

Harassment Policy

Last updated July 2013; review date: July 2014

Rationale

Baptist Student Hostel is committed to the principle that every person is entitled to be safe from sexual harassment, bullying or abuse.

Guidelines

It is important that the person making a complaint of harassment perceives the complaint will be taken seriously.

Definition of harassment

Any unwelcome comment, conduct or gesture that is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, malicious, degrading or offensive. It might be repeated or an isolated incident, but it is so significant that it adversely affects the recipient. It can include physical, degrading or threatening behaviour, abuse of power, isolation, discrimination, sexual and/or racial harassment. Harassment is behaviour that is unwanted by the recipient even if the recipient does not tell the harasser that the behaviour is unwanted.

Harassment can be said to occur when:

- One person subjects another person to repeated unsolicited, or unwelcome, sexual or abusive conduct.
- There is verbal or physical conduct, including misuse of written and or visual material, of a sexual or abusive nature by one person toward another.
- A person's conduct is unwelcome and offensive and might reasonably be seen as unwelcome and offensive, or a threat is made if the other person does not accept the conduct.
- The conduct is of such a nature, or is persistent, to the extent that it impacts on the individual's participation in the life of the Hostel or their health.

Some of the common reactions to having been harassed are: anxiety, fear, embarrassment, vulnerability, guilt, and anger.

Protocols for harassment grievances

The Baptist Student Hostel has appointed two harassment contact persons (HCP) to receive accusations or reports of harassment against any person/s associated with the Hostel. One contact person will support the affected person while the other contact person will be available to represent the person to whom the accusation has been made against, if they choose them or they may choose an alternative support person.

The harassment contact person is able to:

- Keep your details confidential, and not disclose these unless authorised by you.
- Assist you to identify the type/s of complaint (e.g. racial harassment).
- Outline the various complaint options and resolution procedures available to you.
- Support you when meeting with, or writing to the other party (as required).
- Explain the need for you (and friends and family) to keep the allegation confidential.

You may choose to resolve the complaint in the following ways:

- You may meet privately with, or write in confidence to the Respondent to describe the alleged harassment, and to ask that the behaviour cease. A HCP or other support person can accompany you to a meeting, if required.
- You may request that the complaint be mediated.
- At any stage you may choose to complain to an appropriate external agency such as the Human Rights Commission, the Race Relations Office, or the Police.

The Board of Trustees will provide a representative for the affected person and the person whom the accusation is made against. The harassment contact persons' contact details are available from the Hostel managers.

Failure by the Respondent, in the case of fellow-students and associates, to cease and desist in the harassing behaviour is likely to result in their immediate exclusion from the Hostel. If the harassing behaviour is by an employee of the Hostel it will be dealt with under the terms of the employment contract.