

## **Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy**

We are committed to providing a positive work environment free from any harassment, bullying, intimidation, aggression or coercion.

Harassment or bullying is, in general, unwanted conduct and can include verbal and non-verbal, physical, written or other unwanted behaviour, which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, degrading, hostile, disturbing, humiliating or offensive environment. It may be on the grounds of sex, marital status, race, disability, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, age or gender reassignment. For the purposes of this Policy this list should be considered non-exhaustive, and any form of harassment or bullying will not be tolerated and will lead to formal disciplinary action. Bullying or harassment are considered Gross Misconduct under our disciplinary policy.

Harassment may be persistent or an isolated incident, obvious or subtle, face-to-face or indirect. It may even be through unequal or unfair application of systems or practises.

Examples of behaviour which may constitute harassment or bullying include (but are not limited to):

- Spreading malicious rumours;
- Professional or social exclusion;
- Insulting behaviour;
- Unwelcome sexual advances or physical contact;
- Unfounded threats relating to job security;
- Calculated undermining of an employee's competence, for example through a consistently unreasonable or unfair workload, overbearing supervision or unnecessary circulation of critical memoranda;
- Physical assault;
- Verbal abuse, threats, derogatory name-calling, ridicule, insults and offensive or embarrassing jokes;
- Offensive emails, texts or visual images;
- Derogatory graffiti/insignia or display of derogatory or offensive material; and
- Inciting others to commit any of the above.

## **Unlawful Grounds of Harassment and Bullying**

We wish to reiterate that we will not tolerate any instance of harassment or bullying regardless of the grounds.

This Policy will equally apply to work related events even if they occur away from the normal workplace. The following are expressly unlawful grounds by which a person may experience harassment or bullying:

### **Gender**

Harassment or bullying on the grounds of a person's gender, pregnancy, maternity leave etc. This can apply even where the complainant was not the employee to whom the harassment was directed.

### **Marital Status**

Harassment or bullying on the grounds of a person's marital status.

**Gender Reassignment**

Harassment or bullying on the grounds that a person intends to undergo gender reassignment, is currently undergoing gender reassignment or has already undergone gender reassignment;

**Sexual Harassment**

This is distinct from sex harassment, as it is physical, visual, verbal or non-verbal conduct that is sexual in nature;

**Race**

Harassment or bullying on the grounds of race, colour, ethnicity or nationality;

**Disability**

Bullying or harassment on the grounds of a person's disability;

**Sexual Orientation**

Bullying or harassment on the grounds of a person's sexual orientation, applying equally to "same sex" orientation, "opposite sex" orientation and "both sexes" orientation;

**Religion or Belief**

Harassment or bullying on the grounds of a person's religion or beliefs;

**Age**

Harassment on the grounds of a person's age, applying equally to all people regardless of age;

**Grievance**

Harassment or bullying as a consequence of a person raising a grievance.

**Raising a Complaint**

If you feel that you have been subjected to harassment or bullying by any other member of staff, you should raise the matter as soon as reasonably practicable.

You can raise a complaint informally and/or formally. You should contact your line manager or another manager in the absence of your line manager or where your complaint is against that specific manager.

**Informal Procedure**

If you feel able, you should speak up at the time that you feel harassed or bullied. It is important to be direct and for you to state explicitly that you feel you are being harassed and that the behaviour is unacceptable to you. You can also discuss the matter with another colleague or manager and ask them to speak to the harasser on your behalf.

Alternatively, if you feel unable to speak to the harasser directly, you could write a letter to them which clearly identifies the offending behaviour and requests that it stops immediately. You should sign and date any such letter and ensure that a copy is kept for any possible future formal complaint. It is also advisable that you keep an 'incident diary' of any offending behaviour.

Where the informal procedure has not resolved your complaint, you can raise a formal grievance.

### **Formal Procedure**

If you feel that you have been subjected to harassment or bullying you may decide to deal with the issue through formal procedures, regardless of whether informal steps have been taken or not.

Where you wish to deal with any issue of harassment formally, you must do so according to the company's Grievance Policy.

### **Consequences of Breach**

Harassment is a disciplinary offence and will be dealt with according to the company's Disciplinary Policy. Bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination may constitute gross misconduct, punishable by summary dismissal without notice.

You should bear in mind that harassment or bullying may also constitute a criminal offence punishable by a fine and / or imprisonment.

