



Bullying & Harassment Policy

Introduction

Bullying & Harassment:

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power which is meant to undermine, humiliate, or injure the person on the receiving end.

Harassment is any conduct, whether physical or verbal, persistent or 'one off', which is unwanted and offensive to the direct or indirect recipient. It is not possible to list every category of harassment, but they include the following:

- Racist or sexually suggestive, offensive, or lewd remarks, jokes or banter (whether made directly to the recipient or to a third party)
- Unwelcome sexual advances whether physical or verbal
- Threatening behaviour or threatening remarks
- Repeated and unwanted verbal abuse
- Linking training and promotion or employment opportunities to sexual favours
- Display of offensive or sexually suggestive pictures or pin ups
- The display or writing of racist or sexually suggestive graffiti ☒ The denigration of another person's religious beliefs.
- Questions or inferences about a person's sex life.

It is important to stress that the legitimate actions of managers, in ensuring that their team members carry out their duties to the standards we require, cannot be construed as harassment provided that those involved are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect.

Please note that the behaviour complained of does not have to be considered offensive by another person in order for it to be deemed harassment. It is the recipient's own perception or response that is important - something intended as a "joke" may offend another person; different people find different things acceptable.

Discrimination - some bullying or harassment will constitute unlawful discrimination, e.g. if it relates to a person's sexual orientation, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage or civil partnership status, maternity, age, race, religion or belief, or disability. This includes if you make assumptions based on these characteristics or if they are connected with someone who holds one of these characteristics (e.g. bullying because of what you think is someone's sexual orientation, not what it actually is; or bullying someone because they have a disabled relative or friend).

Serious bullying or harassment may amount to other civil or criminal offences, e.g. civil or criminal offences under the Protection from Harassment Act 1996 and criminal offences of assault.

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Victimisation is treating someone less favourably than others because they have complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing them or someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint or giving them inferior work.

Provided that you act in good faith, i.e. you genuinely believe that what you are saying is true, you have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment. Core will take appropriate action to deal with any alleged victimisation, which may include disciplinary action against anyone found to have victimised you.

Informal Resolution:

What to do if you feel you're being bullied or harassed Informal Resolution. Most recipients of bullying or harassment simply want the bullying or harassment to stop. In the first instance, you may attempt to resolve the problem yourself informally. In some cases, it may be possible and sufficient for you to indicate clearly to the person engaging in unwanted conduct that the behaviour in question is not welcome, that it offends you or makes you uncomfortable. You should keep a note of the date and what was said and done in case the unacceptable behaviour continues and you wish to make a formal complaint. In circumstances where it is too difficult or embarrassing for you to do this, an alternative would be for you to seek support from, or for an initial approach to be made by, a sympathetic friend or representative.

Formal Grievance Procedure:

If the conduct continues, or it is not appropriate to resolve the problem informally, then it should be dealt with through the formal Grievance Procedure, as detailed in our Grievance Policy. All such complaints will be handled with sensitivity and in total confidence. Should the complaint be one of sexual harassment / discrimination, and should you so wish, you may contact and discuss the matter with a senior member of the Human Resources (HR) Department (who may if you wish be of the same sex as you) on a confidential basis.

Investigation:

All complaints will be investigated promptly and, if appropriate, disciplinary action will be brought against the alleged perpetrator. You will be kept informed of the general progress of the process of investigation and the outcome of any disciplinary proceedings. We will treat complaints of bullying and harassment sensitively and maintain confidentiality to the maximum extent possible. However, the person who is accused of harassing you will be made aware of the issues raised and given a right to respond.

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