



Title: Misconduct and Sexual Harassment Policy

Code: GU-PL81MSHP

Version: 1.1

Date of Issue: 2025

Effective Date: February 2025

Approval Authority: Board of Trustees

Document Owner: University President

Review: The policy is subject to a periodic review every 4 years or in a shorter cycle as per amendments of university policies

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the university provides a safe and positive environment for the university community where they either work or study. This policy includes both in-person interactions and those conducted through indirect means, such as correspondence, phone calls, Learning management system, social media impacting the students. The policy sets out the principles of addressing any form of bullying, harassment, discrimination case in terms of disclosure and reporting.

2. Scope

This document applies to everyone associated with the university including students, staff, contractors, suppliers, and visitors that covers incidents occurring both on and off campus that are connected to university-related activities. The policy holds good for all students registered in local and franchised programs.

3. Acronyms

GU	Gulf University
HoD	Head of Department
SSU	Student Services Unit
A & R	Admission & Registration Unit

4. Definitions

Harassment: Harassment covers a wide range of behaviors of an offensive nature. It is commonly understood as behavior that demeans, humiliates, and intimidates a person, and it is characteristically identified by its unlikelihood in terms of social and moral reasonableness.

Discrimination: Discrimination is the unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, or sexual orientation.

Violence: Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, or psychological harm.

Sexual Violence: Sexual violence is any kind of sexual activity or act (including online) that was unwanted or involved one or more of the following: pressure, manipulation, bullying, intimidation, threats, deception and force.

Bullying: Bullying is when people repeatedly and intentionally use words or actions against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing. These actions are usually done by people who have more influence or power over someone else, or who want to make someone else feel less powerful or helpless.

Student: Any person currently studying in the university in any undergraduate or postgraduate program. Those who completed the study is excluded in this definition. If the status shows suspended/withdrawal for temporary period for the person s/he is included within this definition.

Consent: Consent is an unambiguous, affirmative and conscious decision by each person to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity. Consent is willing, positive cooperation in an act or the expression of a desire to engage in an activity. True consent isn't coerced by force, threats or intimidation.

Coercion or Force: Coercion involves compelling a party to act in an involuntary manner through the use of threats, including threats to use force against that party. It involves a set of forceful actions which violate the free will of an individual in order to induce the desired response. These actions may include extortion, blackmail, or even torture and sexual assault.

5. Policy Statement

5.1 The university commits that every student has the right to engage in campus life free from intimidation, discrimination, victimization, or bullying. Respect means creating an environment where everyone is appreciated, supported by their peers, and where any form of harassment is unacceptable.

5.2 GU acknowledges that taking action against bullying, harassment, discrimination, or violence involves complex decisions with consideration of diverse perspectives. This requires tolerance and diversity to understand how actions affect others with empathy.

5.3 GU is committed to encourage students and staff to help prevent all forms of bullying, harassment, discrimination, and violence, by reporting any incident they witness or experience. The university is committed to investigating and taking appropriate action in line with this policy.

5.4 GU is committed to handle each case of misconduct with fairness and proportionality with opportunity to be heard from reporting person and the person

responding with suitable support and guidance. The decision shall be taken based on factual evidence and objectivity.

- 5.5 While investigating any case of violation, the university shall consider the actions and understanding of the students in fair and unbiased manner. However, the reporting incident shall include substantial evidence for informed decision making. Staff involved in investigating such cases shall maintain confidentiality and consider the sensitivity of the matter.
- 5.6 The university commits to inform the parties about the outcome of the disclosure/report after appropriate investigation.
- 5.7 The university ensures that a student who makes a disclosure or report of sexual harassment, misconduct or violence shall receive appropriate support from SSU.
- 5.8 If a student reports bullying, harassment, discrimination, or violence to the police, the university might pause its own investigation until any criminal inquiries and legal proceedings are completed. However, if the police choose not to proceed, are unable to, or haven't yet begun, this does not automatically prevent the university from carrying out its own investigation. The University might also decide to continue its investigation alongside a police inquiry, provided it does not interfere with the legal process.
- 5.9 GU acknowledges the need for privacy when incidents of sexual harassment, bullying, discrimination, or violence are reported. However, it is generally not possible to investigate third-party or anonymous reports involving named individuals. While confidentiality will be upheld on a case-by-case basis the university may share information in exceptional cases to protect someone from harm or to prevent a crime.
- 5.10 The university focuses on spreading a culture that is free from sexual violence and harassment by promoting awareness and providing training initiatives.
- 5.11 The university recognizes its legal responsibility to take appropriate measures to prevent sexual harassment of its staff and is committed to fostering a positive and inclusive work environment.

6. Policy Principles

- 6.1 The student shall submit the disclosure or the report against any form of misconduct and harassment to head of SSU provided the incident happened in

the main campus. If the incident happened outside the main campus, the reporting/disclosure shall be to the HoD. Head of SSU and HoD after initial investigation, shall refer to the Student Disciplinary Committee for detailed investigation.

- 6.2 The student shall have the option to file a formal report. This serves as an official way to raise a complaint about another student or staff member, which shall then be investigated and might lead to actions being taken or appropriate interventions.
- 6.3 If the formal report is made by the student against the misconduct of a staff, the matter shall be referred to the Staff Disciplinary Committee.
- 6.4 The Student Disciplinary Committee/Staff Disciplinary Committee shall conduct meeting involving reporting party and the responding party to ensure detailed investigation if the initial mediation fails to resolve the issue. The committee shall invite the witness/witnesses of the incidents in the meeting if applicable.
- 6.5 The members in the Disciplinary Committee must not have conflict of interest to investigate the reported case. Otherwise, adhoc investigation committee shall be formed by the President of the University.
- 6.6 Depending on the seriousness of the misconduct and the severity, risk assessment shall be conducted by the Head of Admission and Registration Unit to avoid future incidents of misconduct and take precautionary measures.
- 6.7 Within 1 week of the incident, the disclosure or the reporting shall take place. The investigation shall be completed within 15 working days after the reporting/disclosure of the incident.
- 6.8 The investigation team shall identify the actions to be taken and recommendations or sanctions to prevent future incidents to the Student Disciplinary Committee/Staff Disciplinary Committee.
- 6.9 Final report shall be submitted to the Head of Admission and Registration Unit, Head of SSU and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- 6.10 If a student is unhappy with the outcome of the investigation, they may submit a written appeal to the Head of Admission and Registration Unit within seven working days of receiving the decision. The matter shall be sent to Vice President for Academic Affairs if there are valid grounds for appeal.

7. Responsibilities

Academic and administrative staff are responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this policy.

Heads of Departments are responsible for:

- ensuring that all faculty members are fully informed of this policy.
- appropriate implementation of this policy.

Students are responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this policy.

Head of A & R Unit and Head of SSU are responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this policy.

University Policy Development and Review Committee is responsible for:

- systematic review of the effectiveness of this policy.

8. Related Policies

- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Whistle blowing Policy
- Anti-slavery Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

9. Related References and Standards

BQA	Institutional Reviews Handbook
HEC	Academic Regulations and Resolutions