



HR Policy - Bullying and Harassment

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1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the University's commitment to providing an inclusive, safe, and respectful educational and work environment. We believe that everyone has the right to learn, work, and thrive in an atmosphere free from bullying and harassment. This policy outlines our commitment to preventing and addressing bullying and harassment within our university community.

1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other University policies:

- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- EDI Policy
- Workplace fairness guidance

1.3 Any legislative changes will supersede this policy.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all members of University staff including honorary staff, TSS workers and all visitors to the University

3. Principles

3.1 The University of Hull is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive community, which offers equality and opportunity for all by eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and promoting respectful relations on campus.

3.2 Bullying is defined for the purposes of this policy as unwanted behaviour from a person or group that is either:

- offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting; or
- an abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates, or causes physical or emotional harm to someone

This includes instances of 'upward bullying' which can be defined as bullying from one or more employees towards someone more senior, for example a manager. Examples of this can include:

- Showing continued disrespect
- Refusing to complete tasks
- Spreading rumours
- Constantly undermining someone's authority
- Doing things to make someone seem unskilled or unable to do their job properly

3.3 Harassment is defined for the purposes of this policy as unwanted behaviour from a person or group that is related to a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act and, intentionally or unintentionally (ie. 'banter'), either:

- Violates the person's dignity;
- Created an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person;
- Sexual harassment consists of unwanted conduct of a "sexual nature" and applies to individuals of any gender. Line managers also must take "reasonable steps" to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

3.4 You must respect the rights and dignity of others and refrain from offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or the abuse or misuse of power intended or tending to undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient.

3.5 We will not permit or condone bullying or harassment and you have a right to complain should it occur. In the event of failure to adhere to the University's requirements disciplinary action may be a consequence of any reported or alleged activity that constitutes behaviour of bullying or harassment.

3.6 It should be borne in mind that anyone found responsible for harassment may also be held personally liable should the person who has been harassed undertake legal proceedings. Some forms of harassment may be criminal and punishable by prison sentences and fines. Where the University believes this to be the case it will not hesitate to inform the appropriate authority.

3.7 In UK universities, every individual has a responsibility to uphold free speech, ensuring diverse perspectives and open dialogue are encouraged. At the same time, it's crucial that we all follow university policies, guidance and the Equality Act 2010 to prevent bullying, harassment, and discrimination. By understanding and following the university's guidance, we help create a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment. Each of us plays a role in balancing the right to free speech with the duty to protect others from harm, ensuring that everyone feels valued and respected.

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

4.1 All colleagues are to be treated with respect. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy applies to the application of all our HR policies.

5. Communication

5.1 This policy and any subsequent updates will be communicated to staff via existing communication platforms

6. Further Information

6.1 This Policy is not contractual and is not intended to be incorporated into individual terms and conditions of employment. It may be subject to review, amendment or withdrawal but any changes will be made following consultation with the recognised trade unions.

7. Monitoring

7.1 This policy will be reviewed, including relevant data as available to monitoring the effectiveness of its application, at the review date in consultation with the recognised local trade unions.

8. GDPR

8.1 All collected data will be managed and processed in accordance with the [University's Data Protection Policy](#) and retained in line with the [University Retention Schedule](#).

8.2 Data will be securely stored within the MyHR system and physical records maintained within the individuals central HR file. In cases where deemed necessary, data may also be securely stored within relevant departments. Access to this data is restricted to staff whose responsibilities necessitate the use of such information for the execution of their roles.

8.3 For further details regarding the handling of your data, please refer to the [University's Staff Privacy notice](#) or contact the Data Protection team - dataprotection@hull.ac.uk

9. Version control record

Version number	Summary of changes including paragraph numbers	Date approved by PWG
9	Policy development undertaken in line with policy development review. Moved to new policy template.	1/8/24

10	Updated principles to include free speech and harassment definitions to include sexual harassment	Changes agreed by PWG through circulation November 2024
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