

TMUC ANTI HARASSMENT AND ANTI BULLYING POLICY

The Millennium Universal College is committed to providing a safe environment for all its learners and employees, free from discrimination of any kind and any form of harassment. As per our learner and staff well-being and code of conduct, we have a formal and fair anti-Harassment and anti-Bullying policy. TMUC has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of harassment in the institute, treats all incidents seriously and promptly investigates all allegations of harassment. Any learner/employee found in breach to this policy will face disciplinary action as per the policy. All complaints of harassment should be reported to and will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. Complete learner/staff confidentiality will be maintained, the complainant will be given his/her due listening.

AIM OF THE POLICY

This policy aims to ensure that all TMUC learners and employees can learn and work in a supportive (conducive) environment that is physically and psychologically safe (i.e. all TMUC learners and employees) can learn and work without fear of being bullied. It is also the aim of this policy to define, in clear terms, the expectations that teachers and other employees have of being valued and supported in their work, such that they too have a physically and psychologically safe environment for working.

This policy outlines what TMUC is expected to do to prevent / deal with all forms of harassment and bullying.

At TMUC, we aim to adopt anti-harassment and anti-bullying strategies and intervention procedures to:

- To ensure all learners, staff, college administration treat each other with courtesy and respect.
- To avoid culture and behavior at the campus that may create an atmosphere of hostility or intimidation.
- Prevent harassment and bullying from taking place and where necessary to act upon complaints of harassment promptly and fairly.
- Reassure and support students who have experienced harassment or bullying.

The expectations laid out in this policy apply to all working and learning in TMUC: learners, teachers (full time and visiting faculty), College administration, leadership, and custodial staff.

1.0 HARASSMENT

At TMUC, we define harassment as deliberately hurtful behavior which intimidates, torments or abuses others. Harassment is when the speech or actions are so severe, pervasive, or targeted at particular people that it hinders the learner's ability to get an education, significantly harms their well-being, substantially interferes with their rights, or intimidates the student because of their identity.

Harassment is especially harmful due to actual or perceived characteristics such as race, ethnicity, ancestry, colour, ethnic group identification, gender expression, gender identity, gender, disability, nationality, religion, age, or a person's association with a person or group. This kind of harassment can violate other civil rights laws too. It can be of any kind (having many forms, including cyber-bullying, which is the use of communication technologies) and can be carried out by an individual or a group.

This policy recognizes the need for all of us to be aware that harassment can happen at any time. At TMUC we recognize that harassment in any form might take place and so we proactively seek to guard against it. Consequently, in TMUC, we advocate proactive approach in dealing with any forms of harassment as soon as they become evident. This policy also sets precedents for preventing harassment from starting.

1.1 WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment is any form of unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a staff/learner feel offended, humiliated, intimidated and violated. It includes situations where a staff/learner is asked to engage in sexual activity, as well as situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient. Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents and actions constituting harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal.

Examples of conduct or behavior which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

1.2 Physical Misconduct

- Unwelcome physical contact which includes all kinds of inappropriate touching.
- Physical violence, including sexual assault
- Physical contact. (in any form)

1.3 Verbal Misconduct/Written Misconduct

- Comments on a learner's private life
- Sexual comments, stories and jokes
- Sexual advances
- Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy
- Sending sexually explicit messages (by phone or by email or any other communication medium)

1.4 Non-verbal Misconduct

Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material

Sexually-suggestive gestures

Anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment, regardless of their gender and the gender of the harasser. TMUC recognizes that sexual harassment may also occur between learners/employee of the same gender. Anyone, including learners and staff members who sexually harasses another, will be reprimanded as per the legal parameters and HR SOPs.

1.5 Reporting and Resolution Process

Designated Officials for Reporting

Every learner/employee has a right to be heard. If there is any concern (academic, non-academic or social), he/she must report to his/her Line Manager/Coordinator/Counsellor or Head of Institute with the guarantee that they will be heard. Their concerns shall be addressed with the utmost confidentiality.

The HoD, HOI and HR Department are responsible for receiving reports and complaints of violations of this Policy and sharing them with the Dean.

Reporting Procedures

Any employee/student who has a reasonable belief that harassment has occurred on TMUC property or in a college-related activity must promptly report the alleged incident(s) to his/her Line Manager/ in case of an employee and to the Coordinator/Counsellor or Head of Institute in the case of a student/learner.

