

# Don't turn a blind eye



**Sexual harassment : learn, prevent, protect**

a website  
[unige.ch/help](http://unige.ch/help)



**UNIVERSITÉ  
DE GENÈVE**

# It's not normal, it shouldn't happen – it's illegal!

**C., doctorante:** «Il était très gentil avec moi, il m'encourageait à réussir ma thèse, il voulait toujours aller boire le café après nos séances de travail. Moi, je n'avais pas envie mais j'y allais. Le jour où je lui ai dit que j'appréciais son soutien mais que je ne souhaitais plus l'accompagner au café, il n'a plus été le même homme. Il n'avait plus de temps à me consacrer, alors qu'il était mon directeur de thèse. Il ne cessait de répéter à qui voulait l'entendre que je n'avais pas les capacités pour mener à terme mon doctorat.»

**R. étudiante:** «J'ai terminé mon cursus et depuis toujours je voulais me spécialiser dans un certain domaine. Pour finir, j'ai renoncé à cause d'un professeur connu pour être rude avec les femmes et je suis partie dans un autre canton.»

**L., doctoral student:** "I've heard comments like: 'Oh, but she's a woman,' 'She'll get pregnant again soon,' and 'Well, she's busy with her children, she doesn't have time for that sort of thing.' Or when we need to work overtime or nights, people often say: 'She's a woman, she won't cope!'"

**M., employee:** "He bombarded me with text messages in the evening when I was at home. Even though I never replied to his messages, I didn't feel comfortable at work."

**R., étudiant:** «J'ai entendu des étudiants dire: 'De toute façon, les lesbiennes, ce sont des femmes qui n'ont pas su jouer avec des hommes'.»

**J., employee:** "I thought I fitted in in the laboratory. I'd never heard anyone say anything out of place, until one day I walked in on my colleagues talking about me: 'Are you talking about J., the faggot?' I didn't think my colleagues would talk about me like that. Things haven't been the same since."

**C., employee:** "The day I started my new job, one of my colleagues said: 'C.'s not here to program – she's here to give the programmers a reason to come to work.' And the worst thing is that he thought it was a compliment. It meant I was pretty enough to make a guy want to come to work. But all it did was to discredit me in the project manager's eyes. He didn't give me any work for a month."

**M., professor:** "As a female professor, I've noticed that some students systematically contradict me in class in a really arrogant way. I've spoken to male colleagues in the department; they say they've never encountered this attitude. So I think that if I were a man, I wouldn't have to put up with behaviour like that."

**M., student:** "The assistant always uses pet names. One day it's 'darling', the next 'sweetie' or 'my dear'. I hate it and when I tell him, he says that it doesn't bother him at all.n."

# Sexist and/or sexual harassment – who can I talk to?

## listening, advice, contact points

	External unit	Internal contact points					Societies	
	confiance@unige.ch	Academic supervisor or direct superior	Human resources	The Equality Office	Pôle santé social	Buildings, Logistics, and Safety Division	CUAE <sup>4</sup>	CELVS <sup>5</sup>
<b>For UNIGE students</b>	✓	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>For UNIGE staff<sup>1</sup></b>	✓	✓ <sup>3</sup>	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗
<b>Who?</b>	independent specialists	your direct superior, dean's office or manager	HR staff	management of the Office	psychologists	multidisciplinary team, violence prevention	students	students
<b>Where?</b>	confiance@unige.ch +41 79 684 11 08 +41 79 915 50 26	unige.ch	depends on your department www.unige.ch/adm/dirh/	egalite@unige.ch +41 22 379 12 68	+41 22 379 77 79 rue de Candolle 4 1204 Genève	respect@unige.ch	cuae@unige.ch	celvs.hs@gmail.com
<b>Confidential?<sup>6</sup></b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Free?</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>1</sup> If you are a member of staff and you feel that another member of staff is subjecting you to sexual and/or sexist harassment, you can address a complaint to the rectorate with a view to opening an investigation (articles 69 to 79 and 216 of the University Staff Regulations (Règlement sur le personnel de l'Université)).

<sup>2</sup> A member of teaching staff, a student counsellor and advisor and/or the dean's office of your faculty

<sup>3</sup> Your direct superior or senior manager, the dean's office or the management of an interfaculty centre

<sup>4</sup> The university conference of student associations

<sup>5</sup> The student collective against sexual violence and sexual harassment

<sup>6</sup> On a case-by-case basis

### A website

👉 unige.ch/help/en  
for all your questions about conflict  
or problems at work

### In an emergency

👉 Police 117  
👉 UNIGE internal security  
+41 22 379 12 22  
www.unige.ch/batiment/service-steps

# Don't turn a blind eye



**Sexual harassment: learn, prevent, protect**

a website  
[unige.ch/help](http://unige.ch/help)

[confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch)  
or  
through  
[unige.ch/legalite](http://unige.ch/legalite)  
confidential



[www.unige.ch](http://www.unige.ch)  
2020 Reprinted February

# Contents

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*“Any harassing behaviour of a sexual nature or other behaviour related to the person’s sex that adversely affects the dignity of women or men in the workplace is discriminatory. Such behaviour includes threats, the promise of advantages, the use of coercion and the exertion of pressure in order to obtain favours of a sexual nature.”*

GEA, Art. 4

<b>Sexist and/or sexual harassment – who can I talk to?</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Harassment is no joke</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Harassment is damaging</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>It’s happening to you</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>SURVIVAL KIT</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>It concerns you</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>WE CAN ALL DO OUR BIT TO CHANGE THINGS</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>You are a witness</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>TOLERANCE WON'T BE TOLERATED!</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Laws and regulations</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Find out more</b>	<b>56</b>

# Foreword

*"Many who live with violence day in day out assume that it is an intrinsic part of the human condition. But this is not so. Violence can be prevented. Violent cultures can be turned around. (...) Governments, communities and individuals can make a difference."\**  
Nelson Mandela

When it comes to equality, the University of Geneva must be beyond reproach, not only because its home city is a symbol of dialogue, peace and democracy, but also because as a centre for research and education, it has an undeniable impact on the future of our society and on that of everyone who studies and works here. The University needs to be in line with the strategy adopted for sustainable development in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

For all those reasons, our University must offer a professional and educational environment in which equality, respect, trust and compassion prevail. This is essential to ensuring that everyone here can give their best and that our University's excellence doesn't falter.

As a university, we cannot plead ignorance of the behaviours that – whether voluntarily or not – threaten these values. Such behaviour includes all the – unfortunately numerous – types of harassment: sexual, gender-based, moral, psychological and environmental.

Harassment is not only reprehensible because it can cause direct physical or psychological harm. It is also reprehensible – and perhaps even more so – because of the lasting, destructive effect it has on its victims. Victims see their environment as dangerous, feel attacked as human beings and, all too often, believe that they are responsible for the harassment they are subjected to.

To combat this scourge here at UNIGE, our starting point was to increase awareness. The massive **#UNIUNIE contre le harcèlement** (university united against harassment) campaign was the opportunity. It was a real wakeup call, and convinced everyone that action needed to be taken and that our tools for dealing with harassment needed reinforcing. The campaign had such a big impact that other universities used it too. We are very proud of what we have achieved.

On the Rectorate's initiative, UNIGE would become an environment in which no form of harassment would be tolerated. Zero tolerance is the goal, and combatting harassment has now become one of the Rectorate's top priorities.

\* Full references for all quotes can be found in the bibliography at the end of the guide.

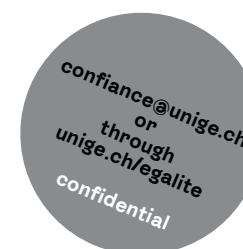
The University's commitment took shape in the form of this guide on how to stay alert in all situations. The aim of this document is to inform everyone concerned – whether they are a victim, a witness or a hierarchical superior – of the measures to be taken. It is also a tool for prevention, describing what harassment is in detail and ensuring nobody can plead ignorance. Zero tolerance is the responsibility of everybody here at UNIGE.

