

ISTANBUL TOPKAPI UNIVERSITY

POLICY DOCUMENT FOR PREVENTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT

Istanbul Topkapi University (hereinafter referred to as the University) aims to create an environment free from any kind of sexual harassment or assault based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other basic discrimination or exploitation or any other reason so as to foster personal, intellectual and academic development. Members of the University are also responsible for exercising due care in the creation and maintenance of such an environment. In institutional environments where hierarchical relations are dominant, due to the difficulties of those who have been sexually harassed or attacked in expressing them, sexual harassment and assault are often rendered invisible and both the individual and institutional environment suffer. Accordingly, the University ensures that sexual harassment and assault shall not be ignored under any circumstance, all members of the university recognize and acknowledge this.

Genderism and gender-based discrimination, which we encounter in all areas of social life, are a widespread but often invisible consequence of the inequality that feeds on and reproduces male-dominated structures. Within this context, sexual harassment and assault are kinds of discrimination and violence that arise from gender inequality. While it is clear that they most visibly target women, sexual harassment and assault can also be directed at men or occur between individuals of the same sex. In addition, people of different gender identities and sexual orientations (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, etc.) can be affected by sexual harassment and assault.

Sexual harassment and assault within the university environment can adversely affect not only the working, learning and academic lives of individuals, but also their daily lives, mental and physical health, and even cause long-term traumatic effects on them. Moreover, sexual harassment or assault are a violation of rights and constitute crime in which the victims can be adversely affected in a variety of ways.

The Policy Document for Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Assault (hereinafter referred to as the Document) aims to empower individuals against sexual harassment and assault and contribute to the process that will develop instruments and support mechanisms to prevent and deter sexual harassment and assault by setting the principles for creating an academic and professional environment free from sexual harassment and assault, raising awareness of gender equality, creating an environment that allows victims or witnesses of sexual harassment or assault to express themselves. However, the purpose of the Document is not to strictly discipline interpersonal affairs, to prevent consensual sexual relations, to impose a specific sexual morality, to prevent freedom of expression and free discussion environment, and to involve any type of individual conflict and discomfort of sexual nature in official processes or to impose harsh sanctions on them.

Consequently, this Document, which declares the University's attitude and policy towards elimination of sexist environment, along with the Directive of Unit for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Assault, set forth the definitions and principles that will form the basis of the works of Unit for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Assault.

PROHIBITION OF DISCRIMINATION

Directive and Document shall be applied without discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or familial status, pregnancy, race, colour, ethnic origin, national origin, membership of a national minority, birth, place of residence, nationality, religion, creed, belief, language, dialect, accent, appearance, health status, disability, age, education, class, property, economic status, social or societal origin, political or philosophical opinion, status or any other basis.

DEFINITIONS

The perpetrator of sexual harassment or assault may be a stranger, as well as an acquaintance such as a spouse, a lover, a friend, a relative, or a colleague, an instructor, an administrative supervisor, etc.. Consensual emotional or sexual relations between individuals do not justify sexual harassment and assault. In such relationships, all kinds of words, attitudes or other forms of behavior of sexual nature that occur without the consent of the individual are considered as sexual harassment or assault.

Sexual Harassment

It includes all words, attitudes or other forms of behaviour of sexual nature that are performed without physical contact, not based on the consent of the individual and which do not need to be continuous.

The following examples, including but not limited to, are considered sexual harassment:

- Verbal abuse, making sexually explicit jokes or compliments or using slangs,
- Showing unusually insistent behaviour for flirting
- Disturbing a person with pornographic material, sending or showing them
- Forcing a person to engage in intimacy or sexual intercourse by threatening her/him with the use or the dissemination of audio or visual recordings without his/her consent,
- Recording and disseminating a person's sexually explicit behaviours without his/her consent,
- Asking questions or spreading rumours about a person's sexual life,
- Making discriminatory remarks or engaging in discriminatory acts about a person's gender, sexual orientation or gender identity,

- Engaging in behaviours resulting from acts of threat, blackmail, insult or similar,
- Stalking,
- Disturbing a person with unwelcome looks and gestures,
- Sending sexually explicit messages or requests through telephone, e-mail or similar media of communication,
- Disturbing a person by sending sexually explicit messages or requests via electronic media including social networks like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat or similar; or with sharing visual or audio recordings or spreading rumours about a person's sexual life without her/his consent
- Insisting on sexual intercourse

Sexual Assault

It is the violation of a person's bodily privacy with non-consensual sexual behaviour without having to be continuous.

