



RIVERMOUNT COLLEGE

Realising the Potential Within

8.02.01 ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to protect students and employees from sexual harassment.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to staff, students, volunteers, visitors and contractors of Rivermount College.

RESPONSIBILITY

Principal reporting to the Board of Directors

LEGISLATION AND REFERENCES

[Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 \(Qld\)](#)

[Sex Discrimination Act 1984 \(Cth\)](#)

Anti-Discrimination Policy 08.04.01

Child Protection Policy 08.01.01

Code of Behaviour Policy – Students 05.01.01

Code of Conduct Policy – Staff 03.07.01

Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedure 03.17.01

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POLICY STATEMENT

All students and employees at Rivermount College have the right to learn and work in an environment free from sexual harassment. The College will provide a fair and safe learning and teaching environment where all students and employees have equal opportunities.

The College is committed to taking action to protect students and employees from sexual harassment and to responding appropriately should such behaviour occur, including possible discipline. Any instances of sexual harassment should be reported under the College *Dispute Resolution Policy*.

In particular, and in accordance with the legislation, it is College policy that:

- An employee must not sexually harass anyone including another employee, a student (existing or potential) or a student at another school.
- An adult student¹ must not sexually harass another student or employee or a student or employee at another school

DEFINITIONS

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome and uninvited comment, attention, contact or behaviour of a sexual nature, that an individual or witness finds humiliating, offensive or intimidating. It can be verbal, physical, written or visual.

Sexual harassment has nothing to do with mutual attraction or consenting friendships.

A person sexually harasses another person if:

- a) the person makes an unwelcome sexual advance, or an unwelcome request for sexual favours, to the person harassed; or
- b) engages in other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in relation to the person harassed;
- c) in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated the possibility that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Sexual harassment can take various forms and may be obvious or indirect, physical or verbal.

Examples of Sexual Harassment may include:

- the distribution or display of offensive pictures or written material, including by electronic distribution
- repeated unwelcome requests for social outings or dates
- offensive comments about a person's physical appearance, dress or private life
- jokes, intrusive questioning, messages or telephone calls of a sexual nature
- direct propositioning or subtle pressure for sexual favours
- leering, patting, pinching, touching or unnecessary familiarity

¹ An adult student means a student who has attained the age of 16 years.

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- indecent exposure, sexual assault or rape
- spreading rumours about someone's sex life

Some forms of sexual harassment, such as assault, physical molestation, stalking, sexual assault and indecent exposure, are also criminal offences and should be reported to the police.

Sexual Harassment may occur:

- between students
- between staff members and students - from a staff member to a student or from a student to a staff member.
- between staff members
- from a visitor/contractor or to a visitor/contractor of the College.

Anyone may be sexually harassed, but it happens more to girls than boys.

Sexual Harassment can cause:

- poor study performance
- academic results that do not reflect ability or effort
- absenteeism due to stress
- loss of self-confidence or self-esteem

How Do I know If My Behaviour Is Causing Offence?

Sexual harassment is often unintended. If you are not sure about your behaviour, you can:

- carefully watch the effect of your actions and words on other people and consider whether they are really appreciating your behaviour or just pretending to because they are embarrassed.
- check your behaviour and language by asking if it is offensive or inappropriate.
- stop behaving in that way.
- apologise, if you are in doubt.
- always treat other people as equals instead of as possible objects of sexual attention.
- discuss your behaviour with someone who has an understanding of the issues.

Victimisation

A person is victimised if threatened, harassed, harmed or subjected to any form of detriment.

In relation to sexual harassment it is against the law to victimise a person who:

- has made a complaint
- intends to make a complaint
- acts as a witness
- intends to act as a witness
- supports a victim
- intends to support a victim

RESPONSIBILITIES

College Responsibilities

The College acknowledges its responsibility to provide an environment free from sexual harassment and will undertake the following steps to prevent and appropriately respond to any instances of sexual harassment:

- Develop and implement a sexual harassment policy to assist in preventing any instances of sexual harassment

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- Educate and train employees to assist in preventing any instances of sexual harassment and to appropriately respond to any instances of sexual harassment
- Establish appropriate grievance and complaints procedures via its *Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedures* to appropriately respond to any instances of sexual harassment
- Remove any discriminatory or offensive materials, rules and practices to assist in preventing any instances of sexual harassment
- Encourage employees and students to contribute to a healthy workplace culture to assist in preventing any instances of sexual harassment

Student and Employee Responsibilities

All students and employees have a responsibility not to engage in sexual harassment against any person.

As employees, all staff/teachers have a duty to ensure that any sexual harassment brought to their attention or personally witnessed, is addressed as soon as possible.

What Can You Do If You Are Being Sexually Harassed?

If you believe that you are being sexually harassed, you can:

- tell the person who is harassing you that you don't like it and that you want it to stop.
- talk it over with your friends or your parents.
- talk it over with a teacher you feel comfortable with or one of the people named below.

Employees or students who believe that they are sexually harassed should make it known that the comments, attention, contact or behaviour is unwelcome and offensive. If the sexual harassment continues, or if you are unable or unwilling to handle the matter you should contact any of the following:

Primary School	Secondary School
Deputy Principal/Head of Primary School	Head of Secondary School
Wellbeing Coordinator / Counsellor	Wellbeing Coordinator / Counsellor
Assistant Head of Primary School	Director of Middle Years Learning
Director of Early Years Learning	Year Level Coordinators

IMPLEMENTATION

The College takes reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment including the establishment of this policy and its regular promotion via staff professional development days and at student assemblies.

Students are regularly reminded to speak with a member of the Wellbeing Team or senior management if they feel sexually harassed or unsafe in any way.

COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING

The College utilises the *Dispute Resolution Policy & Procedure* to address sexual harassment complaints and keep appropriate records. Complaints will be monitored by the College's Executive Management Team.

The College will report any criminal offences to the police.

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