

5.1	HARASSMENT AND BULLYING
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Applies to: Staff
Specific responsibility: HECIS Co-Ordinator

Version: 1
Date approved: 5.8.14
Next review date: Aug 21

Policy context: This policy relates to	
Standards or other external requirements	
Legislation or other requirements	
Contractual obligations	

POLICY STATEMENT

HECIS regards the dignity and autonomy of all people as a core value of the organisation. Harassment and bullying behaviour is based on the misuse of power in human relationships, and negates the dignity and autonomy of its victims.

HECIS regards the health and safety of its staff, volunteers, and users as a primary responsibility.

HECIS is fully committed to eliminating, as far as possible, all forms of bullying and harassment in the workplace and in its relationships with its users through a culture of openness, support, and accountability.

DEFINITIONS

Unreasonable behaviour is behaviour that is offensive, humiliating, intimidating, degrading or threatening. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal abuse
- Initiation pranks
- Excluding or isolating employees
- Giving a person the majority of an unpleasant or meaningless task
- Humiliation through sarcasm, or belittling someone's opinions
- Constant criticism or insults
- Spreading misinformation or malicious rumours
- Deliberately setting work routines or procedures to inconvenience certain employees
- Displaying written or pictorial material which may degrade or offend certain employees

Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person or group of persons. It includes behaviour that could be expected to intimidate, offend, degrade, humiliate, undermine or threaten.

Harassment is uninvited, unwelcome behaviour, which does not have any legitimate workplace function.

Harassment includes any written, physical, or verbal conduct that from the perspective of a reasonable person is intimidating, offensive or humiliating against another person. Harassment is any behaviour, which is not asked for and not wanted and that happens because of a person's sex, race, age, pregnancy, marital status, disability, transgender (transsexuality) or sexuality.

HECIS: Harassment and Bullying

Harassment can include:

- Sexual or suggestive remarks or gestures
- Displaying or circulating sexually suggestive, offensive or degrading/insulting material on walls, computer screen savers, E-mail,
- Making fun of someone, imitating someone's accent, spreading rumours, unwelcome practical jokes
- Obscene or unsolicited telephone calls, letters, faxes or E-mail messages
- Invasion of personal space, unnecessary physical contact
- Continually ignoring or dismissing someone's contribution in a meeting/discussion.
- Pushing, shoving or jostling or assault
- Threats, insults, name calling, inappropriate language

PROCEDURES

HECIS strongly encourages any employee or volunteer who feels they have been bullied, or have witnessed bullying taking place, to take action by making it clear that such behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.

- Employees and volunteers are encouraged to first discuss the matter with the involved party prior to lodging a formal complaint.
- If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should provide written details of their concerns and the nature of the complaint, to the HECIS Co-Ordinator.
- The HECIS Co-Ordinator will initiate an informal meeting with the complainant to discuss the complaint and come to a full understanding of it.
- The HECIS Co-Ordinator should address the complaint with a view to resolving it within two weeks. This may take the form of the HECIS Co-Ordinator prescribing certain actions to be adopted which address the issues and find a resolution.
- On completion of the investigation the HECIS Co-Ordinator will determine a course of action to be taken.

Possible course of actions may include, but not be limited to, any combination of the following:

- counselling;
- disciplinary action against the harasser (e.g. suspension, probation or dismissal);
- official warnings that are noted in the harasser's personnel file;
- disciplinary action against the person who complained if there is strong evidence that the complaint was vexatious or malicious;
- formal apologies and undertaking that the behaviour will cease;
- conciliation/mediation conducted by an impartial third party where the parties to the complaint agree to a mutually acceptable resolution;
- reimbursing any costs associated with the discrimination or harassment;
- re-crediting any leave taken as a result of the harassment;

Written documents produced as part of the dispute should be held on a confidential file by the HECIS Co-Ordinator for a period of twelve (12) months and destroyed if no further conflicts arise.

DOCUMENTATION

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	
Forms, record keeping or other organisational documents	

Reviewing and approving this policy		
Frequency	Person responsible	Approval
Annually	HECIS Co-Ordinator	Management Committee

Policy review and version tracking			
Review	Date Approved	Approved by	Next Review Due
1	13.8.15	HECIS Co-Ordinator	Aug 2016
2	28.7.16	HECIS CoOrdinator	Aug 2017
3	14.8.17	HECIS CoOrdinator	Aug 2018
4	3.9.18	HECIS CoOrdinator	Aug 2019
5	20.8.19	HECIS CoOrdinator	Aug 2020
6	15.9.20	HECIS CoOrdinator	Aug 2021

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