The proposed anti-harassment measures are part of a bigger picture. A university-wide system is now in place, so anyone who feels they are in danger, or who witnesses inappropriate behaviour, can easily find the right people, in order to deal with the problem quickly and efficiently thanks to the single point of contact : [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch). A website bringing together all the services and resources necessary in case of conflict or problems at work was launched in 2019.  
[www.unige.ch/help](http://www.unige.ch/help)

We initially printed 5,000 copies of this guide in French and 2,000 in English. They have now run out, which is why we have decided to reprint an updated version. We would like to express our warmest thanks to the federal equal opportunities programme. Without their support, none of this would have been possible.



*Yves Flückiger, Rector*  
February 2020



# Introduction

*“Both at the individual level and for society as a whole, there is no universal law that guides our actions. The rule of thumb is cultural diversity, made possible by the astounding malleability of the human brain.”*  
Catherine Vidal

The trigger for starting the anti-harassment campaign **#UNIUNIE contre le harcèlement** in 2017 was yet another case of a young, female researcher with a promising academic career ahead of her leaving the University because she was harassed in the workplace. She confided in well-meaning colleagues and superiors, but at the end of the day, nobody was able or knew how to protect her, even though she had asked for assistance. Unable to remain powerless in the face of such situations, the University of Geneva decided to take action to prevent and combat sexual and gender-based harassment through a wide-reaching information and awareness-raising campaign aimed at the entire UNIGE community, including both students and staff. The University also created the harassment prevention working group,\* in charge of implementing the proposed measures, such as a trustworthy channel of communication dedicated to this issue. That has now been done, through the creation of [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch). The working group also played an active role in developing this guide.

With these tools, UNIGE wants to create an excellent environment for studying and working, one in which respect and compassion prevail. There must be no harassment – the rule applies to everybody.

*“I also wrote The No Asshole Rule because there is so much evidence that civilized workplaces are not a naive dream, that they do exist, and that pervasive contempt can be erased and replaced with mutual respect when a team or organization is managed right – and civilized workplaces usually enjoy superior performance as well.”*  
Robert Sutton

Furthermore, the overall climate has been favourable to this initiative. It has become clear that people within the University have had enough, as demonstrated not only by the multiple complaints made to the University Assembly in recent years, but also by the cross-disciplinary symposium “Sexual harassment at university: Reflections on a taboo subject” organised on 15 April 2015 by the student collective against sexual violence and sexual harassment (CELVS-HS), and the Swiss campaign for education without harassment run by various associations in 2016. To find out more, visit the website: [www.formation-sans-harcèlement.ch/notre-revendication/](http://www.formation-sans-harcèlement.ch/notre-revendication/) (in French).

\* Marie-Claire Cors-Huber, Head of HR  
Nadine Frei, student, Secretary of the university conference of student associations (CUAE)  
Brigitte Gaillot, Vice Dean, Faculty of Science  
Natacha Hausmann, Head of Legal Services  
Jérôme Lacour, Dean, Faculty of Science  
Marylène Lieber, Professor, Gender Studies Institute, Geneva School of Social Sciences  
Brigitte Mantilleri, Head of the Equality Office, Chair  
Valeria Marino, student, member of the student collective against sexual violence and sexual harassment (CELVS)  
Liliane Zossou, Rectorate Administrator



Around the globe, people have had enough as well (just think of #MeToo), as portrayed by the mainstream media. Sexist remarks and other forms of harassment aimed at well-known scientists, politicians and artists are regularly criticised, and speech is becoming freer. This can only be a good thing. Initiatives have been launched by cities, such as the “*Stop sexism*” campaign (2016-2017) in Strasbourg. Paris, London and Geneva have all taken a stand against sexist advertising campaigns as well. And people have started talking about and reacting to harassment, for example with the “Musée du Harcèlement de Rue” (museum of harassment in the street) in Lausanne. Researchers, geographers, town planners and politicians are also increasingly looking at the question of women in public spaces for example Geneva’s action plan and campaign Objectif zéro sexisme dans ma ville (Target: No sexism in my city).<sup>1</sup>

This is all the more commendable given that sexual and gender-based harassment has been going on for such a long time, with incidents shrouded in silence and having an irreversible impact on the victims – and sometimes even resulting in PTSD. Harassment has a direct impact on the victim because it reduces their ability to do their work. It also has an indirect impact, as it adversely affects the working environment and therefore the performance of the whole team (Hirigoyen, 2017).

Harassment is also harmful to the image of prestigious, international teaching and research institutions such as UNIGE. A university tarnishes its reputation by failing to protect the most vulnerable social groups,<sup>2</sup> such as women, members of sexual and gender minorities and international students. The University of Geneva is proud that it attracts many students from abroad, for instance. They are usually alone and far from their families. For these young people, and for all our students, academic excellence cannot be achieved without respect, trust and compassion.

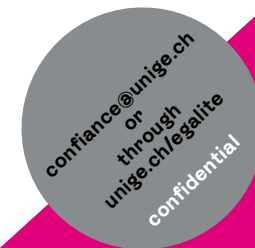
*“Rather than making fun of American excess concerning trials for sexual harassment, we would be better off implementing a prevention policy, enforcing respect for the individual in the workplace.”*  
Marie-France Hirigoyen

To properly fulfil its mission, ensure it covered all aspects of harassment and above all propose sustainable solutions, our group looked into how UNIGE goes about protecting women and minorities, examined the strengths and weaknesses of existing channels, identified shortcomings, and consulted extensively with people both inside and outside the University.

This aim of this guide is to help you identify sexual and gender-based harassment within the University, and to do your part to ensure that UNIGE achieves excellence by showing respect. This guide also provides information about our new, independent team of harassment experts, who you can contact at our completely secure email address: [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch). This unit is here for you if someone makes you feel uncomfortable, if you feel you are being harassed, if you want to tell someone about any inappropriate behaviour you have noticed, or if you want to make sure you take

the necessary action to protect your team. You will be listened to and provided with suitable advice.

\* *Harassment Prevention WG, Geneva, November 2017 / February 2020*



<sup>1</sup> Lieber, Marylène. 2008. *Genre, violences et espaces publics. La vulnérabilité des femmes en question*, Les Presses de Sciences Po.

Lieber, Marylène, Greset, Cécile and Perez-Rodrig, Stéphanie, 2019. *Le traitement pénal des violences sexuelles à Genève: une étude exploratoire*, IRS Working Paper n°14

<sup>2</sup> According to the Canadian study: *Violences sexuelles en milieu universitaire au Québec*, research report on the ESSIMU study, 2016.

# Harassment is no joke

*"At the heart of the struggle of feminism to give rape, date rape, marital rape, domestic violence, and workplace sexual harassment legal standing as crimes has been the necessity of making women credible and audible."  
Rebecca Solnit*

When we brought up the issue of harassment within the University, we noticed that knowledge of the subject is rather variable. Some people think that talking about harassment is over the top and can get in the way of friendly professional relationships. Others think that some things are ok while others are not, without defining the limit between these things. There are also people who are unaware of, or who prefer to ignore, the extent of the problem and the real impact it can have. Thankfully, many people within the University community respect the people around them and are well aware of the limits that shouldn't be crossed in a professional context. Having said that, if we want to prevent misconduct and promote a culture of respect, it is best to agree on the definitions of different types of harassment and to know what the law says. You will find information about the relevant legal texts on pages 53-55.

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<sup>3</sup> In *Le harcèlement et les violences à caractère sexuel dans le milieu universitaire*, a report adopted in 2016, the ad hoc working group noted that certain American and Canadian studies suggest alarming figures regarding sexual violence on university campuses. One states that between 15 and 25% of female college or university students will experience sexual violence during their studies. These figures have been confirmed by another US study, which reports that 10% of female students and 3% of male students experienced sexual violence in 2015.

