

Introduction to the Policy and Bylaws on Sexual or Gender-Based Harassment and Violence (SGBV), University of Peradeniya

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“Sex” and “Gender”: What is the difference?



- Sex refers to a set of biological and physiological characteristics that one is born with or that develop later on in life at puberty.
- Gender refers to how girls and boys are socialized to embody norms, roles, and relationships that a particular society considers appropriate based on a person’s biological sex. This may include clothing and hair as well as how you walk, talk, and behave. So, gender can also be called “social gender”.



Purpose of the lecture today:

- To introduce you to the types of discrimination, harassment, and violence that you might face based on your biological sex and/or social gender; and
- To introduce you to the UOP's Policy and Bylaws on Sexual or Gender-Based Harassment and Sexual Violence (SGBV), which attempt to eliminate such harassment/violence.

Why do you need to be aware of SGBV Policy and Bylaws?

- You could become a victim of SGBV;
- Someone you know could become a victim of SGBV;
- You might be witness to an act of SGBV;
- You could be accused of SGBV.

What types of conduct are prohibited under the Policy?

- Sexual Violence;
- Sexual Harassment;
- Gender-based Harassment;
- Retaliation;
- False allegation.

What is Sexual Violence?

Physical assaults of a sexual nature include:

- Rape [in the law, rape is vaginal penetration without consent]
- Aggravated sexual assault [forced sexual acts that do not amount to rape]
- Sexual battery, etc. [forced sexual acts accompanied by bodily injuries such as biting, choking, beating, etc.]
- Attempts to carry out such acts of violence



What is Sexual Harassment?

- Any acts of harassment of a sexual nature that causes annoyance or discomfort to a person, which can be physical or mental;
- The act of harassment can be physical, verbal, gestural, visual, written, or cyber;
- A sexual act *becomes* harassment when it is *unwelcome*, especially when it is *repeated* despite the recipient indicating that it is unwelcome.



What makes a sexual *act* sexual *harassment*?

CONSENT

- Sexual activity or conduct must be based on consent.
- Lack of protest or lack of resistance does not always mean consent.
- Someone who is unconscious, physically or intellectually impaired, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs *cannot* give consent.



What Forms Does Sexual Harassment Take on Campus?

- Physical – Touching, pinching, squeezing, stalking;
- Verbal – Unwanted sexualized comments, cat-calling;
- Non-verbal – Wolf-whistling, licking one's lips, making kissing noises, sticking your tongue out; peeping through keyholes/fanlights, exhibitionism;
- Visual – Displaying posters or taking and displaying photos and videos of a sexual nature without consent;
- Written – Anonymous letters and posts to sexually slander;
- Electronic/cyber – Bullying/harassment (body-shaming/imputing sexual identities); Indiscriminate sharing of sexually-themed content/material; “Revenge porn” to blackmail or slander former partners.

What is Gender-Based Harassment?

Gender-based harassment (GBH) is when you harass someone verbally, physically, and psychologically based on stereotypes of gender-appropriate behavior, sexual orientation, or gender identity and expression.

MALE
 FEMALE
 OTHER

GBH can make the university a hostile and unfriendly place for a student because it can create 'in-groups' and 'out-groups' and make some feel like they are 'pariahs/outcasts'.



