

P42: SEXUAL ASSAULT & HARASSMENT POLICY

Overseer: PBC Principal

Approval Authority: PBC Board of Management

Review Schedule: 3 yearly

Next Review Due: April 2021

Review Table			
Date	Review Type <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheduled Policy amendment Admin update 	Summary of Changes	Review person/group
12/04/2018	Policy development		Hanlie van Rooyen
09/08/2018	Policy amendments	Expansion of 1.3, adjustments to 1.4, removing heading 1.6 and renumbering of 1.6.1-1.6.5	David Smith

Preambleⁱ

Perth Bible College is a community-centred, faith-based higher education provider. We believe that community is a primary means for personal transformation as well as being foundational for healthy church ministry. To facilitate this, part of our training includes being part of a transforming community.

PBC, therefore, believes that members of this community will feel safe and respected, thereby contributing to both preventing sexual assault and sexual harassment and dealing in a caring manner with incidents that may occur. The practices, policies and procedures that underwrite this belief are outlined in what follows.

1. Prevention of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment

1.1. Admissions Practices

All new applicants are assessed through three personal references from those outside the family who have known the applicants for a minimum of two years. Additionally, the acceptance of offer documentation requires all applicants to sign a commitment to comply by the College policies, procedures and Code of Conduct, and are committed to a church, thereby, demonstrating a willingness to comply to Christian values.

1.2. Building Trust Relationshipsⁱⁱ

The College values and endeavours to foster trust relationships in the student community. Opportunities that contribute to a sense of belonging to the College community are provided in the form of Growth Groups, Ministry Forums, Devotion Times, the annual College Retreat, a number of College events, and community duties.

The members of the Student Council are people who can be approached about any matters, whether within the College or personal. They have been elected to be part of the Student Council due to the trust and confidence that their fellow peers have in them as brothers and sisters in the Lord. As a group they are actively involved in current issues and concerns of students. Additionally, students may approach either their nominated faculty Growth Group leader or the College Chaplain to raise pastoral care concerns.

1.3. Pastoral Careⁱⁱⁱ (also see P25: PASTORAL DISCLOSURE and P32: STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH POLICY)

Perth Bible College is committed to caring pastorally for the students studying at the College as part of our commitment to train, equip and form people for effective Christian ministry. Pastoral care within the College environment is, amongst others, provided via faculty-supervised student Growth Groups and one on one sessions with a staff member as requested by students.

Growth Groups offer an opportunity to discuss matters of concern with a faculty member and other students, and the discussion of relational issues in a secure and confidential space. The Dean of Students/Chaplain is available in person during office hours or via mobile phone after hours, including weekends and public holidays, for all students concerns and grievances.

During any consultations with the Dean of Students/Chaplain students will be provided with accurate advice on access to personal support services, access to emergency services, health services, counselling, legal services, advocacy, and accommodation and welfare services. The Dean of Students/Chaplain will hold regular followed-up meetings with the students until such time as the situation has been resolved satisfactorily for all parties involved.

All students are required to commit to a local church for the duration of their study. Students are requested to nominate a pastor for contact for pastoral care and who may provide feedback to PBC. The senior pastor of the church will be the point of contact for PBC on matters requiring pastoral support.

1.4. Student Code of Conduct^{iv}

PBC affirms that the New Testament injunctions establish a standard of conduct for the Christian community which may differ from those of the wider community (e.g. Rom 12:1, Gal 6:16-26; Phil 2:12-18; Col 2:20-3:17; Eph 4:17-5:5; 1 Peter 2:12). As PBC is part of the Christian community, it is appropriate that the required Code of Conduct reflects the expectations of that community.

All students should advocate and practise respect for all people. Students should conduct themselves in such a way as to uphold their integrity. They should practice honesty in their dealings with all other parties. At no time should a student engage in behaviour which is of a harassing nature. This can include but is not limited to: sexual innuendo, bullying, joking at the expense of others, name calling or labelling, etc. Students should not use physical intimidation or violence in their interactions with others. Students should not respond with physical intimidation or violence even if they believe they have been provoked by others.

PBC affirms the New Testament injunction that sexual activity should be constrained within the covenant of marriage. Marriage is considered by the College as being between one man and one woman. Students should maintain their sexual purity in this regard. Outside of the covenant of marriage, students should seek to maintain relationships which respect PBC's definition of marriage and seek to uphold the sexual purity of others.

PBC does not tolerate the use or distribution of pornography. Using College facilities to view or distribute or create pornographic materials would be considered as a serious breach of this Code of Conduct. PBC students should seek to dress in an appropriate and modest manner which would not be construed as offensive (such as in t-shirt slogans/print) or overtly sexually provocative.

