

Fair Treatment Contact Officers (FTCO)

Information Sheet

Purpose

The purpose of this Information sheet is to clarify what Fair Treatment Contact Officers (FTCOs) are, why they are important and what they do. Should you find that further explanation or clarification is required please raise or discuss the matter with your HR Advisor ([HRA](#)) or Fair Treatment Contact Officer ([FTCO](#)).

Q1 What are FTCOs?

FTCOs are staff who are appointed and trained by HR to assist staff with any enquiries about discrimination, sexual harassment or bullying. Students seeking support should contact an [Education Welfare Officer](#). The FTCO is an entirely voluntary role.

FTCOs are trained in the various University policies, procedures and guidelines which set out the expected behaviours at the University, including:

- The [Code of Conduct](#) that sets out general principles and expectations of ethical conduct. Staff who are in breach of the Code may be subject to disciplinary procedures as described in the University of [Adelaide Enterprise Agreement](#) as appropriate.
- The HR [Behaviour and Conduct](#) policy; and
- The HSW Handbook chapter [Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying](#).

Q2 Why are FTCOs important?

FTCOs play a vital role for the University because they

- Can provide, distribute and explain information in a confidential and independent manner
- Provide a voluntary service to staff, volunteers and the University community
- Contribute to the University goals of a safe, healthy and harmonious workplace
- Provide a peer contact point for staff that is aware of the University work environment and its organisational factors.

Q3 Attributes required to be a FTCO?

Prior to being appointed to the role, the FTCO must show they have:

- A commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), diversity principles and the need to address bullying behaviours from the workplace
- The ability to liaise effectively with people at all levels of the University whilst acting discreetly, objectively, impartially and maintaining confidentiality
- The capacity to be accessible to staff when required

Q4 What will a FTCO do?

FTCOs will:

- Listen to you if you feel you have been discriminated against, sexually harassed or bullied
- Help you clarify the types of behaviour you are concerned about
- Offer and explain the difference between formal and informal options for dealing with your concerns
- Maintain confidentiality
- Perform their role should questions or matters needing clarification arise during a complaints process

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Q5 What won't a FTCO do?

- Discuss your case with anyone without your permission.
- Advocate on your behalf or become involved in informal or formal resolution processes
- Act to resolve or investigate your complaint
- Take over your case or try to push you to take any particular action
- Make any finding or determination that you have been discriminated against, sexually harassed or bullied

Q6 How does the FTCO role fit into the workplace?

The role of the FTCO is a voluntary role and requires the ongoing approval of the staff members manager/supervisor.

FTCO's may receive enquiries from within or outside their own work area. They may be called upon at short notice, if available, to deal with people who are in an emotional or distressed state. The demands placed on a FTCO may vary but generally involve:

- meeting with an individual or group for an hour;
- providing clarification on reasonable behaviour; and/or
- informing the individual of the various options to resolve their concerns.

Ongoing professional development, support and training is provided to a FTCO (subject to the ongoing approval of their supervisor) to ensure they are equipped to handle the requirements of this voluntary role.

Q7 Is contact with an FTCO confidential?

Yes, unless you disclose an unlawful act or the health and safety of someone is at serious risk.

Q8 What information will the FTCO collect?

A FTCO will collect de-identified information to inform the University of specific training and development needs. Your FTCO should show you the form at the beginning of your meeting.

Q9 What if you require further information about FTCOs?

If you require further information, please contact a member of the central [HSW Team](#)

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