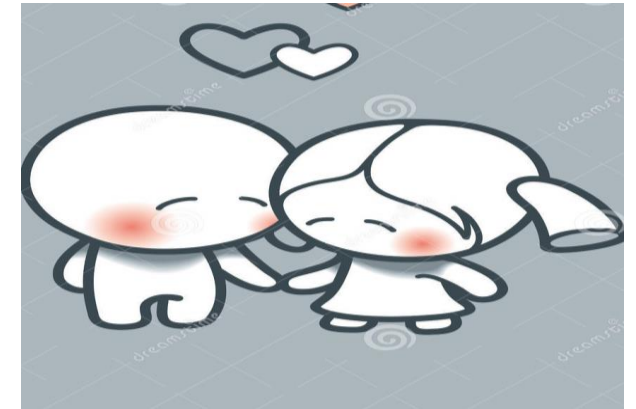
Ragging



Intimate Partner Violence at Peradeniya

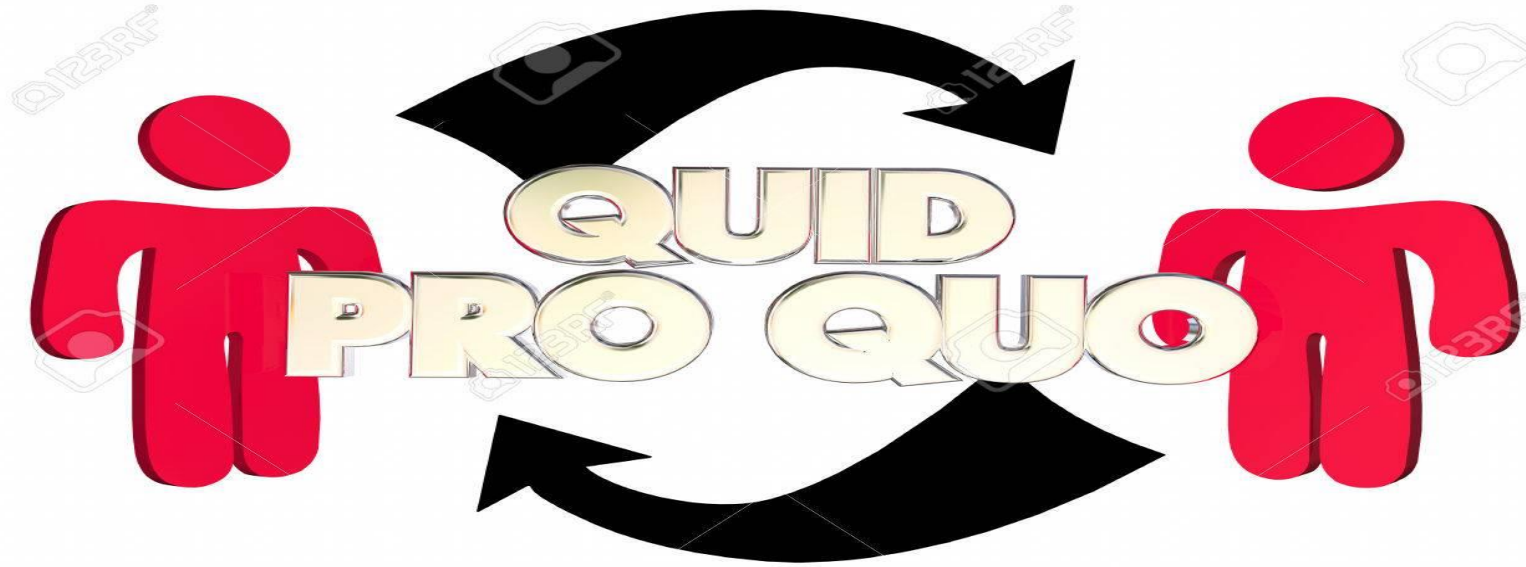
- Harm or threat of harm by a current or former partner

Physical – Punching, slapping, biting, choking, scratching, stabbing.



Sexual – Sexual intercourse or other acts *without* consent.

Psychological – Unreasonable jealousy and excessive control; Unauthorized sharing of private written and audio-video material.



“This for That” or Sexual Bribing is when someone promises a reward related to education/employment in exchange for a sexual favor. The opposite is when someone is penalized in terms of his/her education for refusing to provide such sexual favors.

Why does *quid pro quo* happen?

University is an Institution.



It is a space
of....

FREEDOM

but also

A space
of....

POWER

Who is governed by the SGBV Policy?

- Students;
- Staff.

The Policy covers both students and staff – acts of SGBV between members of staff, between students, and between students and staff.

How is the “University” is defined under the Policy?

- “University premises” are wherever the victim and victimizer are present in their official capacity: Hostels, hospital/clinics, field visits, religious places and canteens in addition to the Faculty premises.
- All acts carried out under the aegis of the University are governed by this Policy whether they are carried out within or outside the University premises, including research sites, clinics, labs, hospitals, etc. or hotels/restaurants.

What types of SGBV acts are covered?

The Policy covers acts

- Between members of the University community and visitors to the University;
- Between students or between students and staff; and
- Between individuals of any gender, gender identity, or gender expression.

Important: Both males and females could become victims of sexual and gender-based harassment and sexual violence. However, a majority of victims tends to be female.

But it is possible male victims are more reluctant to come forward because of social and cultural norms.

Is there a responsible authority to monitor & prevent SGBV at the University?

- Committee to prevent Sexual or Gender-Based Harassment and Sexual Violence (SGBVC), University of Peradeniya.
- The Medical Faculty representative to the Committee is Prof. Champa Ratnatunga of the Department of Microbiology.



Who may complain?

- All persons governed by this Policy;
- Third parties who have a personal or professional link to the alleged victim;
- Those who may have witnessed the alleged conduct.

What are the avenues for complaining?

- Through a Student Counsellor/Mentor, SGBVC Representative (Prof. Ratnatunga), Members of the Faculty SGBVC, Deputy Proctor, or any Teacher of the Faculty whom you can trust;
- Directly to the Vice-Chancellor;
- Lodge a complaint of SGBV on the UOP webpage:
<https://sgbvc.pdn.ac.lk/instructions.php>
- You can also directly lodge a complaint of Ragging/SGBV on the UGC webpage:
https://eugc.ac.lk/complaint-portal/introduction_EN.php

What is the responsibility of those receiving complaints?

- They must forward the complaint to higher authorities;
- The higher authorities must inquire into the complaint;
- The authorities must provide assistance – medical, legal, counselling, other - where necessary;
- The authorities must ensure confidentiality;
- They must take steps to prevent retaliation.

What is the Disciplinary Procedure at the University?

- If the perpetrator is a student, the Bylaws on Student Discipline will apply when deciding on an appropriate punishment.
- If it is a member of staff, the provisions in the University Establishments Code will apply when deciding on an appropriate punishment.

Questions?



Thank
You

