UNIVERSITY POLICY NO. 039, SERIES OF 2025

POLICY ON THE PREVENTION, REPORTING, INVESTIGATION, AND RESOLUTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND GENDER-BASED SEXUAL HARASSMENT

SECTION 1. POLICY DECLARATION

Quezon City University (QCU), in fulfillment of its institutional commitment to human dignity, gender equality, social justice, inclusive education, employee welfare, and the protection of fundamental human rights, hereby adopts this Policy on the Prevention, Reporting, Investigation, and Resolution of Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Sexual Harassment.

The University recognizes that sexual harassment and gender-based sexual harassment undermine personal dignity, educational access, academic freedom, professional development, psychological safety, and equal participation in institutional life.

As a public higher education institution, QCU shall promote a safe, respectful, inclusive, and harassment-free learning and working environment for all members of the University community.

The University adopts a policy of zero tolerance for sexual harassment and gender-based sexual harassment, meaning that reported incidents shall be addressed through appropriate procedures and substantiated violations shall be subject to lawful and proportionate disciplinary action.

QCU shall prohibit sexual harassment, gender-based sexual harassment, sexual intimidation, unwanted sexual advances, coercive sexual conduct, and other prohibited behavior under applicable Philippine laws.

The University shall establish accessible, confidential, impartial, trauma-informed, and survivor-centered mechanisms for reporting, investigating, resolving, and preventing sexual harassment.

All members of the University community shall be protected against unlawful discrimination and retaliation in connection with legitimate complaints, reports, or participation in authorized investigations.

The University shall uphold procedural due process, the presumption of innocence in applicable proceedings, confidentiality requirements, and the rights of all parties.

Consistent with Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities), Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality), and Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), QCU shall institutionalize comprehensive measures to prevent harassment, protect affected individuals, ensure accountability, and strengthen a culture of respect and equality.

This policy establishes the University's institutional framework for sexual harassment prevention, reporting, investigation, protection, resolution, monitoring, and continuous improvement.

SECTION 2. LEGAL AND POLICY BASES

This policy is anchored on the following legal, regulatory, and international frameworks:

2.1. The 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article II, Section 11. Recognizes the dignity of every human person and guarantees respect for human rights.

2.2. The 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article II, Section 14. Recognizes the role of women in nation-building and guarantees the fundamental equality before the law of women and men.

2.3. The 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article III, Section 1. Guarantees due process and equal protection of the laws.

2.4. Republic Act No. 7877, or the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995. Prohibits sexual harassment in employment, education, and training environments and establishes relevant institutional responsibilities.

2.5. Republic Act No. 11313, or the Safe Spaces Act. Prohibits gender-based sexual harassment in public spaces, online environments, workplaces, and educational and training institutions.

2.6. Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 11313. Provide relevant requirements concerning institutional duties, reporting, investigation, protection, and accountability.

2.7. Republic Act No. 9710, or the Magna Carta of Women. Promotes substantive equality and protection against discrimination and gender-based violence.

2.8. Republic Act No. 10173, or the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Establishes requirements for the lawful processing and protection of personal and sensitive personal information.

2.9. Republic Act No. 7610, or the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act. Provides relevant protections for children, including minors enrolled in educational institutions.

2.10. Republic Act No. 9344, as amended, or the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act. Establishes relevant protections and procedures involving children in conflict with the law, where applicable.

2.11. Republic Act No. 11648. Strengthens protections against rape and sexual exploitation and establishes relevant amendments to Philippine criminal law.

2.12. Applicable Civil Service Commission Rules on Sexual Harassment and Administrative Cases. Govern relevant complaint, investigation, disciplinary, and administrative procedures involving government personnel.

2.13. Applicable Commission on Higher Education Policies and Guidelines. Establish relevant requirements concerning gender equality, student welfare, institutional safety, and harassment prevention.

2.14. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Establishes international commitments concerning the elimination of discrimination against women.

2.15. United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5. Promotes gender equality and the elimination of violence and discrimination.

2.16. United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 10. Promotes reduced inequalities and inclusive participation.

2.17. United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16. Promotes peaceful, just, and accountable institutions.

SECTION 3. OBJECTIVES

3.1. General Objective

To establish and maintain a safe, respectful, inclusive, and harassment-free University environment through comprehensive mechanisms for preventing, reporting, investigating, resolving, and monitoring sexual harassment and gender-based sexual harassment.

