

## ANTI-HARASSMENT STATEMENT

Last Review:	October 2022
Next Review:	October 2024

- **Loreto College opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and harassment.** This includes incidents that may take place in a ‘virtual space’ including social media, mobile phones, blogs or otherwise on the internet.
- *Harassment can happen on its own or alongside other forms of discrimination.*
- *Harassment may consist of unwanted behaviour, an act or series of actions directed towards someone because of a personal, physical or cultural characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating someone’s dignity or which creates a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.*
- *Unwanted behaviour could be:*
  - *spoken or written words or abuse*
  - *offensive emails, tweets or comments on social networking sites*
  - *images and graffiti*
  - *physical gestures*
  - *facial expressions*
  - *jokes*
- *This applies both inside and outside of College, on College trips or events (including social events).*
- *Harassment is unlawful discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 if it’s because of or connected to one of these things (Please refer to Equality and Diversity Policy for further information).*
  - *age*
  - *disability*
  - *gender reassignment*
  - *race*
  - *religion or belief*
  - *sex*
  - *sexual orientation*
- It is a criminal offence to commit intentional harassment. This occurs if a person ‘**with intent** causes a person alarm or distress’ and in particular:
  - uses threatening, abusive or insulting language or behaviour or disorderly behaviour, or,

- displays any writing, sign or other visible representation which is threatening, abusive or insulting, so causing a person harassment, alarm or distress.

## Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a student's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments,
- sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualized names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (college should be consider when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

It may include:

- non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
  - sexualised online bullying;
  - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
  - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.
- **Racial harassment** can be sustained or offensive behaviour, physical or verbal, or it can be a single incident. Such behaviour includes:
    - Derogatory name calling
    - Insults and racist jokes
    - Ridicule of an individual for cultural differences
    - Exclusion from normal workplace conversation or social events
    - Unfair allocation of work and social responsibilities
    - Racist graffiti or insignia
    - Verbal abuse and threats
    - Physical attack
  - **Other forms of harassment**, for example, towards people with **disabilities**, or towards people on the grounds of **age** have common characteristics with sexual and racial harassment in that they may be:

- Personally directed or non-specific
  - Verbal, physical, or written or in the form of insinuations
  - 'Jokes' of ridicule
  - Refusals to co-operate with others
  - Bullying, either physical or verbal
  - Display, storage or circulation of offensive material (including information held on computer)
  - Constant criticism of the performance of work tasks.
- The characteristics of harassment are that ***behaviour is unwanted by the recipient and that it is for each individual to determine what behaviour is acceptable to them and what they regard as offensive.***
  - Harassment is not dependent on an intention to cause distress or hurt but is assessed by the impact the behaviour has on the recipient.

**Complaints can be dealt with in one of two ways;**

- **Informally** with the person straight away or
- **Formally** through the college systems as identified in the **Code of Respect, Student Behaviour Policy** and **Equal Opportunities Policies**.