Investigation Process

After the complaint is received, the HOI in case of the learner and the HR Department in case of

employee must investigate to decide if the allegations can be confirmed and whether to resolve the complaint through Formal or Informal Proceedings.

The objective of an enquiry is to attain an accurate and complete account of all incidents considered relevant to the allegations of the complaint. It should be noted that no complaint is deemed insignificant, however, culpability cannot be assumed. The practice is for the purpose of protecting the rights of the victim and the rights of an unfairly accused individual.

Informal Proceedings

Informal Proceedings may also include punitive action, however, the aim is to resolve the issue through non-disciplinary corrective action. Upon the initiation of the Informal Proceeding, the Head of Institute (in case of learner complaints) and the HR representative (in case of employees) will meet separately with the Complainant and the Complainee. An elected faculty member will observe the situation and will follow up to confirm whether or not further incidents have occurred. In case the Faculty Member informs that the problem persists, a Formal Proceeding will commence.

File Maintenance: All proceedings shall be minuted and record of employees are to be kept with HR and the record of learners are to be kept at the HOI office. For as long as all parties involved are linked with TMUC, HR Department will maintain a confidential file which will include all information regarding inquiry and investigation followed by resolution, if any.

Formal Proceedings: TMUC Harassment Complaint Cell

Harassment Complaint Cell is set up to carry out formal proceedings for the complaints lodged. The Dean will conduct an investigation along with the HOI and HR Director to corroborate the claims.

In case of the complaint being substantiated, the Dean will decide, based on the Committee findings, on the suitable action.

File Maintenance: The HR Department will maintain in a separate confidential file: the original Reporting/Complaint Form, investigatory interview notes and minutes, findings, the outcomes of the enquiry, including any decision for action.

1.6 WRITE TO US

TMUC has a dedicated email address which learners/employees can contact to lodge any complaints or queries regarding harassment, bully, inappropriate behavior or misconduct across the institution on haveyoursay@tmuc.edu.pk. Any claim which the learner feels is not catered by the campus appropriately; the learner can directly email to student confidentiality portal.

All complaints must be made from the personal email address of the learner/employee, i.e. charges cannot be made on behalf of other learners/employees, or social media platforms, or from anonymous or third party accounts. We would like to assure learners/employees that all complaints will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and privacy.

1.7 FALSE ALLEGATION

Allegations of harassment made out of malice (or with an intent to hurt the reputation of the staff or other learner), are to be dealt with as serious offences. Making a malefic allegation of sexual harassment, knowing it to be false, whether formally or informally is a severe offence under this policy and action would be taken under TMUC disciplinary regulations. Any charge found to have been intentionally dishonest or made in willful disregard of the truth, and to malign or damage the reputation, however, will make the complainant (student, staff or faculty) liable to severe disciplinary action.

TMUC recognizes that false accusations of harassment can have serious repercussions. If, after the investigation, it is found out that the complainant has maliciously or recklessly made a false accusation, the complainant will be subject to appropriate sanctions, disregard for truth will be treated with the same degree of seriousness and severity as an allegation of harassment itself. False allegations by the learners will be addressed by the HOI and when the complaint comes from the employee's side, the HR department will respond to it.

1.8 SANCTIONS AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Any member staff or learner who is found to have harassed another learner or staff under the terms of this policy is liable to any of the following sanctions:

- Written warning/ explanation/apology
- Awareness training (to assist the Complainee in understanding the effect of his/her behavior)
- Short-term or long-term suspension
- Dismissal in case of employee and expulsion in case of learner
- Referral to law enforcement .liable to criminal/legal proceedings

The nature of the sanctions will depend on the gravity and extent of the harassment and that will be decided upon by the committee to look after such complaints. Suitable deterrent sanctions will be applied to ensure that incidents of harassment are not treated as trivial. Certain severe cases, including physical violence, will result in the immediate dismissal of the harasser/abuser/disruptor.

