

Taita College Board of Trustees

Prevention of and response to sexual harassment in the workplace

Rationale

All employees are entitled to work in a safe and inclusive workplace where people are valued and treat one another with respect. Sexual harassment is an example of unacceptable behaviour that can occur in the workplace. Sexual harassment can be a form of discrimination, and has the potential for serious consequences for individuals and agencies.

Purpose

1. To prevent sexual harassment from occurring.
2. To promote a positive workplace culture
3. To respond effectively to instances of sexual harassment.

Delegations

1. Managing the performance and behaviour of staff is delegated to the Principal.
2. Managing complaints against staff, unless against the Principal him or herself, is delegated to the Principal.

Defining sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome or offensive sexual behaviour that is repeated or is significant enough to have a harmful effect on an individual's employment, job performance or job satisfaction. 'Unwelcome' means behaviours that are not solicited or invited and are regarded by a person as undesirable or offensive at the time.

Some examples of behaviours that can constitute sexual harassment if they meet the definition above:

- touching, hugging, encroaching on someone's personal space or kissing
- staring or leering
- insults or taunts of a sexual nature
- unwanted invitations to go out on dates
- requests for sexual favours, or pressure for sex or other sexual acts
- repeated or inappropriate advances on email or social networking websites
- intrusive questions or comments about a person's private life, clothing or physical appearance
- sexually explicit pictures, posters, gifts, emails or text messages
- sexual gestures, indecent exposure, or inappropriate display of the body
- sexually suggestive comments or jokes, or other forms of inappropriate language
- stalking or sexual assault.

Examples of what may not be sexual harassment include:

- friendly banter, mutually acceptable jokes
- occasional appropriate compliments
- behaviour based on mutual attraction.

Guidelines

1. Clear expectations for staff behaviour will be developed, documented and shared among staff through a code of conduct or similar.
2. A procedure (see Appendix 1) for responding to allegations of sexual harassment will guide the response to any allegation of sexual harassment.
3. In the case of a complaint, as an employer, Taita College has an equal obligation to both a complainant and a respondent to uphold their rights and provide support.
4. Any formal actions taken in response to an allegation of sexual harassment will be in line with the provisions of the relevant collective agreement.

Documentation

The Board expects the following documents to be prepared, kept up to date and used to guide the school's practice in this area. These documents will be available to the board on request.

- clear expectations for staff behaviour at Taita College
- complaint processes
- systems for reporting and recording complaints.

Monitoring and review

Compliance with this policy will be evidenced by:

- an annual report to the board on formal complaints received including a non-identifying general indication of the nature of the complaint
- biennial staff workplace survey.

The policy will be reviewed as part of the triennial review cycle.

Approved by the Board/Commissioner

19 July 2017



Commissioner

1 Appendix 1: Procedure for response to allegation of sexual harassment

