



Enhancing Campus Safety: CUHK's Commitment to Education and Training on Preventing Sexual Harassment and Discrimination

The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) has always been a beacon of educational excellence, fostering an environment of inclusivity and respect. As part of its ongoing commitment to maintaining a safe and supportive campus, CUHK is stepping up its efforts to prevent sexual harassment and discrimination through enhanced education and training initiatives. This renewed focus reflects CUHK's dedication to ensuring that every member of its community feels secure, respected, and empowered. By implementing comprehensive programmes and collaborative efforts, the university is taking proactive steps to address and mitigate the issues of harassment and discrimination on campus.



A specialised training session for university staff members.

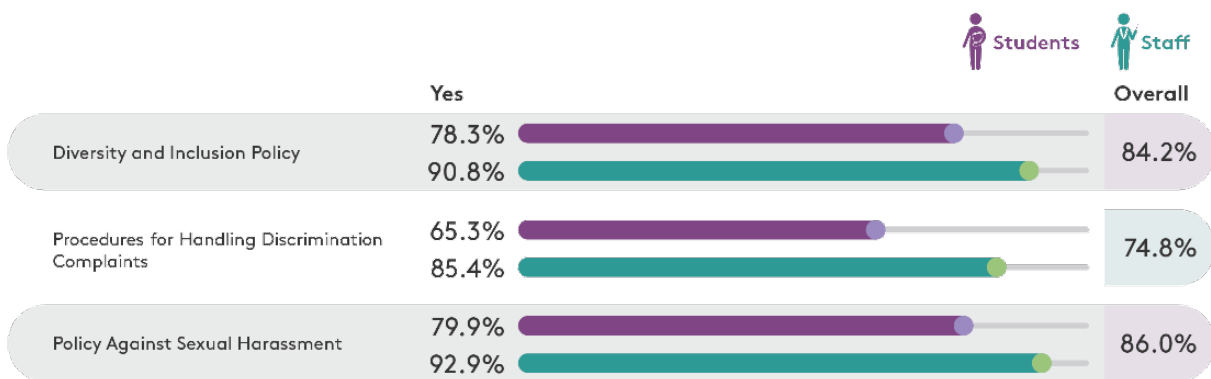
Survey Insights: A Call to Action

The “Survey on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment on Campus 2022/23” revealed critical insights into the prevalence and nature of harassment and discrimination within the university. The survey, commissioned by the University’s Committee Against Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (CADSH) and conducted by the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies (HKIAPS), was distributed to all staff and students between November and December 2022.

With a response rate of 8%, a total of 2,893 questionnaires were completed. Key findings indicate that a significant majority (89.3%) had never encountered discrimination and 95.2% had not encountered sexual harassment in the 12 months before the survey. Those who did experience such issues reported race and gender discrimination, and harassment involving sexually suggestive comments or inappropriate physical contact.

Awareness of university policies was high, but only a small portion of those encountering issues made a report or an enquiry.

Awareness of University's policies and procedures



Statistics from the 2022/23 Survey on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment on Campus: members of the University have a high level of awareness of the University’s policies and procedures.

% of respondents who made enquiry or report

Among those who have experienced discrimination or sexual harassment



Statistics from the 2022/23 Survey on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment on Campus: a relatively low percentage of members who experienced discrimination and harassment made an enquiry or report.

CADSH: Leading the Charge

CADSH has been at the forefront of addressing these issues at CUHK. The structure of CADSH includes the Task Force on Education and Training and the Panel Against Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (PADSH) which conducts conciliation or investigation upon receipt of complaint, ensuring a well-rounded approach to tackle these challenges. Chaired by Professor Lee Tan, CADSH is dedicated to creating a safe and respectful environment for all university members. Professor Lee emphasised the unwavering commitment to enhancing CADSH's efforts in light of the survey findings.

“As chairperson of CADSH, I can assure you that CUHK remains steadfast in its mission to combat discrimination and sexual harassment. The survey results have provided us with valuable insights, and we are determined to leverage these findings to strengthen our support systems and preventive measures,” said Professor Lee.



(From left) Professor Lee Tan, CADSH Chairperson; Professor Anthony Fung, Convenor of the Task Force on Education and Training; and Professor Margaret Ip, Convenor of PADSH at CADSH training event.

Collaborative Prevention Efforts in Orientation Camps

Recognising the importance of early education and awareness, CADSH has collaborated with the Joint Committee on New Student Orientation (JCNSO) to promote anti-sexual harassment awareness among student organisers and camp facilitators.

This initiative, spearheaded by Professor Anthony Fung, Convenor of the Task Force on Education and Training, aims to ensure that new students are introduced to a culture of respect and safety from the outset.



New students attending the anti-sexual harassment seminar.

“Orientation camps are a crucial entry point for new students, and it is imperative that we set the right tone from the beginning. Through our collaboration with JCNSO, we are introducing an awareness programme that includes joint presentations by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and the Diversity and Inclusion Office (DIO) on legal requirements, university policies and protection,” explained Professor Fung.



Activities at orientation camps to raise awareness against sexual harassment.

In addition to these presentations, the initiative mandates the completion of an online training module by all student organisers before they participate in the organisation of orientation camps in July–August 2024. This module, developed in collaboration with the EOC, will also be included as a checklist item on the orientation website for new students for the academic year 2024–25, with a strong encouragement for incoming students to complete the training.



EOC Online Training Module on Preventing Sexual Harassment on Campus for Tertiary Institutions.

Furthermore, the Task Force's well-established Orientation Camp Sponsorship Programme offers additional incentive to inspire student organisers to cover elements of anti-sexual harassment, equal opportunities, and inclusion during orientation activities.

Enhancing Staff Capacity through Targeted Training

To bolster the university's efforts in preventing harassment and discrimination, the Task Force on Education and Training organised a specialised training session for members from PADSH, various faculties and colleges in May 2024. The workshop aimed to equip staff with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively address and prevent harassment and discrimination on campus. The importance of such training is underscored by the survey findings, which revealed many respondents preferred to approach teaching staff, supervisors, department/unit heads, or College/office staff rather than formal channels like CADSH or DIO.



Roving Exhibition to promote awareness on prevention of sexual harassment.

“Enhancing the capacity of our staff to handle complaints is crucial, given that teachers, supervisors, and department/unit heads are often the first point of contact by students and staff concerned,” said Professor Margaret Ip, Convenor of PADSH. “This training covered a wide range of topics including legal frameworks, intervention strategies, and support mechanisms to ensure that our staff are well-prepared to provide the necessary assistance and intervention when required.”

Addressing Sexual Harassment through Awareness Posters

To empower the university community with the knowledge and confidence to act against harassment, CADSH has designed a new poster for display at various locations on campus. The poster emphasises the importance of voicing out against unacceptable behaviour, seeking help through provided contacts, and documenting incidents for potential future actions. By providing clear guidance through these posters, CADSH hopes to convey the support available for fostering a safe and respectful environment.



Publicity Poster introducing steps to respond to and intervene sexual harassment.

A Unified Approach

CUHK's multi-faceted approach to preventing sexual harassment and discrimination shows its dedication to its core values of inclusivity and respect. By leveraging insights from the recent survey and enhancing collaboration across various departments and committees, CUHK is making significant strides in its efforts to educate and empower its community.

Professor Lee summed up the university's mission succinctly: "Our goal is to ensure that every member of the CUHK community feels safe, respected, and supported. By intensifying our education and training efforts, we are building a campus culture that stands firmly against discrimination and harassment."



Meeting of the Task Force on Education and Training.