3.2. Specific Objectives

This policy specifically aims to:

1. Prohibit sexual harassment and gender-based sexual harassment in all covered University environments.
2. Promote awareness of prohibited conduct and institutional responsibilities.
3. Establish accessible and confidential reporting mechanisms.
4. Maintain an appropriately constituted Committee on Decorum and Investigation.
5. Ensure fair, impartial, timely, and trauma-informed handling of complaints.
6. Provide appropriate support and protective measures for affected individuals.
7. Protect complainants, respondents, witnesses, and other participants against unlawful retaliation.
8. Establish appropriate referral mechanisms for specialized, administrative, and criminal proceedings.
9. Ensure lawful and proportionate disciplinary action for substantiated violations.
10. Protect the privacy and dignity of all parties.
11. Promote institutional accountability and preventive education.
12. Monitor the effectiveness of anti-sexual harassment initiatives.
13. Support QCU's contribution to SDGs 5, 10, and 16.

SECTION 4. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

This policy shall apply to members of the QCU community and to conduct within the University's lawful authority.

4.1. Students

All enrolled students shall be covered, including undergraduate, graduate, and other officially enrolled learners.

4.2. Faculty Members

Regular, contractual, temporary, part-time, and other faculty members shall be covered.

4.3. Administrative and Support Personnel

Administrative, technical, clerical, maintenance, security, and other support personnel shall be covered according to their applicable employment arrangements.

4.4. Job Order and Contract of Service Personnel

Individuals engaged through job order and contract of service arrangements shall be covered to the extent permitted by applicable laws, contractual provisions, and institutional authority.

4.5. Visitors and External Stakeholders

Visitors, contractors, service providers, partner institutions, and other external stakeholders shall be subject to applicable campus conduct and safety requirements.

Where QCU lacks disciplinary jurisdiction over an external individual, the University shall take appropriate protective measures and refer the matter to the competent employer or authority.

4.6. University Activities and Facilities

The policy shall apply to covered conduct occurring in:

1. Classrooms and laboratories.
2. University offices.
3. Libraries and learning spaces.
4. University grounds and facilities.
5. University-sponsored events.
6. Academic fieldwork and extension activities.
7. Internships and authorized off-campus learning activities.
8. Official University online learning platforms.
9. University-related digital communication channels.
10. Other settings where the conduct falls within applicable institutional jurisdiction.

4.7. Online and Digital Environments

The policy shall cover relevant gender-based online sexual harassment involving University community members where applicable law and institutional authority permit.

SECTION 5. DEFINITION OF TERMS

5.1. Sexual Harassment refers to conduct constituting sexual harassment under applicable Philippine laws, including Republic Act No. 7877 and other relevant statutes.

5.2. Gender-Based Sexual Harassment refers to conduct prohibited under Republic Act No. 11313, including applicable forms of unwanted sexual behavior and harassment in workplaces, educational institutions, public spaces, and online environments.

5.3. Unwelcome Sexual Conduct refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which may include verbal, nonverbal, physical, or digital behavior.

5.4. Sexual Coercion refers to the use of pressure, threats, authority, or other improper means to obtain sexual compliance.

5.5. Online Gender-Based Sexual Harassment refers to prohibited gender-based sexual harassment committed through digital or electronic means, as defined by applicable law.

5.6. Complainant refers to a person who submits a complaint or is otherwise recognized as a complainant under the applicable procedure.

5.7. Respondent refers to a person against whom a complaint has been filed.

5.8. Committee on Decorum and Investigation (CODI) refers to the committee established or designated in accordance with applicable laws and regulations to address sexual harassment complaints within its jurisdiction.

5.9. Retaliation refers to unlawful adverse treatment imposed because an individual reported misconduct, filed a complaint, or participated in an authorized proceeding.

5.10. Protective Measures refer to appropriate temporary actions intended to reduce risks to the safety, welfare, or rights of persons involved in a complaint.

5.11. Trauma-Informed Approach refers to an approach that recognizes the potential effects of trauma and seeks to minimize unnecessary distress while respecting procedural fairness.

5.12. Survivor-Centered Approach refers to an approach that respects the dignity, safety, privacy, informed choices, and support needs of a person reporting sexual harassment, consistent with applicable legal obligations.

