



Osaka University Harassment Counseling Office

Issue 17 March 2019

Harassment Counseling Office Newsletter

It is now March, a very busy time. We hope you are doing well.
Here is Newsletter No. 17 from the Harassment Counseling Office.



Column Message from a counselor

Common perception of harassment

The counselors in the counseling office are ready at any time to conduct training in any department if requested.

In a recent seminar about power harassment a participant said; “When we were students we studied like crazy. No one asked for a break”. This is something we hear often. The commenter was likely a student around 40 years ago.

Let’s look at an example. 40 years ago, smoking in the workplace was permitted. Many people had ashtrays on their desks in their offices or laboratories. (It was also the role of women to dispose of the contents of the ashtray and to serve tea).

However, awareness of the dangers of tobacco and the damage caused to others by passive smoking increased and smoking in the workplace is now banned in many countries. In 2003, the Health Promotion Law was enacted and leading to smoking being restricted in public places. Now, it is forbidden to smoke on Osaka University Campuses. I am sure that young people find it hard to believe that at one-time smoking was permitted everywhere.

The change from smoking being permitted in the workplace to being banned was dramatic. This example of smoking shows how common perception can change between generations.

The problem of harassment is perhaps not as clear cut as that for smoking. Even so, it is similar in that something that used to be permitted is becoming impermissible. The university is a public entity, therefore, all members must be sensitive to changes in order to prevent friction with those who do not know the old days.

Another frequent comment at training seminars is; “I want you to show me the line I mustn’t cross”. The Harassment Counseling Office leaflets provide an explanation however, there are subtle changes for each and every case. What is required is for problems to be nipped in the bud by raising them for discussion at an early stage and for an environment of common perception of harassment to be cultivated. The only ones who can create a common perception that becomes Osaka University standards are the members themselves.

Osaka University Harassment Counseling Office

Toyonaka campus 06-6850-5029 (sexual, academic and power harassment)
06-6850-6006 (academic and power harassment)

Suita campus 06-6879-7169 (sexual, academic and power harassment)

Minoh campus 072-730-5112 (sexual, academic and power harassment)

Website http://www.osaka-u.ac.jp/ja/guide/student/prevention_sh

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