Sexual assault can occur in two forms:

- In its first form, sexual assault occurs as a violation of the person's bodily immunity. Examples of such sexual assault include hugging, caressing, touching, tweaking cheeks, kissing, holding her hand, stroking her hair.
- In the second type of sexual assault, the body's immunity is violated by inserting a sexual organ or other object into the body, in other words rape.

Emergency

If immediate action is not taken or precautions are not considered, sexual harassment or assault cannot be prevented. In addition to this, the situation where the safety of life or the protection of the rights and freedoms of the persons, who are accepted as the applicant in the Directive, is endangered, and the possibility of these persons being harmed, and the disappearance of the evidence of sexual harassment or assault are considered as an emergency.

Persistent Tracking (Hunt)

It is any sexual attitude and behavior that creates a sense of physical or psychological fear and helplessness in the person and puts pressure on the person in a way that causes the person to worry about his/her safety, whether verbally, in writing or by using any means of communication.

Retaliation

If a person rejects any sexual or emotional offer made to her, and nevertheless both believes that she has been sexually harassed and witnesses and complains about such a situation, it is implicitly or explicitly making her work life difficult.

The following examples, including but not limited to, are considered retaliation:

- If the person exposed to retaliation is a student; downgrading, ignoring, blocking or leaving questions unanswered, rejecting academic interview requests, spreading rumors that may cause adverse effects, making it difficult or preventing access to academic and financial support (for example, scholarship, reference letter, etc.),
- If the person exposed to retaliation is an employee; preventing or ignoring promotions, hindering her professional development, rejecting professional interview requests, spreading rumors that may cause adverse effects, causing difficulties in the use of personal rights (for example, annual leave use, overtime wages, etc.), forcing her to do jobs that are not in the job description.

The Promise of Reward

It is the promise of all kinds of privileges, including receiving an award, promotion, grade or similar undeserved earnings, in case the person accepts a sexual or emotional behavior or offer. It is a promise of rewarding, expressly or impliedly, that if the person accepts a sexual behavior or offer, undeserved gains will be provided.

The following examples, including but not limited to, are considered rewarding promises:

- If the person to whom the sexual behavior or offer is made is a student; promising to increase your grade, provide academic or financial support, share exam questions,
- If the person to whom the sexual behavior or offer is made is an employee; promising to get a promotion or salary increase, to lighten the workload, to shorten the working time.

ETHICAL PROBLEMS REGARDING VOLUNTARY SEXUAL AND/OR EMOTIONAL RELATIONS BETWEEN PERSONS WITH AUTHORITARIAN RELATIONS

- Emotional and/or sexual relations between University members (according to the Directive, the academic and administrative staff of the University, subcontractor company representatives and employees, all service providers and business employees and students are evaluated within this scope) and other University members over whom they have academic, administrative or career-determining authority, even if it is based on consent, may involve wearing risks for both parties. Such relationships are likely to have conflicts of interest, abuse, and favouritism, which may damage a free and merit-based working environment.

The main responsibility for the emergence of such voluntary sexual and/or emotional relationships is the responsibility of the person who is higher in the hierarchical order. In such a case, this person is primarily obliged to assume a preventive role in the formation of such a relationship. In the case of such a relationship, the person in the higher position in the hierarchical order is expected to end the authoritarian relationship. In the termination of the authority relationship, all other appropriate and necessary measures such as transferring the student's supervision to another instructor, making the student change their class should be taken into consideration and applied.

With this document, Istanbul Topkapi University announces to the public and guarantees that sexual harassment and assault will not be ignored in any way, and to encourage people who think they have been exposed or witnessed them to take the necessary steps to apply, to increase the awareness of university members about sexual harassment and sexual assault, and to prevent such incidents, is ready and determined to make an effort and to operate an effective support and empowerment mechanism in case of such claims and applications.