## Sexual harassment

*"It never occurred to me to tell my boss. I hadn't realised it was sexual harassment – he'd never touched me, he'd never called me at home. I thought it was just the way things were. Especially as I wasn't the only one putting up with his disparaging remarks."*

*Quoted in a text by Véronique Ducret*

**Article 4 of the Federal Act on Gender Equality** (151.1) is perfectly clear about sexual harassment: **"Any harassing behaviour of a sexual nature or other behaviour related to the person's sex that adversely affects the dignity of women or men in the workplace is discriminatory. Such behaviour includes threats, the promise of advantages, the use of coercion and the exertion of pressure in order to obtain favours of a sexual nature"**.

So, by sexual harassment, we mean any suggestive behaviour or behaviour related to the person's sex (sexist) that is unwanted by the person it is aimed at, that occurs within the University, a library, an office, or elsewhere, during a seminar, a conference, a coffee break or a department party. This covers electronic messages and private phone calls too. In fact, it is the discomfort caused that is taken into account when determining whether harassment has occurred.<sup>4</sup> The perpetrator's intention and the frequency of the behaviour are not taken into account. The victim does, of course, need to provide proof of what happened to them.

*"I now work in a small team of eleven people. The men there behave appropriately towards women. They're comfortable in their own skin; they're there to get the job done; they're capable of getting on well with women. Respect is one of the company's values, which really changes the working environment."*

*Quoted in a text by Véronique Ducret*

Harassment can also be environmental<sup>5</sup> – i.e. not directed at one individual but generated by a sexist, stereotyped working environment. It might be an office or a laboratory where people pin up sexy photos, tell schoolboy jokes and put down women's skills but say it's just banter. Or it might be sexy calendars or supposedly ironic but clearly sexist posters for student nights. Together, these things create a working environment that belittles all women.

*"Masculinity seemed to be self-evident: bright, natural and the opposite of femininity. The last three decades have smashed this centuries-old truth. As women have set about redefining themselves, men have had to do the same. XY remains a constant, but masculine identity is no longer what it was. Which proves that it was never set in stone."*

*Elisabeth Badinter*

Sexism and everyday sexism<sup>6</sup> are often the starting point fort. But what are they?

**Sexism** at work is, firstly, any belief or conviction that leads someone to consider another person to be inferior because of their sex, gender<sup>7</sup> or sexual orientation, or to reduce them in any way to their sexual dimension. Secondly, it is any remark, action, behaviour or practice that is based on an unjustifiable distinction between people because of their sex, gender or sexual orientation which has an adverse effect on a person's wellbeing, work conditions and even employment. For example, believing that women are better at menial, multitasking or administrative jobs, or that they are too emotional for positions of responsibility, constitutes sexism.

**Everyday sexism** at work is any remark, attitude or behaviour that is based on sex or gender stereotypes that are directly or indirectly aimed at a person or a group of people because of their sex or gender. Although it might seem trivial, the aim or the impact – whether conscious or unconscious – is to undermine and belittle people, in either an insidious or a "caring" way, and, as such, these actions can affect a person's psychological or physical wellbeing.

<sup>4</sup> In their report *Violences sexuelles en milieu universitaire au Québec*, female Canadian researchers add the notion of a rape culture which "aims to include in analysis the social environment that (re) produces this type of violence that mainly targets women and that blames victims whilst absolving perpetrators of blame". The idea of rape culture was first developed by American feminists in the 1970s to refer to a set of parameters that govern sexual assaults committed on university campuses and in sporting circles (Buchwald et al., 1993).

<sup>5</sup> The appeals court in Orléans, France, stated that "sexual harassment can consist of a sexist environment or atmosphere in which, without being directly targeted, the victim is subjected to provocations and obscene or vulgar jokes that become unbearable" (AC Orléans, 7 February 2017, source: Association française contre les violences faites aux femmes (AVFT; French association against violence against women) during the Education Sud course: *Harcèlement à l'université* (Harassment in universities)).

<sup>6</sup> Definitions based on the French *vade mecum: Le harcèlement sexuel dans l'enseignement supérieur et la recherche*, reprinted in 2017.

<sup>7</sup> The word "sex" refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that distinguish men and women. The word "gender" refers to socially determined roles, behaviours, activities and attributes considered appropriate for men or women.

Everyday sexism at work might take the form of sexist jokes or comments, remarks about motherhood, stereotypes, rudeness or disrespect, unwelcome compliments or criticisms about a person's physical appearance, or practices that exclude people.

#### Some examples of unwanted remarks

- Sending suggestive messages (using social media, by text message, by email, etc.);
- Comments and remarks about someone's physical appearance, attitude or clothes;
- Discussions of a sexual nature;
- Sexist jokes and banter;
- Homophobic or transphobic comments;
- Intrusive questions about someone's private life or sex life;
- Insistent, unwanted propositions;
- Making a pass at someone or blackmail

#### Some example of inappropriate actions

- Looking at someone suggestively and/or insistently;
- Wolf whistling;
- Displaying sexually connoted images or objects;
- Touching someone's hand, arm or shoulder;
- Stroking, brushing up against or pinching someone;
- Trying to kiss someone.

### Psychological harassment

Moral or psychological harassment, which may also be referred to as mobbing or bullying, needs to be included in these definitions too. As Marie-France Hirigoyen, author of *Harcèlement moral au travail* (2017; *Moral harassment at work*) wrote, sexual harassment is just one more step towards moral harassment. It has been observed that when a person spurns a sexual advance, sexual harassment often turns into moral harassment, with derogatory remarks about the quality of the person's work or research, the individual being marginalised, and so on. However, under Swiss law, psychological and sexual harassment are two distinct phenomena, subject to different conditions (the frequency and intention are not criteria for determining sexual harassment) and entitling victims to different compensation (under the Gender Equality Act, the victim is entitled to a compensatory payment in the event of sexual harassment).

**According to the Federal Supreme Court, psychological harassment or mobbing** “is a series of hostile comments or behaviours that are repeated frequently over a relatively long period, with which one or several people try to marginalise or exclude a person in their workplace”. The perpetrator may be a group or an individual, and the mobbing may be between colleagues at the same hierarchical level or different hierarchical levels.

*“This book traces the transformation of the ideal of virility in western society: the expectation of perfection, the model of control and domination directing itself in accordance with cultures and times.”*

*Alain Corbin*

### So no more flirting then ?

Not at all. Flirting and sexual harassment should not be confused. The first is a two-way, constructive connection based on mutual consent, whereas the second is one-way, degrading and hurtful. The person targeted finds themselves in an uncomfortable situation and obliged to adopt avoidance strategies such as changing their schedule, location (library, office, etc.), course, department or service, or even leaving the university.

However, within the University, a note of caution is still necessary regarding any intimate relationship with a hierarchical superior that could have an impact on either person's career. That is why Harvard University,<sup>8</sup> for example, officially banned intimate and/or romantic relationships between faculty members and undergraduate students in February 2015. The aim is to protect younger students from the consequences of unequal relationships.

## Harassment is no joke

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*"It's time to get over being a woman, not having been born a woman, but having been brought up as a woman in a man's world, having lived every step of your life with men's eyes and men's values."*

*Benoîte Groult*

## And no more kindness either?

Kindness means having a favourable disposition towards someone. Once again, you need to ask yourself whether the person on the receiving end sees it that way. If they feel belittled or deprived of autonomy, your actions no longer count as kindness. But if they feel supported in their work or studies, then they do.



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<sup>8</sup> As part of a formal process to review Harvard University's Title IX policy, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Committee on Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures, led by Professor Alison Johnson, determined that the existing language on relationships of unequal status did not explicitly reflect the faculty's expectations of what constituted an appropriate relationship between undergraduate students and faculty members. Therefore, the Committee revised the policy to include a clear prohibition to better accord with these expectations.

# Harassment is damaging

*"The word is so powerful that one word can change a life  
or destroy the lives of millions of people."  
Don Miguel Ruiz*

Harassment is still a taboo subject, and victims tend to cover up their experiences and leave without really telling anyone what happened or explaining how they suffered. It is therefore important to clarify how harassment can have an impact on victims.<sup>9</sup> This will also help you to spot problems among the people around you.

