

AZERBAIJAN STATE OIL AND  
INDUSTRY UNIVERSITY



# Anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policy



## **Section 1**

### **1.1. Introduction**

Harassment and discrimination are defined as differential treatment based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, marital/parental status, disability, or genetic information. Azerbaijan State Oil and Industry University evaluates the definition and process for dealing with harassment and discrimination on campus and distributes it with both male and female members to provide a safe work environment. ASOIU defines several terms that can lead to crises in the

learning environment, such as harassment, abuse of power, religious discrimination, exploitation, personal sexual tendencies, and abuse.

### **1.2. Current situation**

#### **The present scenario is described below:**

- \* Students can contact the Rector directly through the website to report any wrongdoing, including harassment and discrimination.
  - \* Students can report misconduct, including harassment and discrimination, in person or in writing to the appropriate unit.
  - \* The Scientific Council endorsed the Ethic Code for Academicians and Employees. Any harassment or discrimination is considered a breach of the Code's requirements. The Disciplinary Committee's judgment requires imposing punishment or taking preventative steps.
  - \* The Disciplinary Committee audits infractions of Code rules, such as harassment and discrimination, and renders enforceable rulings.
  - \* Provides harassment and discrimination training to students through lectures and other workshops.
  - \* During the examination time, the Appeal Commission is constituted to resolve student issues.
  - \* Conduct monthly student surveys and take preventive measures based on the results. Investigate harassment and discrimination accusations promptly and thoroughly. Take prompt action and report any concerns to appropriate authorities.
  - \* Violations of this policy may result in punishments such as student expulsion or worker termination. Employees who experience harassment or discrimination should report it immediately.
  - \* If there is a reasonable suspicion of harassment, the University may conduct an investigation, even if no formal complaint is filed.
  - \* Acts that discriminate against university community members
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based on age, color, gender, identity, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, or weight are prohibited, even if not illegal.

### **1.3. Legal base:**

The Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Policy (AHAD) implements laws, decrees, and orders issued by the President and Cabinet of Ministries of the Azerbaijan Republic, including the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Social Service, the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Gender Equality, the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Prevention of Domestic Violence, and the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The AHAD Policy aims to promote dignity and respect for all persons at the University, regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, marital and parental status, handicap, or genetic information.

## **Section 2**

### **2.1. Objectives of the AHAD Policy are as follows:**

- \* Prevent discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, marital status, handicap, or genetic information.
- \* To develop an ethical culture and encourage diversity via an inclusive and active student-centered education system.
- \* Educate people about many sorts of harassment and discrimination.
- \* To provide a safe atmosphere for all individuals.
- \* To conduct fair and unbiased investigations.
- \* Providing continuing trainings and seminars
- \* Promoting dignity and responsibility
- \* Making events accessible to all students, regardless of socioeconomic position or background, and creating a welcoming environment for guests.

### **2.2. Sexual harassment at work**

Sexual harassment includes the following behaviors:

Physical behaviors include sexual contact or rape, kissing without consent, caressing personal regions, and inappropriate handholding.

Verbal activities include sending sexual jokes via email or social media, as well as making personal and inquisitive comments about others' clothing and attractiveness.

Nonverbal behaviors include looking at another person from head to toe,

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making sexual gestures, making sexual facial expressions like winking or kissing from a distance, and giving unwelcome personal presents.

Online sexual harassment refers to sexual harassment on public or private digital platforms, such as messages, postings, images, videos, and pages.

### **2.3. Psychological effect of Harassment on individuals and organization**

Harassment has negative effects on individuals, harassers, and organizations. Victims may experience loss of motivation, poor performance, stress, anxiety, depression, shock, relationship breakdown, withdrawal, sleep disorders, loss of appetite, and general weakness. Harassment can result in negative consequences such as a blemished professional record, job loss, legal issues, and emotional distress. It can also lead to social exclusion and deterioration of relationships. Harassment and discrimination at work will have negative consequences for the organization, including decreased production and performance, lower morale among employees and students, reputational damage, employee replacement, legal costs, and loss of income.

## **SECTION 3**

### **3.1. Policy purpose**

Azerbaijan State Oil and Industry University's policy protects workers against harassment, discrimination, and retribution. ASOIU will guarantee that all parties involved are aware of its rules and that any violations will be addressed and resolved accordingly.

If an employee has questions or concerns concerning these rules, they should contact the manager of the office of legal affairs and policy or a member of the personnel practices committee.

These policies cannot be utilized to exclude or separate persons based on gender or other protected characteristics from workplace social activities or conversations. Avoiding harassment by participating in discrimination or exclusion is unacceptable. ASOIU's rules and laws prohibit discrimination based on gender or other protected characteristics in terms of terms, conditions, privileges, and benefits for its members. The anti-harassment, discrimination, and retaliation rules are meant to supplement, not replace, existing ones.

