**Fostering a culture of respect**

**Zero Tolerance of Sexist Behaviour and Sexual Harassment**

Every person has the right to work in an environment that promotes respect, fairness, equality, and dignity and enables them to make their best contribution. Sexist behaviour and sexual harassment do not belong in the Parliament and we are committed to creating the shared understanding of appropriate behaviours, culture, and accountability mechanisms that will eradicate them.

**Sexual harassment** occurs when an individual engages in unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating someone’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It can be an isolated incident or persistent behaviour and is essentially about the effect on the recipient, not about what was intended.

**Sexist behaviour** is any behaviour which is, or is perceived to be, motivated by prejudice or discrimination based on sex, including behaviour or attitudes that stereotype individuals on the basis of gender.

We’re adopting a zero tolerance approach to sexist behaviour as well as sexual harassment because such behaviour can create a culture where people feel undermined and not respected.

This means that we will:

* Take steps to prevent sexism and sexual harassment from occurring and support culture and behaviour change through information and education.
* Take complaints seriously ensuring we deal with them promptly and sensitively.
* Have policies and processes which are transparent, easily accessible, and understood by those who need to use them.
* Ensure principles around confidentiality within the complaints process are clear.
* Respond in a manner which is consistent, fair and proportionate.
* Ensure that there are consequences for sexist behaviours and sexual harassment.