

**SENATE POLICY ON  
THE PROTECTION  
AGAINST  
SEXUAL  
HARASSMENT AND  
SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

GEORG-AUGUST-UNIVERSITÄT GÖTTINGEN



Equal Opportunities Officer & Equal Opportunities Office

Policy issued  
by the Senate of  
Göttingen University on the  
protection of female  
members of the University  
against sexual harassment  
and sexual violence

The present Senate policy on the protection of female members of the University against sexual harassment and sexual violence was passed by the Senate of Georg-August-Universität Göttingen on 11 June 1997.

(1) The University will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment or sexual violence whatsoever, irrespective of lesser existing prohibitions under penal law. The policy underpins the fact that such behaviour is unacceptable.

(2) All members of the University, particularly those involved in education, teaching and executive functions are required to take suitable measures within their working environment to ensure that sexually harassing behaviour and the use of violence are prohibited and stopped. Within the scope of their responsibility, they are obligated to follow up on every report or piece of evidence. The Equal Opportunities Officer should be contacted in a timely manner for purposes of consultation and, as appropriate, for agreeing on further procedure.

(3) The parties have the right to hold the meetings on the University's premises.

(4) The University shall instruct employees performing educational, teaching and executive functions about the issues associated with sexual violence and recommend their participation in preventive continuing education courses.

(5) Sexual harassment is defined as every sexually coloured behaviour that the affected person declares to be unwelcome or undesirable or that is generally accepted as inappropriate or undesirable. Such behaviour debasing the dignity of the individual may express itself in verbal or non-verbal form. Specifically, these include:

- Physical advances and unwelcome touching
- Demand for sexual contact
- Degrading and insulting comments and jokes
- Comments about sexual activities and intimacies, about preferred physical attributes and weaknesses
- Sexually tainted gestures and behaviours
- The display and distribution of pornographic and/or sexist images and printed materials
- Allowing the display and distributing pornographic and/or sexist texts, images and animations on computer systems

Particularly egregious misconduct is defined as sexual harassment and sexual violence that exploits dependencies at the work place, during study degree or training programmes, applies intimidation by threatening personal or professional disadvantages or promising certain advantages.

(6) Whenever they have the impression they are being sexually harassed or that violence is being used against them, women have the right to inform the superior of the accused. In order to preserve their anonymity, they may do so through a third party whom they trust.

(7) The following steps should be considered to resolve the situation and to reinstate a sustainable working or study situation – depending on the isolated case and taking the woman's wishes into consideration:

- Personal talk between the affected woman and/or a person she trusts with the accused
- Official meeting with the superior, if appropriate, together with the Equal Opportunities Officer and/or a member of the Staff Council

(8) If sexual harassment or the use of violence is at issue, the University is obligated to undertake concrete measures against the perpetrator. These include:

- Oral or written instructions
- Written warning
- Transfer of the accused to another workplace within or outside the University
- Timely or immediate termination or initiation of disciplinary proceedings
- Exclusion from the use of university facilities (the corresponding provision will be incorporated into the regulations governing the use of publicly accessible University facilities)
- In cases of harassment through data processing media: first a warning will be issued and then use of the account will be limited, and permanently withdrawn if the offence is repeated
- Exclusion from a course
- Ban from the premises
- Filing of criminal charges by the President

(9) It has to be ensured that the measures initiated shall have no personal or professional consequences for the complainant.

(10) Within the scope of its possibilities, the University shall ensure that harassed women shall receive free legal and psychological counselling upon request.

(11) The University shall implement measures to identify, eradicate and/or mitigate hazard potentials at its facilities and buildings where danger could arise in respect to sexual harassment and violence against women.

(12) As part of its continuing education curricula, the University offers regular self-assertion courses for women and self-defence courses for women at the University Sports department.

(13) The University is doing and shall do everything in its power to filter out messages and images containing sexist or pornographic content from data networks.

The principles of this guideline shall similarly apply to the protection of male members of the University against sexual harassment and sexual violence.



Design & layout: Grete Andresen

Equal Opportunities Officer & Equal  
Opportunities Office  
Goßlerstr. 15 a, 37073 Göttingen  
Phone +49(0)551-392404, Fax +49(0)551-392557  
frauenbuero@zvw.uni-goettingen.de  
<http://www.uni-goettingen.de/frauenbuero>

