DIGNITY AT WORK

A Good Practice Guide for Higher Education Institutions on Dealing with Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace

equalitychallengeunit

UCU
University and College Union

UNISON
the public service union

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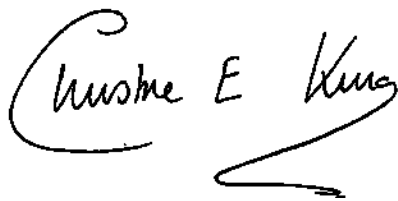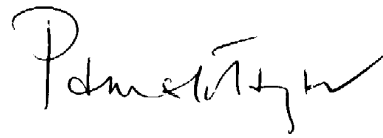Workplace

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Foreword

by Professor Christine King, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive, Staffordshire University and Pamela Taylor, Principal, Newman College

When we were approached to support this publication, we were very happy to agree, because we are acutely aware that bullying and harassment are issues that are relevant to us all. Even those of us working in the most friendly and welcoming higher education institutions know that we cannot be complacent about the challenges that face some of our staff and students, sometimes on a daily basis. Wherever people live, work and study together, in large complex organisations, conflict will arise. This is not necessarily a bad thing – challenges to our traditional way of thinking enable us to grow and develop and to learn to appreciate other people's perspectives. What matters is how this conflict is managed, and treating each other with respect – ensuring that people feel comfortable with sharing their own views and are able to listen respectfully to those different from their own.

Staff at all of our higher education institutions will recognise that when this is not the case, people may believe that they are being treated unfairly and that can create anxiety and distress. If it continues, it may become more serious to the extent that people may feel that they are being subjected to harassment and bullying behaviour within the workplace. This may cause considerable turmoil, not only to the individuals concerned but to wider teams who witness such incidents, with knock-on effects to other departments and services and to students, the general public and other customers that we serve. It is therefore the responsibility of each one of us to ensure that the communities in which we work and study become and remain free from unacceptable behaviour, so that every member of the community can feel able to fulfil their full potential and flourish within the

higher education environment.

This Guidance Pack has been designed to provide information and resources to assist you in your efforts to tackle bullying and harassment and as such we commend it to institutions. We would like to thank the Equality Challenge Unit for taking a proactive stance on this issue and helping to raise the profile of dignity at work initiatives. We sincerely hope that it will be of assistance to you, and will help to make our institutions even better places to work for our staff.

Acknowledgements

The publishers of this Guide would like to thank the following people for their contributions. Firstly, thanks are due to all those who assisted with the project and the production of this Guidance, particularly all the institutions listed in Appendix 4, without whom the good practice elements of this document could not have been produced.

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Introduction

1. One of the primary purposes of the project was to promote dignity at work for all staff within higher education. The project aimed to provide practical guidance on the steps that can be taken to encourage successful working relationships between staff and to work towards the elimination of bullying and harassment in the workplace.

2. This guidance pack has been produced to assist Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the development of their own policies, practices and support mechanisms to promote dignity at work, using examples of good practice from other universities and colleges.

3. Policies and procedures alone will not secure a harassment free working environment.   Employees at all levels of an organisation need to be involved in creating and implementing initiatives, which lead to ownership both of the problem and the solution. Pivotal to this is the role that trade unions can play.

Business Case

4. Investing in employee well-being makes good business sense, not only in terms of improving performance, raising morale and reducing stress, but also in making HEIs more attractive places to work and study, aiding retention and improving overall performance.

5. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) estimates that bullying accounts for up to 50% of stress-related workplace illnesses, which means that every year, bullying costs UK employers **80 million lost working days and up to £2billion in lost revenue**. This is in addition to the human cost to the targets and the risk to employers that employees will take legal action resulting in adverse judgements, heavy costs and damages and extremely negative publicity.

> **"Workplace bullying - in any form - is bad for business. It destroys teamwork, commitment and morale."**
>
> Tony Morgan, Former Chief Executive, The Industrial Society

> **"Work organisation and dignity at work practices that benefit both the employer and the individual, will characterise the high performance work place of the future."**
>
> DTI Website

How much longer can your institution <u>afford</u> to ignore dignity at work?

6. Allowing a culture of bullying and harassment to develop unchecked can have the following outcomes:

    - Damage to morale;
    - Negative impact on individuals, teams and the whole organisation (including those not directly affected);
    - Poor performance/low productivity;
    - Loss of respect for management;
    - Increased absence and ill health (particularly stress related);
    - More resignations;
    - Poor customer service;
    - Conflict with recognised trade unions;
    - Damage to institution's reputation;
    - Employment tribunal claims.

