

HAVE YOU OR ANYONE YOU KNOW EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT LUMS?

Harassment is a very broad term; it includes both direct and indirect behavior, it may be physical or psychological in nature, it may be perpetrated online or offline, on campus and off campus. It may be one offense, or it may comprise of several incidents which together amount to sexual harassment. It may include overt requests for sexual favours, but can also constitute verbal or written communication of a loaded nature. Further details of what may constitute harassment may be found in the LUMS Sexual Harassment Policy, which is available as part of the university code of conduct.

The Office of Accessibility and Inclusion, and the sexual harassment inquiry committee exists to help and support you. If you have any queries, concerns, or complaints relating to harassment or inclusion, or if you would like to discuss any options, please feel free to email oai@lums.edu.pk, or harassment@lums.edu.pk and we will do our best to assist you in whatever way we can.

For matters relating to counselling, kindly email student.counselling@lums.edu.pk, or visit <https://osa.lums.edu.pk/content/student-counselling-office> for more information.

FILING A FORMAL OR INFORMAL COMPLAINT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Any member of the LUMS community can file a formal or informal complaint, and here we provide the details of this procedure. Students can also reach out to the committee with questions or concerns. We are committed to supporting our community through fair and confidential inquiry of any matters pertaining to sexual harassment.

If you think that you may be a victim of sexual harassment, or if you think that you may have witnessed, or come to know of an incident of sexual harassment, we encourage you to seek assistance from the sexual harassment inquiry committee. A complaint may be filed informally, by approaching the committee through email, or in person. Informal complaints are resolved through mediation. A complainant may choose to turn an informal complaint into a formal one at any time.

You may also choose to file a formal complaint. This is filed by filling out a questionnaire and sending it to shic@lums.edu.pk. This questionnaire may be requested by emailing harassment@lums.edu.pk, or oai@lums.edu.pk. It will also be made available on our website (www.oai.lums.edu.pk) which will be accessible as of 1 July 2020.

When you file a formal complaint, you may choose to pursue it yourself, or with the aid of a friend, family member, or a lawyer acting as a representative.

While filling out the questionnaire, it is important for complainants to try and narrate all relevant information and attach all evidence that they have. The committee understands that harassment is not always, if ever, easy to prove with evidence, but in the interest of fairness, it is important to gather everything that may be relevant. This helps the committee understand the sequence of events, whether it is a single occurrence or a pattern of behaviour. A list of witnesses is also to be submitted: this includes people that the complainant may have confided in, turned to for emotional or other support, or people who may have experienced similar behaviour themselves.

It is usual for the inquiry committee to issue a no-contact order to both parties once a complaint is received.

Once the committee receives the questionnaire along with evidence and the list of witnesses, it then reaches out to the accused party by sending them a questionnaire and a list of charges made against them. The accused party is also to fill out this questionnaire as fully as possible, listing evidence and witnesses in their defence.

Once the inquiry committee has received all the evidence, it may choose to interview witnesses; each party is given the opportunity to respond to the evidence presented against them.

After reviewing all the evidence, the inquiry committee arrives at a decision. The inquiry committee aims to reach this decision within thirty (30) days of receiving a complaint. If the complaint is found to be valid, the committee recommends penalties. This decision is communicated to the Vice Chancellor or an authority designated by the Vice Chancellor, such as the Dean of Student Affairs or head of Human Resources, who implements the decision.

The inquiry committee's decision may be appealed before the Office of the Ombudsperson, Government of Punjab (<https://ombudsperson.punjab.gov.pk/>).