



Aspire 2 Policy	Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
Approved By	Charlie Clare, Chair of Trustees
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Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Aspire2 is committed to creating a work environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Aspire2 will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any kind. All allegations of bullying and harassment will be investigated and, if appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken. The Charity will also not tolerate victimisation of a person for making allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith or supporting someone to make such a complaint. Victimisation is a disciplinary offence.

What is bullying and harassment?

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

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to relevant protected characteristics, which are gender, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age, that:

has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person; or
is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating their dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Any bullying and harassment constitutes misconduct and are disciplinary offences that will be dealt with under Aspire2's disciplinary policy. Bullying or harassment will often be gross misconduct, which can lead to dismissal without notice.

Bullying or harassment will constitute unlawful discrimination where it relates to one of the protected characteristics, which are sex, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age. Serious bullying or harassment may amount to other civil or criminal offences, e.g. a civil offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 and criminal offences of assault.

Examples of bullying or harassment

Bullying and harassment may be misconduct that is physical, verbal or non-verbal, e.g. by letter or email or through posting on social media.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour that are covered by this policy include (but are not limited to):

- physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault;
- unwelcome sexual advances;
- the offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances, e.g. promotion, access to training;
- threats for rejecting sexual advances, e.g. suggestions that refusing advances will adversely affect the team member's employment, evaluation, pay, advancement, assigned work, or any other condition of employment or career development;
- demeaning comments about a person's appearance;



- unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual or racial nature or about an individual's age, disability, sexual orientation or religion;
- questions about a person's sex life;
- unwanted nicknames related to a person's age, race or disability;
- the use of obscene gestures;
- excluding an individual because they are associated or connected with someone with a protected characteristic, e.g. child is gay, spouse is black or parent is disabled;
- ignoring an individual because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic when they do not, in fact, have the protected characteristic;
- the open display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person, e.g. magazines, calendars or pin-ups;
- spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone;
- picking on someone or setting them up to fail;
- making threats or comments about someone's job security without good reason;
- ridiculing someone;
- isolation or non-cooperation at work; and
- excluding someone from social activities.

What is victimisation?

Victimisation is subjecting a person to a detriment because they have, in good faith, 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 a heavier or more difficult workload.

What should I do if I think I am being bullied or harassed?

You can choose whether to raise your grievance with your manager or directly with a Trustee. The Charity will ensure, where possible, that you can bring your complaint in the first instance to someone of your own sex, if you so choose.

All complaints will be investigated promptly and, if appropriate, disciplinary proceedings will be brought against the alleged harasser. The Charity will decide on a balance of probabilities, after considering all available evidence, whether or not harassment or bullying has occurred.

Aspire2 will treat complaints of bullying and harassment sensitively and maintain confidentiality to the maximum extent possible. Investigation of allegations will normally require limited disclosure on a "need to know" basis.

You have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint in good faith, even if the complaint is not upheld. However, making a complaint that you know to be untrue may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

What can I do to help stop bullying and harassment?

We all have a responsibility to help create and maintain a work environment free of bullying and harassment. You can help to do this by:

- being aware of how your own behaviour may affect others and changing it, if necessary - you can still cause offence even if you are "only joking";
- treating your colleagues with dignity and respect;
- taking a stand if you think inappropriate jokes or comments are being made;
- making it clear to others when you find their behaviour unacceptable, unless it should be obvious in advance that this would be the case;
- intervening, if possible, to stop harassment or bullying and giving support to recipients;
- making it clear that you find harassment and bullying unacceptable;
- reporting harassment or bullying to your manager or a Trustee and supporting Aspire2 in the investigation of complaints; and
- if a complaint of harassment or bullying is made, not prejudging or victimising the complainant or alleged harasser.