service must be available to students/victims of harassment.



PRINCIPAL
PROF. DR. MUHAMMAD NASIR SALEEM
RAHBAR COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Nasir Saleem
BDS (Hons), FCPS, MSc, ICMT,
FDS RCPSG, PhD (Scholar),
Principal
HOD Operative Dentistry,
Rahbar College of Dentistry, Lahore