

- Continued suggestions for social activity outside the workplace after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome
- The display, storage or circulation of offensive material (including pictures, objects, written materials or information held on a computer)
- Unfair treatment, which might include deliberate exclusion from conversations or events at work
- Comments that have the effect of isolating or humiliating a member of staff
- Making gestures that mock a person's individual or unique characteristic
- Offensive, hostile, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power that is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end
- Persistent invasion of personal space
- Intrusion by pestering, spying, following or stalking

Bullying

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, which, through the abuse or misuse of power, or perceived power, makes the recipient feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated and threatened. Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct.

Physical conduct includes perceived horseplay, touching, pinching and pushing as well as grabbing, shoving, punching and other forms of physical assault.

Offensive material

This is displaying or distributing material that degrades or offends, including posters, graffiti, flags, emblems and material of a sexist, racist, sexual or pornographic kind. It includes bringing into the workplace badges or other insignia that are intended or are likely to create hatred or fear based on sexuality, gender, disability, race, etc.

Social networking and bullying

Cyber bullying: This is bullying, harassment and victimisation conducted via social networking channels – often using blogs or social networking sites to post photographs or offensive, upsetting or threatening comments about you or other colleagues.

Social pressure and/or exclusion: This is usually through use of online 'friendship circles'. There is often peer group pressure to become someone's 'friend' online. You may feel uncomfortable accepting invitations, particularly from colleagues or senior members of staff. You may also feel bullied or victimised if you are excluded from any social networking where other colleagues have been included. All colleagues are responsible for treating their colleagues with dignity and respect and should consider whether their words or contact could be offensive to others.

Responsibilities

Managers must:

- Actively work to create and nurture an inclusive environment within their teams

- Create a working environment that neither condones nor gives support to any kind of acts of harassment and/or bullying
- Ensure that this policy is clearly communicated to all colleagues
- Openly challenge any behaviour that breaches the requirements of this policy
- Treat any complaints seriously, and if a complaint is received:
 - Listen and be sympathetic to the complainant
 - Try to get the offending behaviour to stop
 - Try to establish from the colleague, the nature, seriousness and impact of the alleged harassment and/or bullying
 - Advise the colleague of the sources of support available to them
 - Consider, with advice from Human Resources, if the matter should be dealt with formally or informally

If the behaviour could constitute misconduct, and/or is witnessed independently, it is the manager's responsibility to take action in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure, without the need for you to make a formal written complaint.

There may be cases where a manager believes that a colleague is being harassed and/or bullied but the colleague either denies it or insists that they want no action taken. In such cases the manager may not pressure the colleague to complain or request action. However, the manager should consider other ways in which they can stop the behaviour.

You should:

- Be aware of the issue of harassment and/or bullying, of the forms it can take, and of the damage it can do to colleagues and the business
- Be aware of your own conduct and the impact it may have on other people
- Not be afraid to stand up against harassment and/or bullying or to support a colleague who is being harassed and/or bullied
- Talk in confidence to any colleague that you believe is being harassed and/or bullied and inform them of this procedure. It is possible that the colleague may be reluctant to have the matter dealt with formally. If so, be encouraging but sensitive to their wishes

The Human Resources team will:

- Actively promote the Dignity at Work Policy amongst managers and colleagues
- Provide clear advice to managers, complainants and the person being complained about with regard to the policy and necessary action to be taken
- Ensure that complaints are handled speedily, sensibly and sensitively

If at any time you feel unfairly treated or subjected to direct or indirect discrimination, you can raise the matter through the Grievance or Special Complaints Procedure, where every effort will be made to secure a satisfactory resolution.

There will be no victimisation of any colleagues for making, supporting or assisting a complaint of harassment, bullying or discrimination – even if the complaint is not upheld. However, if a complaint is shown to be untrue and has been brought in bad faith (e.g. maliciously or as an act of spite), disciplinary action may be taken.

All complaints of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously. All complaints will be investigated, and where appropriate, the disciplinary procedures will be followed.

Complaints

You should report any instances of unacceptable behaviour, such as inequality, discrimination or victimisation that you have been subjected to, witnessed or become aware of to the HR department through our **'SPEAK UP NOW!'** confidential reporting portal ([click here](#)), or

Scan the QR code to complete the 'SPEAK UP NOW' report form:



Support available

Confidential Counselling Service (GroceryAid) – The company has set up a partnership with GroceryAid to provide you with access to a free and confidential counselling service along with a number of other free services. GroceryAid helps people, and their families, who are working in, or retired from retail and associated businesses.

How can I contact GroceryAid?

- Online – www.groceryaid.org.uk
- Email – welfare@groceryaid.org.uk
- Free and confidential Helpline – available 24/7, 365 days a year on 08088 021 122

Human Resources advice and support

A.F. Blakemore Human Resources

Sharedservices@afblakemore.co.uk or 0121 568 2905

A.F. Blakemore Mental Health First Aider

reachout@afblakemore.co.uk