SECTION 6. PROHIBITED ACTS

QCU shall prohibit conduct constituting sexual harassment or gender-based sexual harassment under applicable laws.

Depending on the circumstances and governing law, prohibited conduct may include:

6.1. Unwanted Sexual Advances

Unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors.

6.2. Sexual Coercion

Using academic, supervisory, or institutional authority to pressure an individual into sexual activity or compliance.

6.3. Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment

Conditioning academic grades, admission, employment opportunities, promotion, benefits, or other institutional decisions on sexual compliance.

6.4. Hostile or Intimidating Sexual Conduct

Unwelcome sexual conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or working environment, where prohibited by applicable law.

6.5. Unwanted Sexual Touching

Unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature.

6.6. Sexually Offensive Verbal Conduct

Sexually inappropriate remarks, propositions, or other verbal behavior constituting prohibited harassment.

6.7. Nonverbal Sexual Harassment

Sexually offensive gestures, displays, or other nonverbal conduct constituting prohibited harassment.

6.8. Online Sexual Harassment

Prohibited sexual harassment through electronic messages, social media, learning platforms, or other digital channels.

6.9. Misuse of Institutional Authority

Using supervisory, academic, or administrative authority to engage in prohibited sexual conduct.

6.10. Retaliation

Unlawful retaliation against individuals who report sexual harassment or participate in authorized proceedings.

SECTION 7. GENERAL POLICY GUIDELINES

7.1. Zero-Tolerance Institutional Commitment

QCU shall not condone sexual harassment or gender-based sexual harassment.

All reports shall be appropriately assessed, and substantiated violations shall be addressed through applicable disciplinary or other lawful procedures.

7.2. Equal Protection

All members of the University community shall be protected against prohibited sexual harassment regardless of sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, ethnicity, nationality, or other protected characteristics.

7.3. Accessible Reporting Mechanisms

QCU shall provide accessible reporting channels for individuals who experience or witness possible sexual harassment.

7.4. Confidentiality

Complaints and related records shall be handled confidentially to the extent permitted or required by law.

Information shall be disclosed only to persons authorized to receive it or where disclosure is legally required.

7.5. Procedural Fairness

Complaints shall be handled impartially and in accordance with applicable procedural requirements.

Respondents shall be afforded the rights and opportunities required by law.

7.6. Protection Against Retaliation

The University shall prohibit unlawful retaliation against complainants, respondents, witnesses, and other participants in authorized proceedings.

7.7. Survivor-Centered Support

QCU shall facilitate appropriate support for persons reporting sexual harassment, including access to counseling, safety planning, and relevant referrals.

7.8. Trauma-Informed Procedures

Personnel handling complaints shall be trained to minimize unnecessary distress and avoid inappropriate or repetitive questioning.

7.9. Conflict-of-Interest Safeguards

Individuals with material conflicts of interest shall not participate in deciding the merits of a complaint where disqualification is required.

7.10. Protection of Minors

Complaints involving minors shall be handled in accordance with applicable child protection laws and reporting obligations.

7.11. Prevention and Education

QCU shall conduct regular educational activities concerning sexual harassment prevention, respectful conduct, reporting procedures, and institutional responsibilities.

7.12. Non-Interference with Legal Remedies

Nothing in this policy shall prevent affected individuals from seeking remedies before competent government authorities.

SECTION 8. COMMITTEE ON DECORUM AND INVESTIGATION

8.1. Establishment or Designation

QCU shall establish or formally designate a Committee on Decorum and Investigation in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

8.2. Composition

The composition of the CODI shall comply with applicable requirements concerning representation, qualifications, and impartiality.

Where required, relevant faculty, employee, and student representation shall be provided.

8.3. Functions

The CODI shall perform duties within its lawful jurisdiction, which may include:

1. Receiving or evaluating complaints.
2. Conducting appropriate preliminary assessments.
3. Facilitating authorized investigations.
4. Evaluating relevant evidence.
5. Preparing findings and recommendations.
6. Referring matters to competent authorities.
7. Supporting appropriate preventive initiatives.
8. Maintaining confidential case records.

8.4. Training

CODI members shall receive appropriate training concerning applicable laws, procedural fairness, confidentiality, trauma-informed practices, and complaint handling.

