

Dignity at Work Policy

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All changes to this document are recorded in this table.

Date	Title	Officer
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Policy on Preventing and Resolving Incidents of Harassment & Bullying

The University of Central Lancashire is committed to working towards creating a climate in which all employees are treated fairly with dignity and respect.

We will aim to:

Ensure the dignity at work of all our employees
Respect and value difference
Make full use of all the talents of all our workforce
Prevent acts of discrimination, exclusion, unfair treatment, and other negative or demeaning behaviours
Demonstrate our commitment to equality of opportunity for all
Be open and constructive in our communications
Handle conflict quickly and decisively
Be fair and just in everything we do
Educate our workforce in the development of positive behaviours whilst working to eliminate negative behaviours

Definitions of Harassment and Bullying

ACAS offer the following definitions:

Harassment, in general terms, is unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of men and women in the workplace. It may be related to age, sex, race, disability, religion, nationality, or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident. The key is that the actions or comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient.

Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient.

Bullying or harassment may be by an individual against an individual or involve groups of people. It may be obvious or insidious. Whatever form it takes, it is unwarranted and unwelcome to the individual.

In deciding if harassment or bullying has occurred the key is not the intention of the perpetrator, but whether the behaviour is unacceptable by reasonable normal standards and is unwelcome to the person or people subjected to it or witnessing it.

Examples of Behaviours which could constitute Harassment or Bullying

Harassment and bullying can range from extremes such as physical violence to less obvious forms such as excluding someone. It can occur in a variety of ways – with or without witnesses, be persistent behaviour over a period of time, or a one-off act. These behaviours may include the following, although this will depend on the perspective of the recipient. This list is provided for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to be exhaustive:

- physical contact which is unwanted
- unwelcome remarks about a person's age, dress, appearance, race or marital status
- offensive language or gestures
- posters, graffiti, inappropriate jokes, gossip
- isolation, non-cooperation or exclusion of individual/s
- coercion to engage in sexual activity
- pressure to participate in political/religious groups
- “cyber bullying” eg SMS messages or comments / images on external websites
- shouting at / humiliating staff
- setting unreasonable deadlines
- persistent unmerited criticism
- personal insults.

Positive Behaviours - Responsibilities of staff and managers

All staff are responsible for ensuring that their own behaviour is appropriate, and they comply with this policy. Below are examples of positive behaviours which can be adopted, that can help prevent harassment and bullying, such as:

- be aware of this policy and comply with it.
- set a positive example by treating others with respect
- take care that jokes, banter, sarcasm are not potentially hurtful to others
- be mindful of body language – what an individual finds acceptable in terms of personal space, for example
- do not make personal comments, and take care not to make casual remarks which could be insensitive to issues individuals may be facing in private
- do not accept behaviour that may be offensive when directed against you or others, and take positive action to ensure that it is challenged and/or reported
- try to find the right balance between appearing uninterested and appearing intrusive
- don't act on assumptions which may make others feel excluded
- be supportive of colleagues who may be subject to bullying and/or harassment.