

Passed by AECT Board of Directors, July 14, 2014

Harassment Policy

Article I

Purpose

The purpose of this Harassment Policy is to provide guidance in the event that harassment is observed or reported. Harassment in any form will not be tolerated in any setting, event, or venue sponsored, supported, or sanctioned by AECT. This policy outlines how AECT shall 1) define harassment, 2) receive and review complaints of harassment, and 3) respond to verified instances of harassment. This policy is an articulation of the admonition in the AECT Code of Ethics that Association members “shall refrain from any behavior that would be judged to be discriminatory, harassing, insensitive, or offensive and, thus, is in conflict with valuing and promoting each individual’s integrity, rights, and opportunity within a diverse profession and society” (Section 1.9).

Article II

Definition

Harassment is a broad term that includes offensive, discriminatory, demeaning, or abusive verbal or written communication or other types of behavior, whether in real or virtual space, that are directed from one or more individuals toward another individual or group of individuals. Harassing behavior is intended to disturb or upset, is usually repetitive, and may draw unwanted attention to characteristics such as gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion, or other factors. Harassment includes but is not limited to display of unauthorized sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking or following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of discussions or presentations, and unwelcome physical contact or sexual attention.

Article III

Receiving and Reviewing Complaints

AECT members who are being harassed or believe that they have been harassed should immediately report such behavior to an appropriate AECT official. The appropriate official in most instances will be an AECT staff member or an elected officer of the Association. For example, complaints of harassment at AECT events, such as the annual international convention or other physical gatherings, should be directed to any member of the Board of Directors in

attendance. Complaints of harassment in electronic communications, such as in webinars or through email or texting, should be directed to the AECT Executive Director.

At AECT physical events, event security or local law enforcement may be involved as appropriate, based on the specific circumstances.

Complaints will be reviewed to determine whether immediate attention is required. Complaints of harassment normally will be verified through observation, witness statements, documentary evidence, or some combination of these sources, including reports from law enforcement in some instances. Subsequent to the immediate review and response, complaints may be referred to the AECT Board of Directors for further action.

Article IV

Response

The immediate response, depending on the nature of the complaint of harassment, may range from 1) simply informing the harassing individual to cease any harassing behavior and to desist from future behavior of a similar or related nature to 2) ejecting the harassing individual from the AECT event, for example escorting the individual from the premises of a physical event or blocking online participation in an online event. Any immediate response by an AECT official must necessarily be consistent with any local law enforcement decision, should law enforcement be involved. Persons expelled for cause from AECT events shall not be entitled to a refund of any event fees. A person should not be ejected for one-time offenses deemed as minor.

Below are examples of behaviors warranting ejection:

- Continuing to harass after receiving a warning
- A pattern of harassment, even if no warning has been given
- A single serious offense such as punching or groping
- Those behaviors defined by federal statute as harassing

The AECT Board of Directors shall review all complaints of harassment. If a complaint is found invalid, a person who was ejected from an event will be entitled to a prorated refund of event fees. If a complaint is deemed to be valid, then the harassing individual or group 1) may be banned from one or more, or all, future AECT events and 2) may, if the person is an AECT member, be expelled from membership for a specified period of time or permanently, at the discretion of the AECT Board of Directors. In no instance shall an expelled member be entitled to any refund of membership dues or other fees; and access to member benefits and services will be immediately discontinued.

Article V

DRAFTED: 24 June 2014
REVIEWED:
REVISED:
APPROVED:

Reconsideration

Persons sanctioned under this policy may appeal to the AECT Board of Directors for reconsideration. The Board may 1) decline to review the appeal, 2) reconsider a prior decision and either affirm or modify it, or 3) reinstate an expelled member. In any case, such reconsideration and any subsequent decision are solely within the discretion of the AECT Board of Directors.

Article VI

Training

The following AECT officials will be required to attend training regarding investigation and handling of harassment complaints:

All AECT Board members and staff