8.5. Independence

CODI proceedings shall be conducted impartially and free from improper interference.

SECTION 9. REPORTING AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

9.1. Reporting Channels

Reports or complaints may be submitted through authorized channels, which may include:

1. The designated CODI receiving office.
2. The Human Resource Management Office.
3. The Student Affairs and Services Office.
4. An official confidential reporting email.
5. Other authorized institutional reporting mechanisms.

The University shall publicly identify the appropriate receiving channels and contact information.

9.2. Initial Reporting

An individual may report possible sexual harassment through the designated channel.

The receiving office shall provide appropriate information on available procedures, support services, and relevant legal remedies.

9.3. Initial Assessment

The authorized office shall assess:

1. The nature of the reported conduct.
2. Applicable legal and institutional jurisdiction.
3. Immediate safety concerns.
4. Relevant protective measures.
5. The appropriate complaint or referral procedure.

9.4. Formal Complaint

Where a formal complaint is required, the receiving office shall explain applicable filing requirements and assist the complainant in understanding the process.

9.5. Referral to the Appropriate Authority

Complaints shall be referred to the CODI or other competent body according to the nature of the case and applicable procedural rules.

9.6. Investigation

Authorized investigations shall be conducted according to applicable laws and procedural requirements.

The parties shall be afforded the rights and opportunities required by the governing procedure.

9.7. Findings and Recommendations

The investigating body shall prepare findings and recommendations within its lawful authority.

9.8. Decision and Disposition

The competent disciplinary or deciding authority shall issue the appropriate decision or disposition.

9.9. Communication of Outcome

The parties shall receive appropriate notice of the outcome in accordance with applicable laws, confidentiality requirements, and procedural rules.

9.10. Appeal or Reconsideration

Available appeal or reconsideration procedures shall be governed by applicable laws and institutional regulations.

SECTION 10. PROTECTIVE AND SUPPORT MEASURES

QCU shall facilitate appropriate measures to protect the safety, dignity, and welfare of persons affected by reported sexual harassment.

Depending on the circumstances and lawful authority, measures may include:

1. Referral for counseling or psychosocial support.
2. Assistance in accessing medical services.
3. Safety planning.
4. Appropriate academic or workplace adjustments.
5. Temporary separation arrangements.
6. Referral to legal assistance or competent authorities.
7. Other proportionate protective measures.

Protective measures shall not be used as substitutes for required investigations or as automatic findings of guilt.

The University shall seek to avoid imposing unnecessary academic or employment disadvantages on persons requesting protection.

SECTION 11. ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNTABILITY AND SANCTIONS

Substantiated violations shall be subject to appropriate administrative or disciplinary action under applicable laws and University regulations.

The nature and severity of sanctions shall be determined by the competent authority after observance of the applicable procedure.

Depending on the governing rules, available sanctions may include reprimand, suspension, dismissal, or other legally authorized disciplinary measures.

Criminal or civil liability, where applicable, shall be determined by the competent courts or authorities.

SECTION 12. RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNIVERSITY OFFICES

12.1. Office of the University President

The Office of the University President shall provide overall institutional leadership, policy direction, and oversight.

12.2. Committee on Decorum and Investigation

The CODI shall perform its duties under applicable laws and authorized institutional procedures.

12.3. Human Resource Management Office

The designated Human Resource Management Office shall support policy dissemination, employee awareness, appropriate referrals, and relevant personnel procedures.

12.4. Student Affairs and Services Office

The designated Student Affairs and Services Office shall support student awareness, appropriate referrals, and student welfare measures.

12.5. Gender and Development Focal Office

The designated Gender and Development Focal Office shall support prevention programs, gender-responsive education, and institutional monitoring.

12.6. Guidance and Counseling Office

The designated counseling office shall provide or facilitate appropriate psychosocial support within its professional capacity.

12.7. Legal Office or Equivalent Unit

The designated legal office shall provide guidance on applicable laws, jurisdiction, procedures, and institutional responsibilities.

12.8. Campus Security Office

The designated security office shall assist in appropriate immediate safety measures within its authority.

12.9. Academic and Administrative Units

All academic and administrative units shall cooperate with authorized prevention, reporting, investigation, and protective measures.