7. Treating dignity at work as a serious issue is likely to have the following benefits:

    - **Higher morale and improved performance**
      Giving employees a more positive working environment improves morale and has a consequent impact on productivity. Relaxed, happier staff are more productive and this relates to the whole workgroup, not just those immediately affected by bullying or harassment issues.

    - **Reduced absence levels, particularly stress related**
      Bullying and harassment are likely to lead to stress related illnesses. Effectively tackling these issues is likely to improve sickness absence rates.

    - **Reduced turnover and better staff retention rates**
      Employees frequently choose not to remain with the organisation when they can resolve their issues by resigning. Research indicates that approximately 50% of those who are targets of bullying and harassment leave the organisation rather than using internal procedures to resolve the situation.

    - **Improved service delivery**
      If staff are treated fairly and well by their employer, they are far more likely to behave in a positive way towards other stakeholders such as students and members of the public.

    - **Better industrial relations**
      Organisations that have an effective strategy to deal with bullying and harassment are far less likely to have constant difficulties

with the recognised trade unions. The best institutions are likely to actively work in partnership with the unions to meet their obligations to promote dignity at work and are usually much more successful in achieving their objectives by operating in this way.

Bristol University – Case Study

The University's dignity at work initiatives are located within the context of Bristol's Positive Working Environment (PWE) structure. Following the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor in 2003, a survey of all 5500 staff was undertaken, and an action plan with key commitments drawn up across a range of areas. A follow up survey is planned for 2006, to track progress across these areas, and to measure how effectively the University is meeting its targets.

Details of provision	• Integral part of the University's strategic development – Bristol regards dealing with dignity at work issues as fundamental to its values and its strategic plan • Initiatives are under one umbrella, administered by one senior manager within the Personnel Department with links to all other sections of the University • High profile and supported by senior management – PWE agenda recognised as "the most important thing that the University is doing" by the Vice-Chancellor and the Director of Personnel • Initiatives include Dignity at Work and Study Advisers and a mediation service • Appropriate resource allocation
Key features	• High profile and well publicised initiative • PWE week of activities highlighting available services with special events, etc. • Range of training and support available including Management Development Programme (includes Bullying and Harassment, Stress and Diversity training) • Drama workshops available for staff (run internally, so costs controlled) • Links with other key concepts such as stress and effective leadership • Specific website promoting range of PWE activities and services

Health and Safety

8. The Chief Executive of the HSE believes that stress is a major problem in British workplaces. In May 2006, the HSE published a survey that indicated around 13 million working days were lost due to work-related stress in 2004/05 and that stress along with Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) accounted for around 70% of all work-related working days lost in Great Britain.

9. The HSE report noted that more than 20% of employees are concerned about work related stress and approximately 40% of employees believed that the risk of stress in the workplace could be realistically reduced. Only approximately 30% said that their employers had taken preventative action to reduce stress levels in the workplace.

10. Bullying and harassment are key causes of stress and the HSE has issued guidance to help you to deal with stress related issues in a comprehensive and strategic way. You have a responsibility not only to put these strategies into place, but also to communicate them effectively to staff.

Managing Stress

11. The HSE has developed **Management Standards for Stress** that identify six factors that may have an association with stress. These are:

    •   The demands of the job;
    •   The employee's control over his/her work;
    •   Support from management, colleagues and the organisation as a whole;
    •   Relationships at work;
    •   The employee's role within the organisation;
    •   Change and how it is managed.

Further details on the HSE Management Standards are available on the website (**www.hse.gov.uk**). Useful information is also to be found on the International Stress Management website (**www.isma.org.uk**) and on the

UNISON Higher Education Health and Safety Advice web pages. (**www.unison.org.uk/education/higher/hands.asp**)

Risk Assessments

12.   Risk Assessment should be undertaken as a five-stage process

  i.   Identify hazards – is there an excessive workload, etc?;
  ii. Decide who may be harmed and how;
  iii. Evaluate the risk and take action – how likely is this to cause serious problems for the employee concerned? If so, action needs to be taken.
  iv. Record findings and formulate an action plan – plan should include timescales for actions;
  v.   Monitor and review the plan.

Although this is not a legal requirement, you are strongly recommended to follow these guidelines in order to meet your legal obligations and avoid tribunal claims.

Developing a Dignity at Work/Bullying and Harassment Policy

13. One of the key methods of starting to tackle the issues could be the introduction of a dignity at work or bullying/harassment policy. When doing so, it is important to be clear about your objectives. A policy fulfils a number of important functions within an organisation, such as ensuring equity and fair treatment and indicating a recognition of the seriousness of the issue being addressed.

