



PERSONAL HARASSMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

Introduction

Harassment or victimisation in any form is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 and is unacceptable. The Society does not accept any form of personal harassment and seeks to ensure that any working environment is sympathetic to all, this includes employees, contractors, and volunteers in all areas of the organisation, including any overseas sites.

Bullying and Harassment

Behaviour can constitute bullying or harassment where: it violates the dignity of a member of staff on the grounds of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation; or where it creates an intimidating, hostile and degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Individual or accumulative acts can seriously undermine the dignity, confidence, and work satisfaction to such an extent that it effects job performance, and general wellbeing.

Conduct becomes harassment if it persists and it has been made clear that it is regarded as offensive by the recipient or a witness to the conduct, although a single offensive act can amount to harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

Complaints

The Society is committed to ensuring that there is no harassment or bullying in the workplace. Allegations of harassment will be treated as a disciplinary matter, although every situation will be considered on an individual basis and in accordance with the principles of the disciplinary regulations.

a) Informal Complaint:

If you are the victim of minor harassment, you should make it clear to the harasser on an informal basis that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask the harasser to stop.

b) Formal Complaint:

Where the informal approach fails or the harassment is more serious, you should bring the matter to the attention of the Business Support Manager or CEO as a formal written complaint. The person dealing with the complaint will invite you to attend a meeting to discuss the matter and carry out a thorough investigation. You have the right to be accompanied at such a meeting by some of your choice and you must take all reasonable steps to attend. Those involved in the investigation will be expected to act in confidence and any breach of confidence will be a disciplinary matter. On conclusion of the investigation the decision of the investigator detailing the findings will be sent, in writing, to you. You have the right to appeal against the findings of the investigator.

If the decision is that the allegation is well founded, the harasser will be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with our disciplinary procedure.

If you bring a complaint of harassment, you will not be victimised for having brought the complaint. However, if it is concluded that the complaint is both untrue and has been brought with malicious intent, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

Governance

The Society will review this policy regularly to ensure it remains up to date and to monitor its effectiveness.