

Resource: Workplace Harassment

Every employee has a right to work in an environment free from harassment. According to Humber's Human Rights and Harassment Policy harassment is defined as engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

Harassment can include visual representations, electronic messages including emails and social media posts, written messages, and verbal and/or physical conduct. Some examples of Harassment are:

- unwelcome remarks, jokes, slurs, innuendoes or taunting;
- hazing, stalking or shunning;
- the repeated mistreatment of one employee or student, targeted by one or more employees or students with a malicious mix of humiliation, intimidation and sabotage of performance (bullying);
- displaying derogatory or offensive pictures, graffiti or materials either through printed copy or personal computer;
- verbal abuse;
- insulting gestures or practical jokes which cause embarrassment or awkwardness;
- unauthorized and/or unnecessary physical contact; and/or
- an impassioned, collective campaign by co-workers to exclude, punish and humiliate a targeted worker.

Harassment can be Code-based harassment or Workplace Harassment (see definitions for Code-based harassment and Workplace Harassment definition below).

Code-based harassment is Harassment wherein any of the Prohibited Grounds identified in the Code is a factor for the Harassment.

OHSa defines Workplace Harassment as engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome or workplace sexual harassment. Workplace sexual harassment means engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome. Workplace harassment also includes what is often called psychological harassment or personal harassment. The comments or conduct typically happen more than once. They could occur over a relatively short period of time (for example, during the course of one day) or over a longer period of time (weeks, months or years). However, there may be situations where the conduct happens only once.

Sexual harassment will be addressed in its own resource.

Workplace harassment is not:

- Proper exercise of management's authority (even if you disagree)
- Performance management
- Disagreements between co-workers

Responsibilities in a Respectful Workplace

Everyone should:

- Behave appropriately in the workplace
- Report inappropriate behaviour
- Participate actively in resolutions
- Live the principles of respect in the workplace

If you feel you have experienced or witnessed harassment, and feel comfortable and safe doing so, you are encouraged to try and resolve the matter on your own and advise the person(s) that the behaviour is unwelcome and needs to stop. Take notes.

If you do not feel comfortable approaching the person(s), or if the matter is not resolved, approach your manager/supervisor, your union and/or email humanrights@humber.ca