CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Procedures for Handling
Informal Sexual Harassment Complaints

1. A complaint will be handled informally when a complainant prefers that informal actions be taken to stop the harassment at the earliest possible stage instead of requesting an investigation into his/her case. In general, informal action may be suitable for minor and single incidents of sexual harassment but not for more serious and repeated acts of sexual harassment.

2. One of the following designated complaint recipients shall become the Subject Officer of the case:

   (a) the Director of Human Resources (or nominee) when the alleged harasser is a staff member; or

   (b) the Dean of Students (or nominee) when the alleged harasser is a student at or below undergraduate level; or

   (c) the Dean of Graduate Studies (or nominee) when the alleged harasser is a student at postgraduate level.

   The nominee shall be chosen from Members of the Committee Against Sexual Harassment (CASH). In appropriate circumstances or at the request of the complainant, the gender of the delegated Subject Officer should be taken into consideration. All complaints of sexual harassment will be received and handled in a confidential manner and any information relating to a complaint of sexual harassment will only be disclosed on a strict need-to-know basis.

3. On receiving an informal complaint of sexual harassment, the Subject Officer should take preventive or remedial measures to address the situation as soon as possible and no later than two weeks after receiving a complaint, e.g. to communicate with the alleged harasser on behalf of the complainant, pointing out that his/her behaviour is deemed unwelcome and should be stopped. Such informal action can be particularly useful when the party concerned does not realize that certain behaviour is offensive to the recipient.

4. The complainant shall write to the Subject Officer to withdraw the complaint within one month if the complaint can be resolved informally. Should the complainant fail to make a written withdrawal of the complaint within one month, the Subject Officer shall write to the complainant to confirm the resolution. A flow chart showing the process is at the Appendix II (b).

5. On conclusion of the case, the Subject Officer shall report to the Chairperson of CASH in writing, giving a brief account of the complaint and measures taken to resolve the complaint. The Chairperson of CASH, as assisted by the Secretary of CASH, shall maintain records of complaints or cases handled for statistical purposes and report to the President on an annual basis.
6. If the complainant requests an investigation into his/her allegation, the complaint should be dealt with in a formal manner according to the procedures laid down in Appendix III (a).
Appendix II (b)

Flow Chart on Handling Informal Sexual Harassment Complaints

Informal complaint received by Subject Officer

As soon as possible and no later than 2 weeks

Take preventive or remedial measures, e.g. convey the message to the alleged harasser that his/her acts are unwelcome and should be stopped

Yes

Case resolved?

Within 1 month

Complainant to withdraw complaint / Subject Officer to write to complainant to confirm the resolution

No

and complainant requests an investigation

Procedures for handling formal sexual harassment complaint

Subject Officer to report the case to the Chairperson of CASH

Note

The Subject Officer will be
- the Director of Human Resources (or nominee) when the alleged harasser is a staff member; or
- the Dean of Students (or nominee) when the alleged harasser is a student at or below undergraduate level; or
- the Dean of Graduate Studies (or nominee) when the alleged harasser is a student at postgraduate level.