## Consequences

### On the victim's health

Victims suffer as a result of harassment, sometimes even years later. This may manifest itself in different ways, including insomnia, a loss of self-confidence (a bubbly, outgoing person may become distrustful and quiet), lack of concentration, forgetfulness, social anxiety, depression, etc. The victim may also experience typical manifestations of fear and anxiety: migraines, backache, stomach pains, ulcers, asthma or anxiety attacks. Finally, victims may develop addictions to various substances, such as tobacco, alcohol, psychotropic drugs, etc.

### On the victim's social relationships

Harassment makes it more difficult for the victim to trust the people around them and may lead to withdrawal. They often have to change where they study or work to protect themselves from their aggressor, which leaves them isolated. What's more, colleagues often turn against a person who dares to report harassment.

### On the victim's studies

Harassment can hinder the victim's academic success and force them to keep things to themselves, or to change subject or thesis supervisor, or the topic of their thesis or post-doc. The victim may have to take a break from their studies, fail exams or end up dropping out altogether.

### On the victim's career

There are instances of people's career progression being hampered by an aggressor who is a hierarchical superior and gives the victim poor evaluations, doesn't invite them to committee meetings, team meetings or seminars, or prevents them from publishing their work, obtaining funding and accessing permanent or more senior jobs. This may lead the victim to change jobs, revise down their professional ambitions or completely abandon their academic career.

### On an institution's reputation

Instances of sexual harassment within a university seriously undermine the university's ability to fulfil its missions to teach and conduct research.

<sup>9</sup> This section is largely based on the French *vade mecum* *Le harcèlement sexuel dans l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche* (2017) and Véronique Ducret's *Pour une entreprise sans harcèlement sexuel. Un guide pratique* (2001).

# It's happening to you

## You are a student or a member of UNIGE staff

*"Ideally you react as quickly as possible, before you are bogged down in a situation with no solution other than leaving."*

*Marie-France Hirigoyen*

It is not easy to admit that you are being harassed and that you are therefore a victim. Often, you think that you are imagining things, or you don't realise that what's happening to you is harassment. After a while, you realise it is harassment, but then there's the question of time. Why didn't you react more quickly? Doesn't that give the impression that you accepted the situation, or that it was your fault? What will people around you think? Isn't it too late to do anything?

You may feel trapped – scared of doing nothing and of having to carry on enduring the harassment, scared of speaking up, scared that nobody will believe you. All too often, people don't speak up, believing that it will stop or that the situation will get better eventually. Then people end up confiding in someone but asking them to keep it a secret, which allows the perpetrator to continue to act with impunity.

### Identify the situation!

*"We feel glued to our chairs during conversations and meetings with nasty people. Listen to author Nick Hornby when he gives 'one of the only bits of advice I have to offer younger generations: you're allowed to walk out'."*

*Robert Sutton*

**Refer to the definitions** in this guide in order to better identify and understand what is happening to you. Don't forget that the person who is harassing you could hurt you – don't be naive about the situation and don't confide in just anybody.

**Collecting evidence** is very important, so that you have a precise record and details of the situation, as long-term memories aren't always reliable. Vague accusations without a clear timeframe could serve against you. You need to act quickly, if possible from the first signs of harassment. Keep a diary or logbook, with any emails, messages and other problematic documents. Note all the comments, attitudes, behaviours and interactions that bother you and/or make you feel uncomfortable, with clear examples. Writing it down will help you to see things more clearly, to explain what is happening and to take a step back. It will also help you to gauge the full extent of the problem and how the situation has evolved. This timeline of big and small events will enable you to put together a case and to calmly make decisions if you start more formal proceedings. An example logbook (in French) can be downloaded here: [www.non-c-non.ch/documents-a-telecharger.html](http://www.non-c-non.ch/documents-a-telecharger.html)

## React!

**Tell the person who is harassing you that you object to their behaviour**, if you think the problem can be sorted out that way. You could send them a letter by registered post, or an email. In either case, keep a copy. However, don't be put off by comments aiming to minimise the harassment such as: You're too sensitive; I didn't mean to hurt you; you've got no sense of humour; you're exaggerating; etc. As the law says, what's important is how it makes you feel. But don't isolate yourself – talk to people you trust about your feelings. If need be, they can give evidence on your behalf.

**Confide in someone you are close to.** Having regularly talked about what is happening to you will prove essential when the story comes out. The person close to you will be able to confirm that you were worried, say how long the situation has been going on, and state that you are telling the truth.

**Talk to people around you**, such as friends, peers and hierarchical superiors. Broach the subject in general terms at first in order to test the water, then be more specific. There is a high chance you will realise that you're not alone, as harassment is often repeated. That might mean you can take group action, find witnesses and people to support you, or at least mention other instances to support your case. If your superiors are sympathetic, they can take action and protect you as necessary.

**Get in touch with [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch)** for expert support and someone to listen to you and advise and guide you with your case – all confidentially.

**You could also file a criminal complaint** with the public prosecutor's office. You have three months after the last event occurred to file a complaint. However, the process can be long and complicated. You can get help from the victim support centre "Centre LAVI", from the association "Viol-Secours", which assists victims of rape, or from a specialist lawyer.

## At UNIGE

➔ Refer to "Sexist and/or sexual harassment – who can I talk to?" on pages 2 and 3.

➔ [www.unige.ch/help/en](http://www.unige.ch/help/en)

## In Geneva

➔ **Centre Loi fédérale sur l'aide aux victimes d'infractions (LAVI)**  
Boulevard de Saint-Georges 72, 1205 Geneva  
022 320 01 02  
[info@centrelavi-ge.ch](mailto:info@centrelavi-ge.ch)  
[www.centrelavi-ge.ch](http://www.centrelavi-ge.ch)

➔ **Association Viol-Secours**  
Place des Charmilles 3, 1203 Geneva  
022 345 20 20  
[info@viol-secours.ch](mailto:info@viol-secours.ch)  
[www.viol-secours.ch](http://www.viol-secours.ch)

➔ **Procureur général du Ministère public**  
Route de Chancy 6B, 1213 Lancy  
022 327 64 63/64

[confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch)  
or  
through  
[unige.ch/egalite](http://unige.ch/egalite)

confidential





### Find out more

- **Collet, Margaux and Rémy-Leleu, Raphaëlle**, 2019. *Beyoncé est-elle féministe ? ...et autres questions pour comprendre le féminisme*. First Editions.
- **Collet, Margaux, Guiraud, Claire, Günbay, Mine, Sabathier, Romain and Bousquet, Danielle**, 2019. *Le Féminisme pour les Nul.le.s*. EDI8.
- **Naezer, Marijke, Van den Brink, Marieke and Benschop, Yvonne**, 2019. Harassment in Dutch academia. Exploring manifestations, facilitating factors, effects and solutions. LNVH. [https://www.lnvh.nl/uploads/moxiemanager/LNVH\\_rapport\\_‘\\_Harassment\\_in\\_Dutch\\_academia\\_\\_Exploring\\_manifestations\\_facilitating\\_factors\\_\\_effects\\_and\\_solutions\\_’\\_pdf](https://www.lnvh.nl/uploads/moxiemanager/LNVH_rapport_‘_Harassment_in_Dutch_academia__Exploring_manifestations_facilitating_factors__effects_and_solutions_’_pdf)
- **Magazine Causette**, 2019. *30 histoires de femmes infréquentables. Hors-série*.
- **National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine**, 2018. *Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine*. The National Academies Press.
- **Hirigoyen, Marie-France**, 2017. *Le harcèlement moral au travail. Que sais-je ?*
- **Magazine Causette**, February 2017. *Fais ta thèse et tais-toi !* pp 51–54.
- **BEFG**, 2017. *Le harcèlement sexuel sur le lieu de travail*. <https://www.ebg.admin.ch/ebg/fr/home/themes/travail/le-harcelement-sexuel-sur-le-lieu-de-travail.html>
- **Clashes**, 2015. *Le harcèlement sexuel dans l'enseignement supérieur et la recherche. Guide pratique pour s'informer et se défendre*.
- **Ducret, Véronique**, 2010. *Qui a peur du harcèlement sexuel ? Des femmes témoignent*. Georg.
- **SECO/BFEG**, 2008. *Rien de plus payant qu'une bonne ambiance de travail*.
- **SECO/BFEG**, 2008. *Sexual harassment in the workplace – A guide for employees*.



