Consultation FAQs

Seeking consultation for the first time feels uncomfortable for many people. Here are some frequently asked questions and answers related to harassment that may help ease any feelings of anxiety.

Q1. I’m not sure which person in the harassment officer list I should talk to.
A. Except for the names marked with *, you can talk to any harassment officer, regardless of which faculty you are attached to. (The harassment officers whose names are marked with * are specialists who provide professional advice within the field of their expertise and are brought in for consultation on referral.) Please call or e-mail any harassment officer you think you will feel comfortable with.

Q2. Is there any chance that my confidentiality will be breached if I seek consultation?
A. Harassment officers have a strict obligation to protect confidential information. Everything you say will be kept in the strictest confidentiality so you have no need to worry. In order to solve the problem, the harassment officers may explain the situation to relevant parties at a minimum level required with your consent. Even in such a case, confidentiality will be strictly observed.

Q3. I’m not sure if my experience constitutes harassment or not. Can I still seek advice?
A. Please seek advice if you are troubled, even if you are not sure if what happened to you would be considered harassment. Your harassment officer will work with you to improve your situation.

Q4. What are the steps involved in seeking consultation or advice from a harassment officer?
A. First, the harassment officer will meet with you in person to hear your story. If any action is to be taken, the harassment officer will confirm each proposed step with you beforehand so that the process remains under your control.

Q5. What specific actions can be taken?
A. Actions taken depend upon your specific situation and desire. Examples of actions that may be taken include providing you with advice so that you can solve the problem yourself, taking steps to improve your study and/or research environment in accordance with the situation, and providing instructions or warnings to the perpetrator or taking disciplinary action against him or her. Although in some cases it may not be possible to completely satisfy your wishes, your harassment officer will work with you to determine the best approach.

Q6. I’m worried that if I seek advice, the perpetrator may enact revenge.
A. As necessary, your harassment officer may interview other relevant parties, including the perpetrator, with your consent. In such cases, your harassment officer will fully explain the “prohibition against retaliation” to the interviewees. Notwithstanding this explanation, if any retaliatory action is taken, such conduct itself will become a further issue and the harassment officer will take action accordingly.

If you have any other questions related to harassment consultation, please contact the Kanazawa University General Consultation Office (consult@adm.kanazawa-u.ac.jp 076-264-6154, 6160) or our harassment officers for harassment-related advice or questions about this guide.
What is academic harassment?

~Here are some examples~

- **Verbal abuse**: Abusive words were spoken about my employer repeatedly in my presence, which made me extremely upset. (Female undergraduate)
- **Unfair evaluation**: I felt disgusted to hear the academic adviser constantly telling students, “You can’t learn.” “You’re trash,” and “Just quit university.” Without providing any instructions, he said, “If your experiment fails again, you have to pay for it.” (Female graduate)
- **Coercion**: I assisted with research and supported my academic adviser because I was told that having a broad range of experiences under my belt would open up my future prospects. But I could not decide on a research topic. As a result, I could not concentrate on one thing and had a hard time. (Male undergraduate)
- **Obstruction**: Despite the fact that the academic adviser had a teaching assistant, he ordered me to make arrangements and prepare for his classes. Because of this, I could not concentrate on my studies. (Female doctoral candidate)
- **Excessive meddling**: I was forced to conduct experiments on weekends. I was told that the time spent attending the classes and practicals needed to earn credits were a waste, and I was not able to attend them. (Female doctoral candidate)
- **Other harassment**: Whenever I conversed with other teachers, my academic adviser spoke ill of those teachers afterwards and got angry with me. So I began to feel scared to speak to other teachers. (Female doctoral candidate)

- **Neglecting of responsibilities by academic adviser**
  - **Insufficient guidance**: Not receiving sufficient guidance to conduct graduation research and write a thesis, and not receiving necessary study and research advice. (Female undergraduate)
  - **Refusing to provide necessary documents and recommendation letters**: The academic adviser did not provide documents and recommendation letters required for applying to graduate schools and jobs that he/she was supposed to prepare. (Male graduate)

- **Discrimination**
  - **Sexual harassment**: Being subject to sexual violence or unpleasant behavior such as the use of obscene language, unnecessary touching including touching the shoulders and back, habitual staring, etc. (Female graduate)
  - **Withholding of essential information**: Being intentionally cut off from essential information such as scheduled events put on by the research unit. (Male graduate)
  - **Poor research environment**: Prohibited from using the office or not provided with a desk when usual practice is for everybody to have a desk. Or being the only one assigned to work in a poor research environment. (Male graduate)

- **Invasion of privacy**: You are not making progress with your research,” and “You really have time for that?” (Male graduate)

- **Alcohol-related harassment**: Even though I can’t hold alcohol, I was pressured to drink at parties and other occasions where alcohol consumption was a prominent feature. (Female graduate)

- **Moral harassment**: I was subject to extreme social harassment, such as being excluded and ignored. (Male graduate)