



HARRASMENT & BULLYING

Policy

Purpose & Objective

The purpose of this policy is to re-affirm The Company' policy of strictly prohibiting harassment/bullying, to allow a working environment where employees are treated with dignity and respect, allowing them to realise their potential.

Scope

This policy is owned wholly by Raise the Bar, it is the responsibility of line managers and HR to ensure that it's fair and consistent implementation. Regular checks will be conducted to ensure this policy is adhered to.

This policy applies to all permanent staff of Raise the Bar, clients, and learners.

Definitions

Harassment/bullying is defined as any conduct which is unwanted by the recipient, or any such conduct which affects the dignity of any individual, or group of individuals at work. Harassment/bullying may be repetitive, or an isolated occurrence against one or more individuals. All employees should be aware that the intention of the alleged harasser is irrelevant; it is the effect upon the complainant which is important.

Harassment may be related to age, sex, sexuality, race, ethnicity, skin colour, health, disability, learning difficulty, religion, personal beliefs, politics, nationality, membership or otherwise of a Trade Union, status as an ex-offender, personal characteristics. In addition, the company will not tolerate bullying or the making of unwelcome, offensive sexual remarks or jokes relating to sex.

Harassment and Bullying Outside of Work

The company will treat all allegations of harassment/bullying seriously even if the harassment/bullying takes place outside of work or via any form of social media/networking. With the advent of social media, the potential to harass or bully an individual has broadened. The company has a duty of care to all employees, clients and learners and will take action and investigate any claims of harassment/bullying via social networking and other internet-based media.

Examples of Harassment or Bullying

Sexual harassment takes many forms, from relatively mild sexual banter to actual physical violence. Individuals may not always realise that their behaviour constitutes sexual harassment, but they must recognise that what is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another. Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature by one individual towards another. Examples include:

- Insensitive jokes and pranks
- Lewd comments about appearance
- Unnecessary body contact

- Displays of sexually offensive material, e.g. pin-ups
- Requests for sexual favours
- Speculations about a person's private life and sexual activities
- Threats of actual sexual violence
- Threats of dismissal, loss of promotion, etc. for refusal of sexual favours
- Posting inappropriate comments onto social networking pages

Racial harassment can also take many forms, from relatively minor abuse to physical violence. Examples include:

- Insensitive jokes related to race
- Pranks
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations
- Abusive, threatening, or insulting words and behaviour
- Displaying abusive writing and pictures
- Sending e-mails with racially offensive jokes

Bullying is a form of harassment and examples include:

- Aggressive or inappropriate and threatening language
- Abrupt mannerisms, violent gestures, throwing objects
- Actual violent behaviour
- Passing down only the 'dirty work', allocating blame and picking on people unfairly.

Procedure

What you should do if you believe you have been harassed or bullied.

- In the first instance you are encouraged to resolve the issue informally by discussing the matter with the person believed to have been harassing/bullying. They may not be aware that their behaviour is perceived as harassment/bullying.
- If, however, employees feel uncomfortable speaking to the individual informally or if after the informal discussion there is no change in behaviour and the harassment/bullying continues, then, the matter must be raised formally in writing to Management.
- Management will investigate all claims of harassment/bullying and will take action in accordance with the company's disciplinary policy.
- Employees found to be bringing false or malicious allegations of harassment/bullying after the investigation has taken place, may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

What you should do if you believe an employee, client or learner is being harassed.

- Knowledge of an incident of harassment/bullying involving anyone associated with Raise the Bar, should be raised immediately with Management.

Handling of Complaints

The Company will immediately conduct a thorough and impartial investigation of any complaint of harassment/bullying.

The company will handle all cases in a sensitive manner maintaining strict confidentiality. Any individual, including witnesses involved in any investigation must observe complete confidentiality and not discuss the investigation with anyone who is not directly concerned with carrying it out.

If the investigation reveals that harassment/bullying has occurred, disciplinary action up to and including dismissal may be taken. The nature of the discipline will depend upon the circumstances of each case.

Protection against Retaliation

Employees who report conduct they believe to be harassment/bullying or who participates in investigations of such reports will be protected from retaliation of any kind. Disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, may be taken against anyone who attempts such retaliation.

Employees who become aware of complaints or investigations of harassment/bullying are expected to refrain from unnecessary and unprofessional discussion concerning the individuals involved, as such discussions may themselves be a form of retaliation.

Suspension

In some instances, it may be necessary to suspend individuals involved in alleged harassment/bullying cases for their own protection whilst the investigation takes place. Suspension is always on full pay and it not considered a disciplinary sanction.

Policy Version Control

Version No	Issue Date	Reviewer	Notes
1	August 2019	HRall	
2	Jan 2021	James Cannon	
3	Jan 2022	James Cannon	