No learner or employee (current or former) is allowed to share any defamatory, offensive or defamatory content against the employer, campus, institution, management or its stakeholders on social and digital media platforms, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, and social curation, and wikis, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat, Instagram and any other social media platform

2.0 BULLYING

2.1 IDENTIFYING BULLYING

The three types of bullying are:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, pushing, theft/ damage to property, inappropriate physical contact)
- Verbal (name calling, teasing, mocking, making offensive remarks, making inappropriate or derogatory comments about someone)
- Indirect (spreading rumours about people, gossiping, excluding someone from groups or social networking groups, sending inappropriate text/email messages or photographs, a.k.a. 'cyber-bullying')

2.2 SIGNS OF BULLYING

Bullying most often becomes apparent when people's normal behavior changes. Any changes in the behavior of someone in College should be considered as possible indications of bullying. The following behaviors have been listed as a few potential indicators (but not limited to):

- Refusal or resistance to come to College/ go into class
- Being anxious in College/class, withdrawal from social groups/ group activities (e.g. class activities or extra-curricular activities) or being unusually quiet in class
- Failure to produce work on time
- Presenting work that appears to have been spoiled or defaced by other Belongings, going missing or damaged
- Changes (reduction) in self-confidence/ self-esteem
- Regular symptoms of illness, such as stomach pains and headaches.
- Regular absence from College, erratic attendance or continual late arrival to class
- Poor/lack of eye contact and poor (closed) body language
- Unwillingness/resistance to taking part in activities with others

Although there may be other causes for some of the above indications, there should always be an investigation by College management where concerns arise.

2.3 DEGREES OF BULLYING

At TMUC, we use the following 'degrees of bullying' as a guide when dealing with incidents in College:

Low-Degree [e.g. Repeated inappropriate or unwarranted criticism in front of others, name-calling

and repeated practical jokes, spiteful/ mean rumors, undesirable facial or physical gestures, improper interference with personal belongings, exclusion from group activities].

Medium-Degree [e.g. organized aggressive behavior, victimizing others, teasing, threatening looks, mimicking others cruelly, encouraging others to exclude, and causing damage to social reputation / acceptance socially].

High-Degree [e.g. Persistent/ on-going use of abusive/extreme language towards an individual, physical assaults or repeated threats to cause harm (intimidation), deliberate intentions to engineer situations which exclude individuals from life in College].

2.4 WHAT IS NOT BULLYING

Some behavior in College can be distressing but is not bullying:

- The mutual conflict between learners
- This involves a disagreement between learners
- One-time acts of aggression
- Social rejection is not bullying unless it includes deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

2.5 CYBERBULLYING

Examples of cyberbullying include:

- Taking humiliating pictures of another learner and sharing them with others.
- Verbally abusing another learner by text message or posting demeaning comments on social media platforms
- Spreading rumors about a student on social media platforms.
- Repeatedly sending emails to intimidate or threaten an individual

Cyberbullying needs to be monitored closely in College since it:

- Can be used as an extension of face-to-face bullying that might be taking place.
- Can enter the home/personal space which is usually considered 'safe'.
- Can involve a large number of people.
- Can take place across age groups/ genders.
- Can include unauthorized, widespread publication of private information or images.
- Can be used for manipulating others

- Can become the reason for emotional/psychological stress

2.6 PROMOTING THE POSITIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AT COLLEGE (ANTI BULLYING)

All those working in TMUC understand the increasingly significant role that technology plays in people's lives and education. As such, we are committed to ensuring that everyone in College understands the benefits and the risks associated with technology. All TMUC teachers and education managers must strive to equip our learners with the knowledge and skills to be informed and careful users of technology.

Therefore, a proactive approach to preventing cyberbullying in TMUC means:

- Teachers using technology in constructive ways in their teaching.
- Providing training to teachers in using technology to develop their practice creatively.
- Support learners' safe and responsible use of technology while in College.
- Ensuring all learners understand the importance of password security

3.0 COLLEGE STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

3.1 PREVENTION

TMUC management should create an environment at College where individuals feel safe, care about each other, value and respect each other.

- Talks about harassment/bullying can be given throughout the academic year.
- College should ensure, clearly-written information for learners about whom to talk to if they have concerns about harassment or bullying.
- Regular College staff training on identifying and dealing with bullying and harassment.
- Target attention/ supervision by staff on key times and locations in College.

It is our aim to work towards the prevention of sexual harassment and bullying at educational institutions. Transforming the existing culture entails catering to all kinds of harassment and bullying, regardless of their severity.

We would like your valuable feedback on our policy for curbing sexual harassment and bullying at TMUC and any advice and guidance in this regard will be appreciated. We firmly believe that all complaints lodged will proceed with confidentiality as we duly respect the privacy of all parties affiliated with TMUC.