



Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure

Approved	EXCO	Date & Issue	October 2020
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Executive Summary

We are committed to creating a harmonious working environment, which is free from harassment and bullying and in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity.

This policy provides the definitions of Harassment and Bullying, the responsibilities of managers and employees.

The procedure for dealing with allegations of bullying and harassment are also outlined.

Scope

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment and may be amended at any time. This policy applies to employees only.

Policy Statement

We are committed to ensuring that individuals do not feel apprehensive of inappropriate behaviour because of their religious belief, political opinion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, age, disability or any other characteristic.

Harassment and bullying are unacceptable behaviours at work and will be treated as misconduct, which may include gross misconduct warranting dismissal.

All employees must comply with this policy.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Harassment may take many forms. It can range from extreme forms such as violence to less obvious actions such as persistently ignoring someone at work. The following, though not an exhaustive list, may constitute harassment:

- Physical contact ranging from touching to serious assault
- Verbal or written harassment through jokes, offensive language, gossip and slander, or remarks that are stereotypical about a particular group
- Isolation or non-cooperation at work, exclusion from social activities
- Intrusion by pestering, spying, following etc
- Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (even if the harasser perceives them to be harmless)

Definition of Workplace Bullying

Workplace bullying is repeated inappropriate, offensive behaviour, which is often an abuse of power or position. It can be direct or indirect, either verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work.



The following examples may constitute bullying:

- Threats, abuse, teasing, gossiping and practical jokes
- Humiliation and ridicule either in private, at meetings or in front of customers/clients
- Name calling, insults, devaluing with reference to age, physical appearance
- Setting unreasonable deadlines
- Imposing excessive workloads
- Making unjustified criticisms
- Excessive monitoring
- Removing responsibilities
- Allocating menial and pointless tasks
- Withholding information
- Consistently refusing requests for leave, holiday or training.

It should be noted that it is the impact of the behaviour which is relevant and not the motive or intent behind it. It is also important to note that appropriate Performance Management will not constitute acts of bullying or harassment.

Employee Responsibilities

You have a responsibility to help create and maintain a working environment that respects the dignity of all your colleagues.

You should be aware of the serious and genuine problems which harassment and bullying can cause, and ensure that your behaviour is beyond question and could not be considered in any way to be harassment or bullying.

You should discourage such behaviour by making it clear that you find it unacceptable and by supporting colleagues if they are experiencing harassment or bullying and are considering making a complaint.

You should alert a Manager or Supervisor to any incidents to enable them to deal with the matter.

Management Responsibilities

Managers and Supervisors have a responsibility to ensure that harassment or bullying does not occur in work areas for which they are responsible.

Responsibility also lies with the manager to carry out Performance Management processes in a professional, fair and appropriate manner.

Managers also have a responsibility to explain the policy to their team members and take steps to promote it positively. They will be responsive and supportive to any member of staff who makes a complaint, provide full and clear advice on the procedure to be adopted, maintain confidentiality in all cases and ensure that there is no further problem or any victimisation after a complaint has been resolved.

Procedure

If you believe that you have been the subject of harassment or bullying, you should, in the first instance, ask the person responsible to stop the behaviour, as it is unacceptable to you. Addressing this at an early stage will often be sufficient to stop the behaviour.

You should report the incident to a Manager or Supervisor as soon as possible to enable them to deal with the matter.

If you decide to make a formal complaint you should use the Grievance Policy and Procedure as soon



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as possible after the incident has occurred. All complaints will be handled in a timely and confidential manner. You will be guaranteed a fair and impartial hearing and the matter will be investigated thoroughly. If the investigation reveals that your complaint is valid, prompt attention and action designed to stop the behaviour immediately and prevent its recurrence will be taken.

You will be protected from intimidation, victimisation or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation. Retaliating against an employee for complaining about harassment or bullying is a disciplinary offence.

Whilst this procedure is designed to assist genuine victims of harassment or bullying, you should be aware that if you raise complaints, which are proven to be deliberately vexatious, you will become subject to proceedings under the Disciplinary Procedure.

If you are unclear or require clarification on any aspect of this policy, please contact a member of the People Team for guidance.

Records

Documentation relating to process will be treated as confidential.

Recording of meetings without the knowledge or consent of those involved in them constitutes misconduct and, in some circumstances, may amount to gross misconduct.

Procedure Review

The Company reserves the right to review, revise, amend or replace the content of this procedure and / or introduce new procedures from time to time to reflect the changing needs of the business and to comply with legislation.

Policy History

- February 2018 – Policy Created
- August 2019 – Policy updated
- May 2020 – Policy updated
- October 2020 – Policy updated