



# ***THE PREVENTION OF HARRASSMENT AT HANKEN***

***The Hanken School of Economics as an organisation and a work community will not tolerate harassment in any form. All employees should be treated equally and with kindness, respect and dignity.***

Hanken promotes openness, social responsibility, integrity and high quality.

Hanken strives to be a secure work place, where

- university staff should be able to work in conditions that are not harmful to their physical and mental health
- the Hanken work environment should be pleasant and
- members of the work community should consciously strive to prevent and resolve conflicts.

§ 28 of the Health Act reads as follows:

## ***Harassment***

***If harassment or other inappropriate treatment of an employee occurs at work and causes hazards or risks to the employee's health, the employer, after becoming aware of the matter, shall by available means take measures for remedying this situation..***

### **What is harassment?**

Harassment is either directed at the affected person's personality or is job related. In order to be able to describe the behaviour as harassment in the workplace, it must have continued for a certain period. In addition, it is a question of deliberate, wilful, repeated and systematically negative behaviour which is in some way directed against the victim's personal characteristics or his / her role and function as employee.

What may be acceptable in certain contexts in one's own free time may be totally unacceptable in the workplace. However, not all inappropriate jokes or misguided statements can be classified as harassment even if they can affect some audiences badly.

Harassment can include both sexually related words and actions, as well as what generally tends to fall within the term 'bullying'.

In cases of sexual harassment, continuation or repeated occurrences is not required. Instead, the manager, Occupational Safety Manager/HR Director or the Occupational Safety Delegate should be notified immediately.

Examples of harassment of a sexual nature:

- physical sexual touching against the will of others
- recurring verbal sexual innuendo
- frequent crude jokes, postings of sexist materials

Examples of other person-related bullying:

- recurring comments and questions regarding appearance, dress and personal life.
- spreading slander, gossip and rumours, especially regarding a person's personal life
- criticising or ridiculing a person loudly and publicly
- making threats or using other aggressive behaviour, which creates a biased atmosphere
- isolating someone from colleagues and the work community
- not responding to greetings or when being addressed
- questioning a person's opinion, belittling his / her views and limiting his / her right to express his /her views

- alluding that someone is mentally ill

Examples of job-related bullying:

- giving someone meaningless or impossible tasks
- regularly reminding someone of trivial mistakes made long ago
- monitoring someone's work excessively ('micromanagement').

There is no question of it being harassment when colleagues disagree or experience conflict at work. One can criticise each other regarding work and it can create uncertainty and anxiety, but it must be accepted. Problems related to operations should be investigated thoroughly, but they should be dealt with objectively. The manager has a major right to direct the organisation of work. The supervisor also has the right and duty to reprimand an employee and if necessary, take disciplinary action, but even that should be done objectively and with a basis in law. The same applies to the processing and implementation of organisational changes and changing tasks.

### **How can harassment be prevented?**

It has been shown that the prevention and settlement of conflicts in the workplace can be facilitated if

- there is a clear position that harassment is not acceptable in the workplace and this message is spread throughout the organisation
- everyone is clear about the objectives of the work in the workplace
- members of the work community learn to discuss the work and allocation of tasks
- factual information is disseminated
- performance assessments are undertaken with employees
- it can be ensured that the information provided to new employees is sufficient and thorough.

### **The investigation process**

Problems in the workplace should be resolved there. The entire work community has a common interest in intervening urgently against inappropriate behaviour and to bring it to an end. The employer must take prompt action in response to a notification of harassment. If necessary, the victim's anonymity should be guaranteed as far as possible, but the employer should know who it concerns, in order to be able to investigate the matter. The 'employer' in this instance refers to both the Director of Human Resources and the victim's immediate manager.

The investigation process may be described as follows:

- the victim documents what happened
- the employer / manager hears the victim and documents the information / allegations
- the employer / manager hears the alleged offender and documents his / her observations
- the employer / manager decides whether and how the process ought to be continued
- if necessary, the employer / manager contacts external experts such as occupational health and the occupational safety authorities
- the supervisor reports to the Director of Human Resources, and generally preserves of the participants' anonymity.

### **Contact details**

- [Occupational Safety](#)
- [Equality representative](#)
- [Occupational Health Services](#)

*These instructions have been dealt with by The Occupational Health Commission 30.11.2011 and 1.12.2011 authorised by the Rector. The contact information last updated and shortened November, 2016.*