### Self-help references

- **De Villaines, Astrid**, 2019. *Harcelées*. Plon.
- **Miller, Barbara**, 2018. **#FEMALE PLEASURE** – Five women, Five cultures, One story. Documentary film.
- **Emma**, 2017. *Un autre regard*. Massot.
- **Joly, Salomé and Meynet, Sibylline**, 2017. *Silencieuse(s)*. Perspectives Art.
- **Bennet, Jessica**, 2016. *Feminist Fight Club: An Office Survival Manual*. Penguin Random House.
- **Bates, Laura**, 2016. *Girl Up*. Simon & Schuster.
- **Sandberg, Sheryl**, 2013. *Lean In*. Deckel Edge
- **Bates, Laura**, 2014. *Everyday Sexism*. Simon & Schuster.
- **Grésy, Brigitte**, 2009. *Petit traité de sexisme ordinaire*. Albin Michel.
- **US universities**: TitleX10/ Sexual Assault Resources. [www.justice.gov/crt/fcs/TitleX-SexDiscrimination](http://www.justice.gov/crt/fcs/TitleX-SexDiscrimination)

- **UK universities**: *Changing the culture* (2016). Report of the Universities UK Taskforce examining violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students. [www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/changing-the-culture-final-report.aspx](http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/changing-the-culture-final-report.aspx)
- **Fem Do Chi**: Self-defence for women and teenagers (in French). <http://www.femdochi.ch/>
- **MedFem**: The medical feminists (in French). <https://www.medfem.org/>



### Online resources

- The blog **Paye ta shnek** was launched in 2012 for reporting sexual harassment in public spaces: <https://www.instagram.com/payetashnek>
- The blog **Paye ta fac** catalogues instances of sexism experienced on a day-to-day basis in French universities: [www.payetafac.tumblr.com/https://infokiosques.net/feminismes\\_genre](http://www.payetafac.tumblr.com/https://infokiosques.net/feminismes_genre)
- Juliette Boutant and Thomas Mathieu share their comic strips on everyday sexism on **Projet crocodiles**: [www.projetcrocodiles.tumblr.com/](http://www.projetcrocodiles.tumblr.com/)
- [www.clashes.fr](http://www.clashes.fr)
- [www.emmaclit.com/](http://www.emmaclit.com/)
- Laura Bates's **Everyday Sexism Project** exists to catalogue instances of sexism experienced on a day-to-day basis: <https://everydaysexism.com>
- <http://www.formation-sans-harcelement.ch/notre-revendication/>
- [www.mirionmalle.com/](http://www.mirionmalle.com/)
- <http://non-c-non.ch/je-subis-du-harcelement-sexuel/temoignages.html>
- [www.osezlefeminisme.fr](http://www.osezlefeminisme.fr)
- <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2016/changing-the-culture.pdf>
- **Défendre Polanski en 2019**: 5 arguments indignes: <https://manifesto-21.com/defendre-polanski-en-2019-5-arguments-indignes/>
- **Adèle Haenel's testimony** (in French): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFRPci2wK2Y>

<sup>10</sup> Title IX prohibits sex discrimination in all university programmes and activities, including, but not limited to, admissions, recruiting, financial aid, academic programmes, student services, counseling and guidance, discipline, class assignment, grading, recreation, athletics, housing, and employment. Sexual harassment and sexual violence are forms of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX. Title IX also prohibits retaliation against people for making or participating in complaints of sex discrimination.

**SURVIVAL KIT****FOCUS ON WHAT IS POSSIBLE**

In her book *Pink Brain, Blue Brain: How Small Differences Grow into Troublesome Gaps - and What We Can Do About It* (2009), American professor of neuroscience Lise Eliot explains that studies carried out on the most talented adolescents confirm that intelligence and excellence at school are more closely linked to the capacities shared by boys and girls than by the stereotypical roles of each sex. And the earlier we intervene to influence neuronal and synaptic development in children, the better our chances of raising boys and girls with diverse, well-balanced skills.

**GATHER STRENGTH**

"Mature, eloquent and passionate, Bates is in many ways the voice of her generation" is what it says on the cover of her book *Girl Up*, which she wrote after the bestseller *Everyday Sexism*. In this book, Laura Bates<sup>11</sup> calls on young women to take control of their lives. The chapters have eloquent titles, for example "Fakebook, Fitter and Instaglam", "Making Waves", "Don't Be Shy, Aim High" and "It's My Face and I'll Smile If I Want To". She also gives very clear examples of how to rid yourself of the sexist stereotypes that hold women back: "Why does 'asking for it' have to be a bad thing anyway? There are lots of things girls often don't ask for because we don't want to seem needy, greedy, or boastful. These include: Asking for a promotion; asking for extra help; asking for love; asking for space; asking for seconds; asking for an explanation; asking for honesty; asking for a pay rise; asking for answers; asking for a re-mark; asking for a second chance; asking for support; asking for more; asking for cake"

**VISIT AN UPLIFTING WEBSITE**

French website *Les Glorieuses* deals with all sorts of subjects and gives its readers strength and courage in a joyous, light-hearted manner. Its founder, Rebecca Amsellen, said, "I want to show women and teenage girls that there are lots of female role models, even if they're studying in schools that are almost certainly named after a white man - just like all those streets they walk down. But I also want to remove their inhibitions, to make them forget the guilt that magazines and adverts inflict on them. (...) Advertisements in the 2000s popularised the image of fragile, naive, romantic women, which does not encourage women to develop strong characters."

**FUNNY AND PRACTICAL**

*Feminist Fight Club* is a light-hearted, positive book aimed at making you more combative. Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook COO and author of *Lean In*, is quite right in describing the book as "engaging, hilarious and practical". It contains judicious, lively analysis, tips and tricks, as well as extremely clear advice about things not to say, for example, when negotiating a job, such as: "I'm getting married"; "I followed my husband"; etc.

**DISPLAY SOLIDARITY**

In a chapter of this book entitled *Maninterrupter*<sup>12</sup> about the bad habit of always interrupting women who are speaking during meetings, the author suggests one possible way of reacting: when a female student, doctoral student, postdoc, employee, manager or professor is interrupted, you - whether you're a man or a woman - should intervene by saying "Um, you could let her finish!" It's simple and effective.

<sup>11</sup> Laura Bates BEM (born 27 August 1986) is a British feminist writer. She founded the *Everyday Sexism Project* website in April 2012. Her first book, *Everyday Sexism*, was published in 2014. She received the British Empire Medal for services to gender equality.

<sup>12</sup> On 18 June 2017, Swiss newspaper *Le Matin Dimanche* had a whole page about manspreading, the maninterrupter and mansplaining.

## DARE TO GO FOR IT

In *King Kong Theory* (Serpent's Tail, 2009), Virginie Despentes shakes things up, saying that women's abandonment of the world of politics (ed.'s note - or academic careers) demonstrates their reluctance to be emancipated. She goes on to say that it is true that to succeed in politics (ed.'s note - or an academic career), you need to be ready to sacrifice your femininity, because you need to be ready to fight, win and demonstrate power. You need to forget being gentle, agreeable and obliging. You need to allow yourself to dominate other people in public, and to stop waiting for their approval, and exercise power head-on without simpering or apologising - there aren't many competitors who will thank you for beating them.

## TRY HUMOUR

In her book *Petit traité de sexisme ordinaire* (Albin Michel, 2009; *A Short Treatise on Everyday Sexism*), Brigitte Grésy points out that there aren't many sexist jokes about men. There is no equivalent to blonde jokes, or jokes about idiots. She believes that making fun of oppressors is *very cathartic* and makes it possible to take a step back and catch your breath.

