P22-23/060

*Development of an anti-sexual harassment policy and procedure*

**Background**

Sexual harassment affects many in the workplace and as such is also an issue for trade unions. The [Wales Trades Union Congress (WTUC)](https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/Sexual%20Harassment%20Toolkit%20-%20English%20%281%29.pdf) has written:

“Whilst anyone can experience violence and harassment, unequal status and power relations in society and at work often result in women being far more exposed to violence and harassment. Sexual harassment is such a lasting, pervasive issue in workplaces that over one in two women have experienced it. These experiences are often compounded by racism, homophobia [and transphobia] and ableism and are regularly minimised, excused or not believed when reported. Experiencing sexual harassment at work impacts on mental health and wellbeing, job security and career progression and is a major barrier to workplace safety.”

Sexual harassment is largely about abuse of power. As workers in a university, we understand that there are a range of power dynamics and hierarchies that everyone must navigate. These can occur between junior and senior staff; between casualised and secure staff; between staff and students; or between students themselves, to provide a few examples.

Tackling sexual violence and harassment is [a priority for UCU](https://www.ucu.org.uk/sexualviolence) nationally, and Cardiff UCU has started to take steps to advance these aims by recruiting a specific sexual harassment contact and undertaking training. The WTUC and the [Labour Research Department (LRD)](https://www.lrd.org.uk/downloads/tackling-sexual-harassment-work-lrd-guide) have produced detailed guides of good practice for tacking sexual harassment in the workplace. They emphasise the importance of having specific policies and procedures for preventing and dealing with sexual harassment, and that these should have a trauma-informed approach.

**The branch notes:**

* That public sector employers should comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to advance equality;
* That Cardiff University has [recently been recognised](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/view/2683621-recognition-for-commitment-to-health%2C-wellbeing-and-safety) for compliance with new international guidance standard ISO45003, which covers [psychosocial workplace hazards](https://www.comcare.gov.au/safe-healthy-work/prevent-harm/psychosocial-hazards) such as sexual harassment, bullying and traumatic events;
* That Cardiff University does not have a separate policy that covers sexual harassment, or a procedure for what a member of staff should do if they find themselves facing this issue;
* That Cardiff University has a clear procedure and dedicated disclosure team for students affected by sexual harassment.

**Members instruct** the branch to work with Cardiff University to develop an anti-sexual harassment policy that aims to prevent incidents from happening, as far as is possible. Alongside this should be a clear procedure for staff to raise concerns and get support if they find themselves the victim of sexual harassment. These policies and procedures should be trauma-informed and designed according to the examples of good practice outlined by WTUC and LRD. Roll-out of the policies should be accompanied by appropriate training for all staff.

Motion proposed by Laurence Totelin (Cardiff UCU EDI Officer) and seconded by Joanna Chojnicka (Cardiff UCU Sexual Harassment Contact)