



PRESS STATEMENT

CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS CALLS FOR EXPEDITING OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT CASES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

17 October 2017

The Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria, deploras any form of sexual harassment and is steadfastly committed to supporting the University community in any way possible to ensure that it is a safe environment – free from sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination – and to foster the values of equality, integrity, human dignity, privacy and mutual respect.

It has come to the attention of the Centre that some students publicly raised concerns about the delay in finalising a complaint of sexual harassment against an employee of the Centre for Sexualities, Aids and Gender (CSA&G). The Centre fully supports the principle that sexual harassment cases should be given the highest priority, and that such proceedings should be finalised as expeditiously as possible.

The Centre also understands that the University is currently reviewing its discrimination and harassment policies to create one umbrella policy. The objective of this new policy is to enable the University to be responsive and effective in dealing with sexual harassment cases that affect staff and students. The current case highlights the need for such a review and reiterates the need to make the effective and speedy finalisation of complaints the central feature of any processes or system.

To increase awareness relating to sexual harassment and sexual assault, the University launched its [#SpeakOutUP Against Sexual Harassment Campaign](#) in November 2016. The campaign also highlights issues such as gender-based violence, discrimination and the vulnerabilities of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. As part of its ongoing campaign, the University has set up a UP Careline telephone service (0800 747 747) and [email address](#) where staff and students can access psychological support.

University of Pretoria Sexual Harassment Policy

- [Code of Conduct on the handling of Sexual Harassment](#) (Rt 267/08 amended 19-11-08)

Advisors on sexual harassment

- Ms Emma Matjila (antisequalharassment@up.ac.za / Tel 012 420 6245)
- Ms Bes Liebenberg (antisequalharassment@up.ac.za / Tel 012 420 2119)
- Student Representative Council member: 012 420 6554
- Support Panel: 24-hour crisis line is 012 420 2310 or 0800 006 428

UP Careline 0800 747 747

Students and staff can access psychological support through the UP Careline. Counsellors are available to support and advise students and staff members with issues of trauma, sexual abuse and violence, psychological issues, exam anxiety and academic stress. The Careline is run in collaboration with the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG). The SADAG website can be accessed at www.sadag.org for other psychological web-based information.

For more information, please contact:

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