



SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Responsibility

All employees, contractors, and students

Policy

Sexual harassment is discrimination and is against the law. Story Institute will not tolerate sexual harassment of or by employees, contractors or students.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

1. Sexual harassment in the workplace is an abuse of power.
2. Sexual harassment is an unwelcome comment or conduct of sexual nature that may lead to adverse consequences for the person who is being harassed.
3. Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Unwanted physical contact
 - b. Sexual advances
 - c. Requests for sexual favours
 - d. Displays of pornographic, sexist, or other offensive material (e.g. graffiti or pictures)
 - e. Practical jokes that result in embarrassment or insult
 - f. Suggestive or offensive comments or gestures, including leering and offensive staring, emphasizing sexuality, sexual identity or sexual orientation.
4. Any sexually-oriented conduct – verbal, physical, or by innuendo – constitutes sexual harassment when:
 - a. Submission to such conduct becomes either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
 - b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions.
 - c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with work performance.
 - d. Such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.



5. Sexual harassment is not limited to men harassing women, but also covers women harassing men, and harassment between men and harassment between women, or between anyone who identifies with any gender, for that matter.
6. The intent of Story Institute's harassment policy is to protect all its students, employees, and contractors and not to constrain the normal social interaction between people.
7. Sexual harassment may be perpetrated by a person in authority such as a supervisor, or by a co-worker, non-instructor, or non-administrator, or non-support worker such as a client, a student, or a contractor of Story Institute, or by members of the public.
8. Story Institute's sexual harassment policy applies not only during work hours and on Story Institute's premises, but also to work-related settings such as conventions, shows and business social events outside of normal working hours. It also applies to unwelcome telephone calls or visits to a person's home, if the harasser is in some way connected to Story Institute.

Complaint Procedures

The following measures and informal actions can often prevent or resolve problem situations:

1. Set a good example. Don't participate in or ignore discrimination or harassment.
2. Approach employees if something is suspected. Symptoms of harassment or discrimination may include: reduced productivity, changes in behaviour, rumours, increased sick leave, increased resignations, or sudden change in performance evaluations.
3. Discuss the situation with the alleged harasser. They may be unaware that their behaviour is offensive. Even if the allegations are denied, the discussion should be treated as a warning that inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated.
4. Keep a confidential record in an Incident Form of all the discussions with the victim and alleged harasser. A copy will be placed in the school's Incident Form File, and the original will be placed in the Student/Employee/Contractor File.
5. All employees have the right to file a formal complaint as outlined below. Also, all employees have the right to contact the British Columbia Council of Human Rights and file a formal complaint of discrimination.



Formal Complaint Procedures

1. If informal attempts at resolving the problem are not appropriate or prove ineffective, a formal complaint and investigation might be required.
2. Right to Complain: Anyone has the right to complain about a situation that they believe to be harassment; there will be no reprisals for doing so. Disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal for cause, shall be taken against any employee who retaliates or attempts to retaliate against a complaint.
3. Who May Complain: Generally, in most situations, complaints will be filed by the victim who alleges harassment or discrimination. However, complaints may also be made by a group of people who may have been subjected to the same offensive treatment, by co-workers who witnessed the incident(s), or by a third party complaining on behalf of the victim.
4. Reporting a Complaint: Any complaint regarding harassment will be made immediately in writing to the Senior Educational Administrator (unless the complaint is against the Senior Educational Administrator), in which case the complaint should be made in writing to the President. If the Complainant feels uncomfortable approaching either the President or Senior Educational Administrator they may make their complaint to any other Director. The complaint will be kept in strict confidence. If, after an investigation of the complaint it is determined that harassment has occurred, disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal for cause, will be taken.

Investigator's Responsibilities

1. The Investigator will be appointed by the Senior Educational Administrator (unless the complaint is against the Senior Educational Administrator, in which case the Investigator will be appointed by the President or any other Director). It is the role of the investigator to seek the truth and make a judgment in a discreet and impartial manner. If the Complainant specifically requests that a female member of staff be included in the investigation process, then the Investigator and the Complainant shall designate a mutually agreed-upon female employee to be Co-Investigator. If anyone at a Director level or higher on the organizational chart is being investigated, they have the right to request an independent third-party investigation and this will be at the expense of the institution.



2. The investigation will be carried out with strict confidentiality. However, it must be stressed that confidentiality does not equate to anonymity. Anonymous complaints cannot be investigated. An alleged harasser has the right to know who has charged them with harassment. During the course of the investigation, it may be necessary to confide to persons interviewed the name(s) of the alleged harasser and/or the victim.
3. The Investigator will conduct interviews to validate or invalidate the alleged harassment with the Complainant, the alleged harasser, co-workers, supervisory personnel or other persons, as they deem necessary.
4. The investigator will report their findings to the Senior Educational Administrator via the Incident Form. If the investigator finds that the harassment has taken place, the Senior Educational Administrator will take such disciplinary action as they deem appropriate to the degree of harassment and the consequences of such harassment that have occurred; such disciplinary action may include any remedy up to and including immediate dismissal for cause.
5. If the Investigator finds that harassment has not taken place, they shall advise the Complainant, the alleged harasser, and the Senior Educational Administrator of Story Institute accordingly.

Pursuance of Other Remedies

1. Once all internal avenues of complaint and investigation have been exhausted, should the Complainant be dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they have the right to file a complaint with the BC Human Rights Commission (604.660.6811).
2. A private, non-profit group, the BC Human Rights Coalition, exists to ensure that citizens of B.C. get the protection against discrimination to which they are entitled. They may be reached at (604.689.8474). This organization can provide information and referrals, emotional assistance, accompaniment to interviews with the employer and/or the B.C. Council of Human Rights and any hearings that may follow, as well as decision-making assistance.
3. A Complainant may file a complaint to the B.C. Human Rights Commission while the harassment is taking place, or within six months of the date they have resigned or have been dismissed. This can be done by submitting a written complaint or by going in person to the B.C. Human Rights Commission.

Based on the evidence and how strong the case is, a human rights investigator will try to negotiate a settlement with the employer. This could involve reinstatement, a formal apology or a cash settlement to cover lost wages and/or emotional costs. If the employer denies the accusation and the case is strong, it will proceed to a formal hearing. The Commission may provide the Complainant with legal assistance.