

Code of Practice Relating to Harassment

PRINCIPLES AND DEFINITION

1. Harassment is an unacceptable form of behaviour. The College is committed to protecting members, staff and any other person for whom the College has a special responsibility from any form of harassment, which might inhibit them from pursuing their work or studies, or from making proper use of university facilities. Complaints of harassment will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary proceedings. The College's harassment policy is based on the University policy on harassment which can be found at: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/policyand procedure/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/policyandprocedure/)
2. For the purposes of this code, harassment may be broadly understood to consist of unwarranted and deliberate behaviour towards another person, so as to disrupt the work or reduce the quality of life of that person, by such means as single or successive acts of bullying, verbally or physically abusing, or ill-treating her or him, or otherwise creating or maintaining a hostile or offensive studying, working, or social environment for her or him. Harassment relating to another's sex, sexual orientation, religion or race are among the forms of harassment covered by this code. Unacceptable forms of behaviour may include unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favours, offensive physical contact or verbal behaviour of a sexual nature, or other hostile or offensive acts or expressions relating to people's sex, sexual orientation, religion, or race. The abuse of a position of authority, as for example that of a tutor or supervisor, is an aggravating feature of harassment. Those protected by this code may appropriately seek advice in relation to harassment even if the conduct in question is not sufficiently serious to warrant the institution of disciplinary proceedings.
3. Being under the influence of alcohol or otherwise intoxicated will not be admitted as an excuse for harassment, and may be regarded as an aggravating feature.

Note on Confidentiality

It is essential that all those involved in a complaints procedure (including complainants) observe the strictest confidentiality consistent with operating that procedure; an accusation of harassment is potentially defamatory.

ADVICE

4. Advice may be sought or complaints pursued through any appropriate channel. In addition to other officers, the following people have been specially appointed to give advice in this connection and to answer questions (whether or not amounting to a complaint):

- (a) St Hilda's College Harassment Advisers (see below);
- (b) University Harassment Advisers. There are approximately 370 Harassment Advisers within the University, with two (one male and one female) appointed within each department or faculty. Details of the Harassment Advisers are posted on departmental and faculty office notice boards. If a student would prefer to speak with an adviser entirely unconnected with their department, faculty, or college; the Harassment Line can find an alternative adviser for them. Telephone: 01865 270760. Email: harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk.

A Harassment Adviser will deal with all cases with the utmost confidentiality (except when there is an unacceptable risk to an individual). They will listen without judgement and clarify options. For more information on the Harassment Advisers, in particular advisers with specialist training in relationship abuse, sexual violence or advisers who are LGB or BME please visit: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/advisornetwork

Any of these may be approached in the first instance, those approached will direct inquirers elsewhere, if that seems most likely to meet the inquirer's needs.

5. It is emphasised that the role of advisers is advisory and not disciplinary. All disciplinary matters lie in the hands of the relevant disciplinary bodies.

College Advisers on Harassment

St Hilda's advisers include the Senior Tutor, Tutor for Graduates, the Communications Manager, the Accommodation Officer and Prof. Dev Gangjee, Fellow in Law.