## AND SHIFT THE PERSPECTIVE

Brigitte Grésy says that shifting the perspective is the best technique of all, but it requires a certain level of maturity and self-confidence. If you've got that, *go for it*: Rephrase comments as questions, ask the other person what bothered them about your attitude or your behaviour, or what their aim is in attacking you like that. The simplest questions - like "What do you want from me? Do you want to ask me something?" - can be extremely effective. Grésy provides a list of extremely clear questions to use in case of everyday sexism.

## TALK STRATEGY

In his book *The No Asshole Rule*, Robert Sutton, Professor of Management at the Stanford University School of Engineering, says that conversations between victims can be particularly constructive when they *share strategies* that have helped them to deal with attacks by "ogres". He mentions several techniques in his chapter "Survival Guide", including that of achieving small, constructive victories.

## FIGHT THE FIGHT

When someone invades your space and bothers you, your reaction is probably to smile or laugh uncomfortably. Here are some tips from a feminist *self-defence workshop*:

- Don't hesitate to show you're annoyed. Set limits, straight away.
- Try to always feel well grounded - stand firm inside your protective bubble. Visualise a clear space around you. If someone enters this space and you don't like it, remember that *you can always say no*.
- If you get overwhelmed by a situation, don't know how to react and don't do anything, don't blame yourself. There's no need to worry - you can *take your time*. Perhaps you could email the person to explain what bothered you, how it made you feel and how you'd like things to pan out in the future.
- If you didn't like a situation, or if you have the impression that you have been harassed, talk it over with people who understand that type of situation, whether it's someone you are close to or a specialist. Tell them what happened to you and they will be able to qualify the behaviour and help you to react accordingly.



# It concerns you

## You are a hierarchical superior on UNIGE staff

*"Make sure the communication is clear. If you don't understand, ask. Have the courage to ask questions until you are as clear as you can be, and even then do not assume you know all there is to know about a given situation."*

*Don Miguel Ruiz*

### Prevent!

Whether you're the head of a unit, department, faculty or the whole university, the information in this guide will help you to define the problem and understand the severity of events. This is important because as a manager, it is your responsibility to create a respectful working environment without harassment. There are several preventive measures you can put in place:

**Present the Code of ethics and professional conduct for the Geneva institutions of higher education** ([www.unige.ch/ethique/charter/](http://www.unige.ch/ethique/charter/)) during a meeting with your team, department or college and clearly set out the requisite rules and behaviours.

**Remind your team that harassment is illegal**, and provide some examples of inappropriate behaviour (see p. 20). Use this opportunity to start a discussion.

**Hand out copies of this guide** to all your staff, give them the email address [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch) and look at the website [www.unige.ch/help/en](http://www.unige.ch/help/en).

**Provide information by organising a meeting** with an expert to answer everybody's questions.

**Explain diversity** and point out that mixed teams perform better than non-mixed teams and that for you a blend of genders, ethnicities and backgrounds is important.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Mathias Wullum Nielsen, Sharla Alegria, Love Börjeson, Henry Etkowitz, Holly J. Falk-Krzesinski, Aparna Joshi, Erin Leahey, Laurel Smith-Doerr, Anita Williams Woolley & Londa Schiebinger, 2017. Opinion: Gender diversity leads to better science. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 8, pp 1,740–1,742.

## Keep your eyes open!

Take all necessary measures to identify situations that could get out of control, unhealthy environments or inappropriate behaviour. If you are not a specialist, you can of course read this guide and some of the other sources listed further on, but you could also get tips from [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch), which is there to advise you and help you take the appropriate steps.

## Take action!

*"Those who really know the art of war never get it wrong when they make a move, are never caught out when they act.*

*That is why it is said that: 'If you know the enemy and you know yourself,*

*your victory will not stand in doubt; if you know Heaven and know*

*Earth, you may make your victory complete.'"*

*Sun Tzu*

You are required to take action if you become aware of instances of harassment, and to take all necessary measures to stop the harassment and protect your staff.

**Meet with the person and listen to them.** You'll find some questions to help you prepare your meeting and to guide you here (in French): [www.non-c-non.ch/documents-a-telecharger](http://www.non-c-non.ch/documents-a-telecharger).

At the end of the meeting, make a precise, word-for-word **note** of what was said in case you are called as a witness months or even years later.

Use this guide to **provide the victim with clear indications** about the process to follow.

**Ask for help** from [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch) to make sure you get it right. Specialists are available to provide you with confidential advice.

**Intervene** directly by calling the accused individual(s) to your office and reminding them of the University's rules. Once again, if you are not sure whether you are doing the right thing, get in touch with [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch).

**Don't be too suspicious** of the person making the complaint. False accusations are fairly rare and even if the facts seem exaggerated the person will really be suffering, which requires action independent of trying to work out who is responsible. In most cases, it will have been extremely difficult for the person to come forward and talk to you about their situation. They will feel embarrassed and know that they are in a weak position because of the possible negative consequences.

**Talk to your boss.** If you have a hierarchical superior, you must talk to them to see how you can intervene to stop the unacceptable behaviour and raise awareness to prevent the same thing from happening again.

**Protect and support** the person as they take action.

[confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch)  
or  
through  
[unige.ch/legalite](http://unige.ch/legalite)  
confidential

**Don't forget [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch).** People who have experienced moral harassment may also come to you – it is easier to report than sexual harassment. If you are unsure, and require clarification, get in touch with [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch).



#### Other guides

- **Daley, Lauren P., Travis, Dnika J., Schaffer, Emily S.**, 2018. *Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: How Companies Can Prepare, Prevent, Respond, and Transform Their Culture*, Catalyst.
- <https://www.catalyst.org/research/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace-how-companies-can-prepare-prevent-respond-and-transform-their-culture/>
- **ANEF, CLASCHES, CPED**, 2017. *Le harcèlement dans l'enseignement supérieur et la recherche, Vade-mecum à l'usage des établissements*. France.
- **SECO**, 2016. *Liste de contrôle: Harcèlement sexuel sur le lieu de travail*.
- **SECO**, 2008. *Sexual harassment in the workplace – Information for employers*.
- **Ducret, Véronique**, 2001. *Pour une entreprise sans harcèlement sexuel. Un guide pratique*. Georg.



#### Publications and reports

- Association Nationale des DRH, 2019. Prévenir le harcèlement sexuel au travail: repères pour les RH. ANDRH&Territoires. <https://www.andrh.fr/actualites/807/prevenir-le-harcèlement-sexuel-au-travail-reperes-pour-les-rh-livre-blanc-andrh>
- **Hirigoyen, Marie-France**, 2017. *Le harcèlement moral au travail. Paris: Que sais-je?, PUF*.
- **BCI**, 2016. *Sexual Harassment and Violence in the University Context: Report from the Task Force on Policies and Procedures Pertaining to Sexual Harassment and Violence*, Montreal.
- **Grésy, Brigitte**, 2009. *Petit traité de sexisme ordinaire*. France: Albin Michel.
- **Faniko, Klea**, 2016. *Carrière académique à l'Université de Genève: le facteur humain*. UNIGE Equality Office.
- **Grésy, Brigitte**, 2009. *Petit traité de sexisme ordinaire*. Albin Michel.
- **Sutton, Robert**, 2010. *The No Asshole Rule: Building a Civilized Workplace and Surviving One That Isn't*. Piatkus.
- **Hirigoyen, Marie-France**, 2001. *Le harcèlement moral dans la vie professionnelle*. La Découverte&Syros.



