

Policy on Sexual Harassment, Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence

adopted by the Academic Committee on July 18, 2024

As part of its contributions to engendering a more equitable institutional culture within the purview of its Reconfiguring African Studies agenda, the AM Cluster is invested in a viable and robust policy regarding sexual harassment and gender-based violence (GBV).

This policy includes provisions for perpetrators of sexual harassment within and outside of the AM Cluster in terms of sanctions and educational measures, as well as legal counseling and support measures to facilitate protection of and redress for victims of sexual harassment and GBV at the University of Bayreuth (UBT). In all instances, the Gender and Diversity Office (GDO) of the AM Cluster will serve as the first contact – first response node of communication. It can be reached via africamultiple-gdo@uni-bayreuth.de.

(1) Instances of sexual harassment involving non-members of the AM Cluster

Members of the AM Cluster may file reports and complaints concerning cases of sexual harassment and gender-based violence with the GDO. Once documentation on such incidents involving non-members of the AM Cluster proves that they have recent histories or past records of sexually predatory activities, the GDO director will notify the Management Board, which shall then determine whether the person concerned will be listed in a “reject database” on known sexual predators and GBV perpetrators. The database will be maintained by the GDO with the support of the Cluster’s DRE and in accordance with data protection law; the Academic Committee will be kept apprised of additions to the “reject list.” Known perpetrators will have their invitations to collaborative activities of the AM Cluster retracted, and/or will not be considered for the same in the future.

(2) Instances of sexual harassment involving members of the AM Cluster

The following steps apply when the GDO receives complaints of sexual harassment and gender-based violence involving AM Cluster members:

- The GDO will constitute a task force to examine the complaint, comprised of members qualified and invested in Critical Diversity, Equity and Equal Opportunity matters, including a student representative.
- The task force will determine the degree of sexual harassment and the extent of violence perpetrated.
- If the task force sees sufficient evidence for an instance of sexual harassment and/or GBV involving members of the UBT, it will pass the complaint on to the Women’s Representatives of the faculty and the university, as well as suitable legal counsel provided by the university administration, to ensure best practice in the carriage of justice in accordance with the UBT *Guideline for Conflict Resolution in the Workspace* (“Richtlinie zur Konfliktbewältigung am Arbeitsplatz”) of December 13, 2012.

The AM Cluster commits to taking comprehensive measures regarding both the victim and the perpetrator of sexual harassment and GBV.

As for victims, the AM Cluster will, through the GDO,

- exercise utmost care to ensure confidentiality and safety during the complaint process;
- ensure that they will not have to work with the perpetrator once the incident has been reported;
- help make alternative arrangements for the victim to continue their own research work without further traumatization;
- help in the provision of psychological trauma counseling, depending on their inclination to receive such;
- ensure that they will receive the necessary protection and support; they will not be subject to gas-lighting or any other secondary mode of traumatization.

A specific App (in English and German) will be developed for UBT victims of sexual harassment and GBV to access immediate information for reporting, assistance and redress purposes. This will allow them to speedily avail themselves of UBT and other institutional resources to deal with their situation. External service providers, e.g. government-funded associations such as *AVALON e.V.* or *Weißer Ring e.V.*, will be consulted with, to ensure that victim protection and redress measures are not subject to internal university power dynamics.

As for perpetrators, the AM Cluster will

- hold them accountable to the AM Cluster, and in case of UBT members, to the UBT;
- relieve them of their responsibilities and privileges with the AM Cluster (including access to Cluster funds);
- encourage them to reflect on their own misconduct and seek counseling to process the matter (UBT-based perpetrators should consider receiving one of the recommended services from *AVALON e.V.* concerning preventive educational measures, specifically for men);
- request them to issue an official apology to the victim and offer damage compensation for the psychological and physical harm done as part of the apology;
- help them receive legal counsel in order to ensure best practice in the carriage of justice towards the victim.

In the case of perpetrators who disregard the decision to suspend their Cluster activities and/or fail to comply with the recommended measures, the AM Cluster may end their membership and permanently revoke all accompanying professional and financial privileges.

Perpetrators may be reinstated in their responsibilities and privileges if they are able to prove to the Academic Committee that they have learnt from the experience and are prepared to change, or in the case of UBT-based members, upon the conclusion of their investigation according to UBT's *Guideline for Conflict Resolution in the Workspace*.

Bayreuth, July 19, 2024

On behalf of the Academic Committee: Prof. Dr. Rüdiger Seesemann, Dean, Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence