

## Dignity at Work Policy (Bullying and Harassment )

### Document Control

Title:	Dignity at Work Policy
Date Last Reviewed:	June 2019
Date of Last EqlA	20 <sup>TH</sup> May 2019
Date of next review:	June 2022
Policy/Procedure Owner	Human Resources

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## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Brunel University London is committed to providing a workplace that is free from bullying, intimidation, harassment or victimisation and where all employees and students are treated and treat others, with dignity, respect and courtesy.
- 1.2 The University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy for employment sets out our commitment to both the principles and the implementation of equal opportunities for all our employees. We value the diversity of our workforce and this is reflected in the core values of the University as set out in our Strategic Plan. We strive to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote our equality and diversity strategy within the context of prevailing legislation.
- 1.3 The University is determined to eradicate any harassment, bully and victimisation and maintains a zero-tolerance approach to such behaviour at work. The effects of unacceptable behaviour can be wide ranging and include:
- damage to morale and engagement;
  - poor performance
  - increased absence (particularly stress related);
  - poor customer service;
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- 3.2 The principles of this policy extend to our expectations of agency workers, contractors, honorary appointees, visitors and volunteers.
- 3.3 This policy covers all places of work and work related events including external business trips, field trips and work related social events.
- 3.4 A separate Bullying and Harassment Policy is in place for students and is available from Student Services. Where concerns cross over with staff and students advice should be sought from HR and student services in how to approach the issue.
- 3.5 In exceptional cases, a dignity at work issue may amount to potential criminal misconduct and may warrant police involvement, such as assault or sexual violence. In such circumstances the Head of Department and Human Resources Directorate will decide on the appropriate way forward in liaison with the individual and relevant authorities as appropriate.

#### 4. KEY PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Timeliness – Every reasonable effort will be made to deal with complaints in a timely manner, balancing the need to resolve issues quickly and the need to ensure they are dealt with fairly and appropriately, normally within 20 working days
- 4.2 Confidentiality – All information concerning dignity at work complaints must be treated in strictest confidence to protect those involved. Matters will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively by all parties involved.
- 4.3 Awareness - Employees will be made aware of the acceptable standards of behaviour and this policy through the University's compliance training programme. Bespoke and ad hoc training on Dignity at Work can also be provided to departments/teams by the Human Resources Department.
- 4.4 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – At all stages, proper consideration should be given to the EDI implications and needs of the individuals involved to ensure that matters are dealt with in a fair manner.

#### 5. ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

- 5.1 All employees of the University are expected to:
  - treat all others with dignity, respect and courtesy
  - conduct themselves professionally
  - be pro-active in developing and maintaining effective working relationships
  - take appropriate action where there are difficulties in working relationships
- 5.2 Unacceptable behaviour may constitute a pattern of repeated behaviours in which individual incidents are borderline, but which taken together, breach the bounds of acceptability. The behaviour does not need to be ongoing; a single event of unreasonable behaviour is enough for an employee to make a complaint.
- 5.3 There are some types of behaviour that would always be considered to fall below the threshold of acceptability. These include assault, discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

5.4 Unacceptable behaviour should not be confused with normal managerial authority carried out in a professional and reasonable manner including legitimate, constructive and fair feedback regarding an employee's conduct or performance.

5.5 Appendix 2 contains guidelines on expected standards of behavior.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

### Employees

6.1 All employees are expected to:

- treat colleagues and other members of the University community with dignity and respect;
- display courtesy in interactions;
- value differences in others and the contribution they make;
- report any witnesses or suspected incidents of bullying, harassment or victimisation immediately to their line manager or to one of the people listed in appendix 3 for support and/or advice;
- adhere to the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

### Managers

6.2 Managers and others in senior positions within the University have a responsibility to:

- lead by example, facilitating an inclusive and respectful working environment in which employees also feel able to challenge inappropriate behaviour;
- setting standards and ensuring appropriate workforce behaviours are maintained;
- take prompt action to challenge and stop inappropriate behaviour when should it occur;
- ensure that any concerns raised with them are acted upon in line with this policy;
- report to their HR Business Partner any complaints of bullying and harassment reported to or witnessed by them.

### Human Resources Directorate

6.3 The Human Resources Directorate will:

- provide training on equality, diversity, inclusivity including dignity at work;
- provide guidance and coaching for managers to enable and empower them to deal with incidents as and when necessary;
- provide advice to employees who wish to raise a dignity at work matter and to facilitate additional support as necessary;
- monitor and report on dignity at work instances;
- ensure the dignity at work policy (and grievance procedure if necessary) is followed fairly and consistently;
- help to maintain and develop the anti-harassment advisor's network.



This is not an exhaustive list and other options may be possible.

7.1.8 Line managers should keep a note of any discussions relating to the informal complaint and should monitor the situation and follow up as necessary to ensure there is no repetition of the problem.

7.1.9 In some circumstances, the line manager may conclude that a disciplinary offence has occurred and that the University's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures should be invoked. In such an event the line manager should contact their HR Business Partner for further advice.

7.1.10 It is advised that those who experience unacceptable behaviour keep a record of any incidents that occur and any attempts to address the issue, noting the dates, times and circumstances, any documentary evidence (e.g. emails) and the names of a witnesses. This will be a useful record in the event that there is a need to use formal procedures to deal with the concerns.

7.1.11 Raising concerns informally, will not preclude employees from raising a formal complaint at a later stage.

## 7.2 Mediation

7.2.1 In some cases, mediation might be helpful in resolving a dignity at work matter. Mediation is a process of dispute resolution, in which an impartial third party (mediator) facilitates a series of individual and joint meetings with the parties to identify a resolution on an informal basis. The University may suggest mediation, however both parties will need to agree to attend. All mediators will be fully trained. The University uses both internal and external mediators.

7.2.2 Further information on mediation is available from the Human Resources Directorate.

## 7.3 Formal Grievance Procedures

7.3.1 In most cases, informal measures should be sufficient to resolve concerns and stop the unacceptable behaviour. However, if the em eoi1il.8 (t)-6.6 ( )0.174 0 Td [(c)-2 (onc)-2 (er)Tc 0 Tw 4.5

- dates, times and locations of incidents;
- any records kept (for example diary notes);
- details of any witnesses;
- any actions taken previously to address the concerns informally.

## 8. GUIDANCE FOR THOSE ACCUSED OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

8.1 The University recognises that it can be distressing for an employee to have a complaint made against them, particularly if they do not consider their behaviour to have been unreasonable or inappropriate. However, complaints should not be ignored as everyone had the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to them and to have their feelings respected by others.

8.2 If an employee is approached by a colleague and told that their behaviour is causing offence they should:

- remain calm and listen to the points made without interrupting;
- allow their colleague to explain how they feel;
- seek clarification if necessary the behavior causing distress or offense;
- discuss how they might remedy the situation and work together more effectively;
- apologise if appropriate.

8.3 In some cases, an employee may have offended a colleague without intending to, in which case the other employee may be willing to accept an apology and an assurance that they will be careful to avoid behaving in a way that might cause offence. Providing the employee does not repeat the behavior that has caused offence, this is likely to be the end of the matter.

## 9. CONCERNS INVOLVING EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS

9.1 In circumstances where concerns involve employees and students, the initial process followed will be the policy that relates to the complainant (Dignity at Work for Employees and Bullying and Harrassment for Students). Any resultant action will be in line with the mn(t)-6.6 (hs [(m)-6 (n(t)(y)8.9 ( rJ -15.728 -1.315 Td [(m)-6 (ecp)]TJ 0 -1pi)2.6 (])TJ 0 -i)-6.6 (he)10.6



## 11. MONITORING

- 11.1 The University monitors dignity at work allegations that are raised with the Human Resources Directorate (including the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team) directly as well as those raised informally through the Anti-Harassment Advisors.
- 11.2 The Human Resources Directorate reports statistical data on dignity at work complaints in the annual Equal Opportunities and Human Resources Report.
- 11.3 Employees are also asked for their views on bullying and harassment in the workplace as part of the two-yearly employee engagement survey, the results of which are reviewed by the Executive Board, EO and HR Committee and developed into departmental action plans as necessary.

## 12. Support for Sexual Harassment

Brunel University does not tolerate any form of sexual violence, harassment or abuse and expects all members of the University community, its visitors and contractors to treat each other with respect, dignity and consideration. Any form of sexual violence or harassment should be addressed promptly and any member of the University who feels they have been subject to violence or harassment should be supported including making a formal complaint if appropriate.

The University recognises that it takes a great deal of courage to talk about experiences of sexual assault and violence. The information that staff disclose will be treated in confidence as far as possible. Information will be shared on a need to know basis to arrange the appropriate support, if the University assess that staff may be in danger.

The direction of support provided will be led by the employee and the University will work with you to see what the next steps will be and how the employee would like to prioritise those. We may offer you a referral to an external aogo a2 (i)2.d-5.9 (pt)-6 (d be)111.3 (a)ecog.5 l 3(2 ( as)72 (s)-2 (aul)











- Other unwanted comments or jokes regarding protected characteristics

#### Unacceptable Physical Behaviour

- Striking / hitting
- Grabbing a person
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## Dignity at Work Policy (Bullying and Harassment)

### Appendix Three: Sources of Support and Advice

Employees who feel they have been subjected to or witnessed behaviour that they consider is inappropriate have several people who they can contact for support and advice on how to resolve the situation.

#### Anti -Harassment Advisors

Anti-Harassment Advisors will provide confidential support to employees who wish to raise concerns about bullying and harassment. They will provide guidance on possible options. They have received training in relation to their role and are supported by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager for staff.

The contact details for the Anti-Harassment Advisors can be found [here](#).

#### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Team

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion manager for employees works with the anti-Harassment advisors to resolve concerns informally. The team can be contacted on [hr.equality@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:hr.equality@brunel.ac.uk)

#### HR Business Partnering Team

Advice and support can be obtained from the Human Resources Business Partners attached to the Department/College. The contact details for the relevant Business Partnering team can be found [here](#).

#### Line Manager







## Dignity at Work Policy (Bullying and Harassment)

### Appendix Four : Dignity at Work Statement

Brunel University values inclusiveness and is dedicated to the principles of equality and diversity. As a result, the University is committed to an inclusive working, studying and living environment that is free from discrimination, intimidation and in which dignity and respect are paramount.

The University takes any issue of sexual harassment, harassment, victimisation and discrimination seriously and would not tolerate, from any member of staff, student or third party, language(s) or behavior(s) that are deemed to be offensive or / and discriminatory against its members of staff or students.

Professor Julia Buckingham  
Vice-Chancellor

19<sup>th</sup> June 2019