#### Websites

- [www.clashes.fr](http://www.clashes.fr)
- **France culture's website**: Hervé Gardette's programme: Sexisme: quand y'en a plus y'en a encore, 27 June 2017. [www.franceculture.fr/emissions/du-grain-moudre/sexisme-quand-yen-plus-yen-encore](http://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/du-grain-moudre/sexisme-quand-yen-plus-yen-encore)
- Juliette Boutant and Thomas Mathieu share their comic strips on everyday sexism on **Projet crocodiles**: [www.projetcrocodiles.tumblr.com/](http://www.projetcrocodiles.tumblr.com/)



#### Legal aspects

- Code of ethics and professional conduct for the Geneva institutions of higher education
- **Laws and regulations**, p. 53
- **Lempen, Karine**, 2015. Les procédures relatives au harcèlement sexuel dans le secteur privé ou public, in *Conflits au travail. Prévention, gestion, sanctions*. Eds. J.-P. Dunand, P. Mahon. Schulthess, pp 265–274.

**WE CAN ALL DO OUR BIT TO CHANGE THINGS**

**After a class, the professor keeps a doctoral student behind. She thinks it's about her doctorate. But no - the professor invites her out for a meal. She's really embarrassed and says no. He insists and she leaves, feeling upset.**

**> Don't let it go - react!** This is unacceptable at UNIGE. The young woman should talk about it with a colleague or professor, and witnesses should get involved.

Contact [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch)

**A professor says to a postdoc that it's not a good time to get pregnant.**

**> Don't let it go - react!** The postdoc should report what happened.

Any witnesses should get involved, and the dean should take the opportunity to remind people that such intrusions into people's private lives are unacceptable.

Contact [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch)

**A professor notices that a male doctoral student is rather heavy-handed and intrusive with a female student.**

**> Don't let it go - react!** It is important that witnesses get involved to lay down the rules regarding respect, or to report unacceptable behaviour.

Contact [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch)

**A doctoral student tells her thesis supervisor that his assistant didn't take it well when she turned him down and has been sabotaging her work ever since.**

**> Don't let it go - react!** The thesis supervisor should not immediately believe his assistant if he denies it. He should talk to his assistant and other witnesses, and intervene if necessary.

Contact [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch)

**A professor gives female assistants more supervisory, administrative and teaching work than the male assistants, which gets in the way of the female assistants' own research.**

**> Don't let it go - react!** The professor should be made aware that job descriptions must be complied with and that professors are responsible for their doctoral students' success.

Contact [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch)

**The head of a unit thinks that sexist jokes or putting your hand on someone's arm aren't harassment.**

**> Don't let it go - react!** Witnesses, colleagues or hierarchical superiors should remind the person that any behaviour that makes someone else feel uncomfortable constitutes a type of abuse.

**It's not the intention that matters, but the way it makes the recipient feel. Give them a copy of this guide.**

Contact [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch)



**A professor notices that a doctoral student behaves in a macho and homophobic way.**

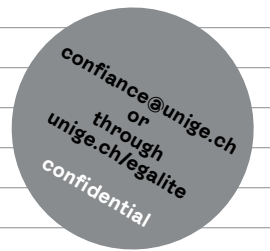
**> Don't let it go - react!** They need to intervene and remind the doctoral student that this type of behaviour is not allowed at UNIGE. They can give them a copy of this guide or remind them of the law. Contact [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch).

"Rather than role models, people need equal access to information, opportunity, and recognition. People need fairness. Fairness does not guarantee that people will always be rewarded according to their merits, but that no one will be rewarded more often than someone else because of membership in a particular group. Fairness means that an average woman has as great a chance of success as an average man."

Virginia Valian

**A professor has systematically forgotten to copy a researcher into group emails since she got pregnant.**

**> Don't let it go - react!** Find a way to keep your colleague in the loop - systematically copy her into any replies you send. Contact [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch).



**A student who is finishing her Master's turns down an assistant's advances. When she needs a letter of recommendation, the assistant won't write one for her.**

**> Don't let it go - react!** The student can get in touch with the student collective against sexual violence and sexual harassment (CELVS), which will tell her about possible courses of action, including writing to the Rectorate, and meeting with or speaking to the assistant concerned. Contact [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch).

"A revolution I tell you, since women started coming out of the drawer. Not the closet. The drawer. The bottom drawer. The one they've always occupied in the chest of drawers of humanity. They don't want to be at the bottom anymore. They want to be on the same level. They're coming out as human beings."

Isabelle Alonso

# You are a witness

## You are a student or a member of UNIGE staff

*"Bullies drive witnesses and bystanders out of their jobs, just as they do to "firsthand" victims."  
Robert Sutton*

At UNIGE, we want the working and studying environment to be built on trust and respect. That means that people who see other people saying or doing inappropriate things should come forward and take action, both to show people that there are limits here at UNIGE and to help the harassed person and make them feel less isolated. It is also important to act as a witness for other people. We are all responsible for creating this environment, which should help to prevent this type of abuse in the long term.

### Assess the situation!

It is not easy to be a witness to inappropriate behaviour by someone you see every day, whose work, talent and commitment you may admire. It is even harder in a very hierarchical institution where a certain mutual dependence can mean people feel sworn to secrecy. All this comes against a backdrop of negligence, in a society in which people don't really care too much about the impact of harassment.

Go to: [www.unige.ch/help/en](http://www.unige.ch/help/en)

### Listen!

As a witness, you can listen to the victim in confidence, give them a copy of this guide and talk to them about [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch). You could also offer to support them, and assure them that you won't do anything without their consent.

*“A wise general always takes into account, in his calculations, both the advantages and the drawbacks of an option. He sees the benefits and can attempt an undertaking; he does not underestimate risks and avoids inconveniences.”*  
Sun Tzu

## Intervene!

In this type of situation, there is no point in behaving like Don Quixote. Instead you need to behave like a strategist who understands the human psyche and the power games within the university. Don't hesitate to look at [www.unige.ch/help/en](http://www.unige.ch/help/en), or to ask for advice from [confiance@unige.ch](mailto:confiance@unige.ch), or people familiar with handling this type of situation. You need to protect yourself and the person you want to help. For that, you must ensure you are fully aware of the repercussions of your actions, and who your allies are. If you feel comfortable doing so, you can, of course, talk directly to the person behaving inappropriately and remind them of UNIGE's rules and the law.

## Be supportive!

You can also help a victim to report harassment, and act as a witness for them. Again, don't do anything without their consent and without evaluating the possible consequences at each step.

## Report!

Once again, with the agreement of the person concerned, you can report inappropriate behaviour to your hierarchical superior, who is required to listen to you and provide support. You shouldn't keep this information to yourself because that can detrimental to the proper functioning of the University. Superiors are guarantors of their employees' and students' wellbeing.

## Work together!

Finally, if prevention is not sufficient and it is necessary to intervene in a more official way, witnesses' help will be necessary, especially if there is a hierarchical relationship, meaning that it is the word of a student or young researcher against that of a professor, or of an employee against a head of department. As Marie-France Hirigoyen writes: “One witness statement is all it takes to give credence to a victim's allegations”.

## Get help!

It is normal to be thrown off-balance or to be shocked by harassment.

*“We approach each other, and mingle with each other, under the constant pressure of a feeling that we are of different sexes; and, instead of regarding each other only in the light of immortal creatures, the mind is fettered, by the idea which is early and industriously infused into it, that we must never forget the distinction between male and female.”*  
Sarah M. Grimké



### Find out more

- **Hirigoyen, Marie-France**, 2017. *Le harcèlement moral au travail. Que sais-je?*, PUF.
- **Grésy, Brigitte**, 2009. *Petit traité de sexisme ordinaire*. Albin Michel.
- **Ruiz, Miguel**, 1999. *Les quatre accords toltèques*. Jouvance.
- Juliette Boutant and Thomas Mathieu share their comic strips on everyday sexism on **Projet crocodiles**: [www.projetcrocodiles.tumblr.com/](http://www.projetcrocodiles.tumblr.com/)
- Altruistic testimony: Adèle Haenel's testimony (in French): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFRPci2wK2Y>



TOLERANCE WON'T BE TOLERATED!

Everybody  
knows ...

... that professor puts his colleagues in an awkward position with his sexist, unpleasant jokes, but he's an important guy.

... young women shouldn't get in the lift with him, but he's a committed professor

... he doesn't think pregnant women should be here, but apart from that he's a nice guy.

