

Anti Harassment and Bullying Procedure

PROCEDURE FOR STOPPING HARASSMENT OR BULLYING

INTRODUCTION

It is essential that the College's environment is such that victims of harassment or bullying feel able to bring such conduct into the open without fear of retaliation, embarrassment or feelings of guilt. In addition, there must be a well-understood procedure to deal with such incidents and to counteract the effects of harassment and bullying.

STEPS TO BE TAKEN BY AN INDIVIDUAL IF HE/SHE IS BEING HARASSED OR BULLIED

Step 1: Ask the harasser to stop

If an individual feels that he/she is being personally harassed or bullied, he/she should not feel that it is his/her fault or that he/she has to tolerate it. If he/she feels able, he/she can approach the individual concerned and make it clear to him/her that his/her behaviour is unwelcome. The person may not realise that he/she is being offensive or unreasonable and a simple chat may resolve the problem at this informal stage without the necessity of lodging a formal complaint.

Step 2: Keep a record of the harassment/bullying and seek mediation

If you feel you are being harassed or bullied then keeping a record of events will help in any investigation of them, but failure to do so will certainly not invalidate a complaint. Consider the following points:

- When did it start?
- What happened?
- Were there any witnesses?
- Were there any threats of reprisals?
- What did the victim do?

If the harassment continues, despite the individual's efforts to stop it he/she should contact the Human Resources Department (employee) by emailing HR@rhacc.ac.uk or the Learner Experience team (students or other college users) by contacting Feedback@rhacc.ac.uk to seek mediation. The option of mediation may bring a resolution without the need to enter any formal procedure. In cases involving mediation appropriate safeguards will be put in place to ensure an harassment-free working and learning environment. These safeguards may relate to all persons involved.

Step 3: Lodge a Formal Complaint

Where the victim considers the harassment or bullying actions to be serious and that mediation will not work he/she should immediately lodge a formal complaint by directly contacting the Human Resources Department (employees) or the by emailing Feedback@rhacc.ac.uk (students and other college users). In cases involving a formal procedure appropriate safeguards will be put in place to ensure an harassment-free working and learning environment. These safeguards may relate to all persons involved

Step 4 : Formal Investigation

The College will appoint an Investigating Officer to fully investigate any formal complaint of alleged harassment or bullying. The College will endeavour to support alleged victims of any harassment

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Review interval:	3 years	Approved on	6 th December 2017
Date of next review:	December 2020	Post to website	No

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and bullying to ensure they can work and study without fear. This may involve suspension without prejudice of alleged perpetrators whilst the investigation is being completed or it may include the involvement of outside bodies such as the police.

Step 5 : Action

After the investigation has been completed an appointed senior manager of the college will determine what further action may be required. A justified complaint may result in action being taken under the college's Disciplinary Procedures. Equally, a complaint which is made and considered by the college to be frivolous or vexatious may result in disciplinary action being taken against the complainant.

NOTE

Where a victim is under 19 or is considered to be an adult at risk it may be more appropriate to use the Safeguarding policy and procedure. Advice should be sought from the Human Resources Department in the first instance.

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