1.5. Online Behaviours

All students sign the Electronic Resource Policy before they commence their studies at PBC. This document outlines the college's expectations for students' online behaviours.

1.6. Equal Opportunity and Harassment^v

Perth Bible College does not discriminate in the admission and access to its programmes and activities on the basis of handicap, age, sex, marital status, pregnancy, political conviction, race, colour, national or ethnic origin or denominational affiliation. Perth Bible College does not discriminate on the basis of gender but affords equal opportunities for both men and women in service, employment, training, leadership and teaching.

1.7. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment covers a range of verbal and physical behaviour which a staff member or student experiences in relation to his/her job or studies and which is unwelcome, unsolicited and non-reciprocal and further, sexual harassment creates an uneasy, intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, which interferes with an individual's performance. It creates an atmosphere laden with sex-stereotyped attitudes and behaviours which emphasise the gender of a staff member or student over his/her work or study responsibilities.

Examples of sexual harassment are:

- touching someone's body unnecessarily in a manner which is unwelcome;
- embracing a person against his/her will;
- verbal abasement of a person which focuses on gender.

1.8. Sexist Harassment

Sexist harassment is a loose term describing gender-based teasing or other "power-play" which goes beyond benign and acceptable social limits. This occurs when one person "puts down" another person with remarks of a sexual nature. Sexist harassment does

NOT involve joking, mutually enjoyed social interaction. It involves disparaging, gender-based communication which gives offence.

Examples of sexist harassment are:

- asking personal, unwelcome questions of a sexual nature;
- “joking” and leering about another person’s appearance or sexuality;
- repeating irrelevant references to a person’s gender in the work or study situations.

1.9. The Effects of Harassment

The effects of sexual and sexist harassment are not only immediate short-term ones but have long term ramifications for the victim, irrespective of the nature of the acts of sexual harassment.

Some effects are:

- loss of confidence and self-esteem;
- decrease in job-study performance;
- anxiety, tension, depression;
- withdrawal from the course.

1.10. Taking Action

If you are being harassed, then you should follow the procedures outlined in P22: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES.

1.11. Campus Safety and Accommodation Guidelines^{vi}

College car parks are located in close proximity to the main Administration area and lecture rooms and are clearly lit in the evening. Likewise, safety is ensured as residential students live adjacent to car parks and are aware of disturbances.

The PBC campus contains a number of self-contained units, which are provided for student accommodation. Students are made aware that life on campus is a privilege and is to be seen as an integral part of their and their family’s spiritual and ministry formation. In many ministry situations, community living is part of the work situation. All students are encouraged to treat College units as they would

someone's private dwelling and respect the privacy of residents. This includes not entering these units without the invitation of the residents.

Student units contain a lounge area for the relaxation and recreation of the students living in that unit. Single students are free to invite visitors of the same sex to their units and use the lounge area for entertaining provided that the other occupants of the unit are not inconvenienced, e.g. through loud talking during study times, etc. When a single student wishes to invite a person of the opposite sex to visit their unit, whether that person be part of a group or by themselves (e.g. their mother or father), the permission of the other members of the unit is required. A single student is not to be alone in the unit with another person of the opposite sex, nor is a person of the opposite sex to be in a student's bedroom.

Residential students require the prior approval of the College Administrator for a visitor (guest, friend or family member) to stay at the College over-night.

2. Response to Incidences of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment

2.1. Policies

Students are advised of their rights and the actions they can take if they are experiencing sexual harassment or if they were the victim a critical incident such as sexual assault. They are made aware of PBC's grievance procedures during their initial interviews and on Orientation Day when they commence their studies. All policies and procedures are readily available to all prospective and enrolled students on the PBC website under the Student Portal.

Issues at PBC related to sexual harassment and abuse are addressed within the College's current framework. The following policies and procedures contain aspects of PBC's approach to dealing with incidents, that could potentially include sexual assault and sexual harassment:

- 2.1.1. P22 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES
- 2.1.2. P25 PASTORAL DISCLOSURE
- 2.1.3. P26 CRITICAL INCIDENT
- 2.1.4. P27 OVERSEAS STUDENT ENROLMENT
- 2.1.5. P32 STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH POLICY
- 2.1.6. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

ⁱ Perth Bible College 2018, Student Handbook, p. 5.

ⁱⁱ Ibid, pp. 7, 12 & 14.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid, pp. 12 & 15.

^{iv} Ibid, p. 12.

^v Perth Bible College 2017, Staff & Faculty Manual, p. 26.

^{vi} Perth Bible College 2018, Student Handbook, pp. 20-21.