12.10. Students, Faculty Members, and Staff

All members of the University community shall comply with this policy and participate in maintaining a respectful and harassment-free environment.

SECTION 13. PREVENTION, EDUCATION, AND AWARENESS PROGRAMS

QCU shall establish appropriate institutional programs for sexual harassment prevention.

These may include:

1. New student orientation.
2. Faculty and staff orientation.
3. Annual Safe Spaces Act awareness activities.
4. Gender sensitivity training.
5. CODI capacity-building programs.
6. Information campaigns on reporting procedures.
7. Digital safety and online harassment awareness.
8. Student leadership education.
9. Workplace respect and professional conduct training.
10. Other relevant institutional activities.

Prevention programs shall emphasize respectful behavior, consent, professional boundaries, responsible use of authority, and available reporting mechanisms.

SECTION 14. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

QCU shall establish a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess implementation of this policy.

Performance indicator	Measurement or monitoring requirement
Institutional anti-sexual harassment policy	Approved and publicly accessible policy
CODI establishment	Official designation and compliance with applicable composition requirements
Reporting channels	Established and publicly communicated mechanisms
Awareness activities	Number of prevention and education sessions
CODI training	Number of members receiving appropriate training
Reports received	Number of documented reports, subject to confidentiality
Formal complaints	Number of complaints processed through applicable procedures
Case disposition	Number of completed, pending, and referred cases
Protective measures	Number of appropriate measures facilitated

Retaliation concerns	Number of reported concerns and appropriate dispositions
Annual implementation review	Completion of the annual review

The University shall interpret complaint statistics carefully. A low number of reports shall not automatically be treated as evidence that harassment is absent.

SECTION 15. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDKEEPING

QCU shall maintain appropriate documentation relating to the implementation of this policy.

Relevant documents may include:

1. Approved Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy.
2. CODI designation documents.
3. CODI composition and terms of reference.
4. Confidential reporting procedures.
5. Complaint forms and procedural guidance.
6. Training and orientation materials.
7. Prevention campaign documentation.
8. Confidential case records.
9. Authorized investigation and disposition records.
10. Protective measure documentation.
11. Anonymized annual case summaries.
12. Annual Anti-Sexual Harassment Implementation Reports.

Records shall be managed according to applicable confidentiality, data privacy, and records retention requirements.

SECTION 16. FUNDING AND RESOURCE SUPPORT

Implementation of this policy shall be supported through appropriate University resources, subject to approved budgets and applicable government regulations.

Resources may be allocated for prevention programs, CODI training, confidential reporting mechanisms, counseling referrals, awareness campaigns, and other authorized activities.

SECTION 17. COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

All concerned University offices, personnel, students, and authorized representatives shall comply with this policy.

Allegations of violations shall be addressed through appropriate institutional and legal procedures.

Failure by responsible personnel to perform legally mandated duties shall be referred for appropriate review.

SECTION 18. POLICY DISSEMINATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS

Upon approval, this policy shall be disseminated to all students, faculty members, administrative personnel, and relevant stakeholders.

The policy shall be made publicly accessible through the official Quezon City University website and other appropriate institutional communication platforms.

The University shall publish appropriate information concerning reporting channels, available support services, and relevant complaint procedures.

SECTION 19. POLICY REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This policy shall be reviewed at least once every three (3) years, or earlier when warranted by changes in applicable laws, Civil Service Commission regulations, Commission on Higher Education requirements, or institutional safety needs.

The designated coordinating offices shall conduct an annual implementation review.

Findings shall inform improvements in prevention programs, reporting accessibility, investigation procedures, and support services.

SECTION 20. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

If any provision of this policy is declared invalid or unenforceable by competent authority, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

SECTION 21. REPEALING AND AMENDING CLAUSE

All existing University policies, memoranda, guidelines, and procedures inconsistent with this policy shall be reviewed and, where appropriate, amended or superseded in accordance with applicable institutional procedures.

SECTION 22. EFFECTIVITY

This policy shall take effect upon approval by the University President, subject to any additional approval requirements under applicable laws, University governance rules, and institutional procedures.

All concerned University offices shall undertake the necessary measures for its dissemination, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

APPROVED BY:

DR. THERESITA V. ATIENZA
University President

Date Approved: July 21, 2025

Cc: Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs
Office of the Vice President for Administration and Finance
Records Management Office