

## **Kowloon Union Church**

### **Position Statement on Harassment**

#### ***Belief***

As Christians we believe that every human being is created in the image of God, and as a Christian community, members of our congregation must endeavor to create an environment of safety and trust, in which the dignity and worth of all human beings is affirmed.

This is consistent with the KUC Constitution, which says that:

*In obedience to the Holy Spirit, the purpose of KUC shall be to gather people of different traditions and cultures in the worship of the triune God, to proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, to nurture believers in the Christian faith, to engage in mission, to respond to human need and to work for justice and peace for all.*

Harassment is a violation of human dignity. No one should be subjected to any form of harassment. Anyone can say no to it and take action to stop harassment. Anyone has the right to make a complaint.

The church will take all possible actions to prevent it from happening and to address the problem once identified.

The church is committed to promote the consciousness of justice, fairness, sincerity and openness in respect of gender equality and mutual respect. It is also committed to raising the awareness of the need to eliminate and prevent harassment through education and public awareness.

The church is committed to provide a safe environment for all people to worship, grow in faith and serve in God. When harassment occurs, the church will do its best to provide the complainant, the accused and their respective families with appropriate referral services or corresponding counseling and pastoral support.

#### ***Definitions***

In general, the following are definitions of harassment:

Harassment is any form of unwelcome, unsolicited or unreciprocated behaviour that denigrates someone, offends them, or humiliates them on the grounds of their race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, disability or other background or identity. Harassment creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment that causes people to suffer or negatively affects them.

The Hong Kong legislature has passed three ordinances that may be relevant to the issue of harassment, namely: Cap. 480 Sex Discrimination Ordinance; Cap. 487 Disability Discrimination Ordinance; and Cap. 620 Race Discrimination Ordinance.

The Ordinances are applicable to areas such as employment and the provision of service. A person shall be liable for one's unlawful action, and through civil proceedings, the KUC Council is liable for the unlawful action of its employees and

any of its authorized agents. Furthermore, each Ordinance has provisions detailing examples or cases in which a person may experience harassment.<sup>i</sup>

### *Our responsibility as a church*

Elements of oppression/harassment based on gender, race, and other social categories exist; but as a Christian community, we must strive to overcome these within our midst, and also to be the salt and light of the earth—being a part of struggles in the wider community to eliminate these, wherever we find them.

Staff, church leaders and members are encouraged to attend workshops and training with a gender-based understanding on harassment, especially sexual harassment, and its prevention.

To further the church-wide effort, KUC offers the following documents to guide our aim to end and prevent harassment:

1. Guidelines to Respond to Harassment
2. Educational materials to raise awareness and understanding on various forms of harassment (see the appendix)

For anyone wishing to make a complaint, they should contact the minister-in-charge and/or the council chairperson as outlined in the KUC Guidelines to Respond to Harassment.

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<sup>i</sup> For the full text of the Ordinances, please refer to the website of Hong Kong e-Legislation (HKeL, maintained by the Department of Justice) below or that of the Equal Opportunities Commission:

1. Cap. 480 Sex Discrimination Ordinance - <https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap480>
2. Cap. 487 Disability Discrimination Ordinance - <https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap487!en>
3. Cap. 602 Race Discrimination Ordinance - [https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap602!en?xid=ID\\_1438403514862\\_005](https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap602!en?xid=ID_1438403514862_005)
4. Examples of harassment can be found in the codes of practice published by the Equal Opportunities Commission under each Ordinance.

(Endorsed on 1st December 2019)