... she gives her assistants too much work and is always harassing them, but she publishes a lot and has a good reputation.

... he has a problem getting along with women and harasses his employees, but he has a good network and lots of contacts.

Everybody knows ...

so let's be brave  
enough to do some-  
thing about it!

# Laws and regulations

*"When your spirit is fair, you do not need  
to be known from the outside, by others.  
When a thought comes, good and bad are both present.  
Consider the roots of these two things:  
good and bad, and practice good not bad.  
Then your spirit will be fair and naturally good."  
Maitre Takuan*

Although it is true that we shouldn't be ignorant of the law, it is also true that we don't always have a copy of the Civil Code or the Criminal Code to hand. And sometimes habits and customs can blur our sense of justice and mean we forget that saying this or doing that is quite simply not allowed and is maybe even punishable by law. This is all set out in a number of legal texts.

We have compiled a list of the articles that deal with the various forms of harassment.

**Gender Equality Act (151.1)**

<https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/19950082/201701010000/151.1.pdf>

**Article 4** Discrimination through sexual harassment

**Article 5.3** Employees' rights

**Article 10** Protection against dismissal

**Code of Obligations**

<https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/19110009/201704010000/220.pdf>

**Article 328.1**, In general

**Employment Act (822.11) (Only available in French, German and Italian)**

[www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/19640049/index](http://www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/19640049/index)

**Article 6.1** Obligations of employers and employees

**Criminal Code (311.0)**

<https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/19370083/index.html>

**Article 173** Defamation

**Article 174** Wilful defamation

**Article 177** Insult

**Article 179<sup>septies</sup>** Misuse of a telecommunications installation

**Article 180.1** Threatening behaviour

**Article 181** Coercion

**Article 189.1** Indecent assault

**Article 190.1** Rape

**Article 193.1** Exploitation of a person in a position of need or dependency

**Article 194.1** Indecent conduct

**Article 197.1 and 197.2** Pornography

**Article 198.2** Sexual harassment

**University Act (C130) (only available in French)**

[www.geneve.ch/legislation/rsg/f/s/rsg\\_C1\\_30.html](http://www.geneve.ch/legislation/rsg/f/s/rsg_C1_30.html)

**Article 3** Equality

**Article 42** Counselling and mediation

**Article 44** Disciplinary council

**University Staff Regulations (only available in French)**

[www.unige.ch/rectorat/static/Regl\\_personnel\\_14\\_mars\\_2013.pdf](http://www.unige.ch/rectorat/static/Regl_personnel_14_mars_2013.pdf)

**Title II, chapter VIII Procedures for protection of legal personality**

**Article 62** Scope of application

**Article 63** Definition of psychological and sexual harassment

**Article 64** Mediators

**Article 65** Principles of mediation

**Article 69** Aim

**Article 70** Requesting an investigation

**Article 71** Examination of the complaint by the Rectorate

**Article 72** Referral to an internal investigator

**Article 73** The investigator's mission and inquiry

**Article 74** If a party or witness does not appear

**Article 75** Closing the inquiry

**Article 76** Requests for further inquiries

**Article 77** The investigator's report

**Article 78** The Rectorate's decision

**Article 79** Appeals

**The Code of ethics and professional conduct for the Geneva institutions of higher education**

<http://www.unige.ch/ethique/charter/>

**Available for consultation on 'Memento' (in French)**

[memento.unige.ch](http://memento.unige.ch)

Directive on protecting legal personality in relationships at university (Ref.0271)

Directive on professional or relationship-related conflict management (Staff) (Ref.0112)

Directive on protecting privacy, particularly regarding psychological and sexual harassment (Staff) (Ref. 0260)

# Find out more

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# Publication details

*"I would like today to ask that we begin to dream about and plan for a different world. A fairer world. A world of happier men and happier women who are truer to themselves."*  
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

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Brigitte Mantilleri, in close cooperation with Marie-Claire Cors-Huber, Véronique Ducret, Klea Faniko, Nadine Frei, Brigitte Galliot, Natacha Hausmann, Juliette Labarthe, Jérôme Lacour, Marylène Lieber, Valeria Marino and Liliane Zossou.

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Bridget Black

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*«Le Livre doit être Vent, écarter le rideau,  
Le Livre doit être le Poulain du Shah Ismail  
te hisser sur son dos  
et te lancer à l'assaut des dragons...  
Les dragons sont à la porte de la forteresse,  
Les dragons sont là, monstres noirs à sept têtes,  
Tu finiras par les vaincre,  
Et tu pénétreras dans un jardin... '*

*Sélime avait trouvé ce livre :  
Caractères très noirs  
sur papier blanc,  
Un livre d'une quarantaine de pages,  
grand comme la main...»*  
Nâzim Hikmet

# UNIGE anti-harassment campaign #UNIUNIE contre le harcèlement

**Le pire ce n'est pas les remarques les pressions le malaise l'humiliation c'est que personne ne réagisse.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Il semblait impossible de faire cesser ses intimidations humiliations blagues homophobes remarques déplacées mais il a suffi qu'une collègue intervienne.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Il se sentait très fort tout puissant irréprochable dans son droit avant qu'un collègue lui demande d'arrêter.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Vos blagues sexistes sont insupportables dégradantes méprisantes humiliantes même si je souris.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Je suis incapable de supporter une petite blague misogynie. Mon avocat non plus.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Vos blagues misogynes sont si bien trouvées originales drôles hilarantes que je peux désormais les raconter au tribunal.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Pour vous c'est juste une blague, pour moi c'est du mal-être du dégoût de la peur de l'anxiété bref juste une raison de quitter l'Uni.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Parfois sourire être sympa porter une robe être une femme est un comportement à risque.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Une femme prof on lui parle de ses enfants. Un homme prof on lui parle de ses projets.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Ma jupe est-elle trop longue trop courte trop colorée trop ouverte ou ai-je le droit d'étudier tranquille ?**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Je n'ai pas besoin d'une main sur l'épaule de paternalisme de faveurs d'un type derrière moi pour réussir.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Si votre voisin est tellement belle que vous ne pouvez pas vous empêcher de la fixer durant des heures, nous pouvons vous aider à trouver une autre place.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Your sexist jokes are so clever hilarious brilliant witty I'm going to tell them to my lawyer.**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**How about not mentioning my legs my dress my chest my walk and talking about my research instead?**

#UNIUNIE UNIVERSITE DE GENÈVE

**Ici, une femme a osé dire non.**

www.uniunie.ch

**Sexism claimed a victim right here.**

www.uniunie.ch

**Ici, le sexisme a fait une victime.**

www.uniunie.ch

**Ici, une femme a pris la défense d'un homme.**

www.uniunie.ch

**Ici, un homme a pris la défense d'une femme.**

www.uniunie.ch

**Ici, une femme a dit non mais n'a pas été entendue.**

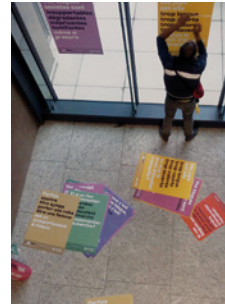
www.uniunie.ch

**Ici, une femme a décidé de quitter l'Uni.**

www.uniunie.ch

**Ici, l'homophobie a fait une victime.**

www.uniunie.ch



14 Posters

8 Stickers

# UNIGE anti-harassment campaign further afield #UNIUNIE contre le harcèlement

## Brussels, Belgium



## Liège, Belgium



## SIG, Geneva, Switzerland



## Nantes, France



## Neuchatel, Switzerland



## Franche-Comté, France



## Santa Catarina, Brasil



**Et si au lieu  
de commenter  
mes jambes  
ma robe  
mon décolleté  
ma démarche  
vous commentiez  
ma recherche?**

**Si vos  
blagues sont  
trop lourdes  
pour prendre  
cet ascenseur  
prière  
d'emprunter  
l'escalier.**

**confiance@unige.ch**  
or  
through  
**unige.ch/egalite**

**confidential**