### **3.2. Equal employment opportunity**

ASOIU's policy prioritizes equitable employment opportunities and a

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positive learning environment free of discrimination and harassment. Harassment is defined as verbal, written, or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual based on their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other protected characteristic under Azerbaijan laws, or that of their relatives, friends, or associates and that: a) creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work atmosphere; b) interferes with an individual's study and job performance; or c) negatively impacts employment possibilities.

Harassing behavior can take the form of epithets, slurs, threats, derogatory jokes, and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group. Harassment can occur in the workplace, on University time, or while using University facilities via e-mail, phone, text messages, or social media. ASOIU forbids any kind of discrimination or harassment.

### **3.3. Retaliation**

ASOIU supports reporting any suspected prejudice or harassment. ASOIU conducts fast and comprehensive investigations into such allegations. ASOIU does not tolerate retribution against individuals who report discrimination or harassment or cooperate in an investigation of such incidents.

The University prohibits retaliation against any member of the community who reports, opposes, participates in investigations, or requests accommodations in good faith. (This policy defines "retaliatory action" as intimidation, menace, coercion, discrimination, or unfavorable educational or job action. Rudeness does not qualify.)

#### **Retaliatory measures may include the following, depending on the situation:**

- \* Adverse actions related to job or educational programs.
- \* Unreasonably interfering with another person's academic or professional career.
- \* Stalking, harassing, or attacking others;
- \* Attempting to encourage others to take harsh action on your behalf.

#### **Options for dealing with discrimination and/or harassment**

The University encourages reporting any incidents of discrimination or harassment. If you have experienced or witnessed discrimination or harass-

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ment, you can seek help from a Confidential Resource or file a complaint. The University recognizes that deciding between these alternatives might be challenging. It is suggested to get guidance from a Confidential Resource before making any decisions.

### **Reporting an Incident of Harassment, Discrimination or Retaliation**

ASOIU promotes reporting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or status. If you suspect you have been a victim of such activity, please contact your academic mentors, faculty deans, personnel practices committee, legal office manager, or the university president.

In addition, ASOIU encourages individuals who believe they are being subjected to such conduct to promptly advise the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and to request that it be discontinued. Often this action alone will resolve the problem. ASOIU recognizes, however, that an individual may prefer to pursue the matter through complaint procedures.

### **Complaint Procedure**

If you believe you have been a victim or witnessed prohibited conduct, please contact your academic mentors, faculty deans, personnel practices committee, legal office manager, or university president.

ASOIU promotes quick reporting of complaints or concerns to prevent irreparable damage to relationships. Early reporting and assistance are most beneficial in resolving harassment situations, regardless of the reporting time.

We shall quickly investigate any reported complaints of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation. Individual interviews with parties involved and witnesses may be conducted during the investigation to gather pertinent information.

ASOIU shall preserve anonymity throughout investigations and remedial actions.

Retaliation against individuals who report or participate in investigations of harassment or discrimination is a significant violation of this policy and will result in disciplinary action. Report any acts of retaliation immediately for timely investigation and resolution.

Misconduct including harassment, discrimination, or retribution will be addressed properly. ASOIU may take appropriate disciplinary action, including training, referral to counseling, withholding promotions or pay increases, reassignment, temporary suspension without pay, or termination, depending

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on the circumstances.

If a party to a complaint disagrees with the outcome, they can appeal to ASOIU's president. The inquiry will then be reopened after consulting with the university's legal office manager.

False and malicious allegations of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, as opposed to those filed in good faith, may result in disciplinary action.

### **University commitment during the investigation**

ASOIU's Disciplinary Committee protects complainants by preventing them from meeting in university offices or lecture halls. If this is not possible, the complainant is given paid leave or temporal suspension until the investigation is completed. The complainant is also suspended from work upon receiving the complaint to prevent conflict, communication, or threats.

To protect everyone's privacy, the University Council informs the complainant and defendant of the final judgment without providing any investigation-related papers.

If a condemnation judgment is made by the Disciplinary Committee and authorized by the university council, the complainant will face sanctions unless they agree to preserve the inquiry.

If a university member attempts to influence the investigative committee's work, they will face administrative consequences, regardless of gender.

The complainant can make a concession to the investigative committee at any point of the process, which the committee can accept or reject.

All witness and complaint statements must be documented in electronic or handwritten format.

The defendant can challenge the inquiry committee's judgment by producing additional evidence. The university president must answer within three days, either rejecting or accepting the complaint.

The investigative committee may approve a settlement between the complainant and the defendant following their mutual apologies.

When anonymous complaints arrive via e-mail, the investigative committee reviews them and decides whether to investigate or ignore them based on their gravity or maliciousness.

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