14. You should clarify the scope of the policy, whether it relates to staff, students, visitors, contractors, or any combination of these. Where there are separate policies for each group, they should be comprehensive and consistent. One policy that covers all circumstances avoids the difficulties of deciding which policy and procedure to use when dealing with cases, and will enable your institution to promote one recognised standard of conduct for all, as your policy should include examples of unacceptable behaviour. The policy should also outline relative responsibilities, including those of bystanders or witnesses, and should provide guidance on the procedures to be followed, and sources of help available, in the event of bullying or harassment. There should be a clear distinction between the informal and formal procedures and the aim should generally be to resolve issues at the informal stage, if at all possible, as this is usually the complainant's preferred initial course of action and enables resolution with as little long-term damage as possible.

15. Any policy should be jointly developed with the recognised trade unions. Most institutions will involve the unions at the consultation stage, but if you have been working in partnership throughout the development of the policy, not only will the unions be committed to making it work, but they will be able to offer you helpful insights from their perspective on your own institution and any specific issues that may need to be addressed.

16.   In order to be useful, any policy needs to be comprehensible and easy to read, but it is surprising how often policies are written without any regard to plain English. It is also clear that employees need to be aware of where to find details of the policy and how to access advice and help in using it.

17.   However, any policy is only as good as its implementation. Management commitment is essential to making policy development a reality within the institution. You should make sure that you do not put so much effort into writing the perfect policy that you have no resources left to make it work effectively. Organisations often argue that they do not have sufficient resources to effectively deal with bullying and harassment, but with top level commitment it can be done, as the following case study demonstrates.

Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication – Case Study

When the current Director took over at Ravensbourne, he, together with the HR Director, sought to reposition the HR function by increasing its resources to enable the department to deal with relevant issues, both strategic as well as operational, including dignity at work, and implementing compulsory training. Governors of the College were involved in a variety of activities, including chairing the Diversity Committee, and external expertise was bought in when required, for example to conduct mediation.

Details of provision	• Appropriate resource allocation • Leading by example (attendance at compulsory training, etc.) • Flexibility according to circumstances - senior level appointment initially to promote diversity initiatives, structure revised when embedded into culture • Compulsory diversity training – follow up letter from Director is sent to non-attenders • Use a variety of techniques, including mediation, according to situation
Key features	• Board level Chair of the Diversity Committee • Compulsory diversity training for all staff and Governors • Willingness to take difficult decisions for senior staff, where necessary • Buying in external expertise where required (seeking staff opinions first) • Undertaking joint initiatives with other colleges to maximise resource usage

Key Features of a Model Policy on Bullying and Harassment

- Commitment from Senior Management;
- Acceptance that bullying is an organisational issue;
- A statement that bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated;
- Clear definitions of unacceptable behaviour;
- Legal implications for organisations and individuals;
- A statement that bullying may be treated as a disciplinary offence, and it should be listed as a misconduct and gross misconduct in the disciplinary procedure;
- Steps to assess and prevent bullying;
- Mechanism for third party complaints;
- Mechanism for initiation of the policy without a complainant;
- Duties of Heads of Department/Faculty/Services and supervisors;
- Confidentiality for complainants when they report bullying;
- Procedures to protect complainants from victimisation;
- Clear complaints procedures, separate from the normal grievance procedure;
- Availability of 'confidential advisers' and where to contact them;
- Informal complaints procedure;
- Formal complaints procedure;
- Procedure for investigating complaints;
- Information and training about bullying/harassment and the policy;
- Repair mechanisms/options outlined;
- Access to support and counselling;
- Review, monitoring and evaluation.

Other important considerations:

- Is it jointly agreed by the employer and recognised trade unions?
- Does it cover everyone?
- Is it effectively implemented?
- How will you measure progress?

Support Mechanisms

Mediation

18.   Mediation is a process whereby a trained facilitator assists people in dispute to find a mutually acceptable solution to an identified problem. The objective of mediation is to resolve conflict by finding a consensus to the issue. Achieving a win/win solution is not always possible but the mediator will seek to develop an outcome where neither party feels that they are the loser, and thus mediation is a more positive approach than the traditional grievance procedure.

19.   Mediation, like all other support mechanisms, is not suitable for use in all cases, but can provide a very useful additional facility particularly when dealing with issues between peers and when early intervention is possible. Mediation can only succeed when it is voluntary and where all concerned agree to keep the process confidential. Mediation is not likely to succeed where there is a serious power imbalance, or where one party is afraid of the other. Conflicts with a long, entrenched history are also unlikely to be suitable for mediation.

University of Sunderland - Case Study

Details of provision	• University identified a need for a conflict resolution process that was less adversarial • Mediation service available to all staff on a self-referral basis, or by their line manager (with individual's agreement) • Mediators have certificated training and have dealt with 11 cases over an 18 month period
Key features	• Additional service, not replacement for, harassment advisory network • Trade Unions involved in development of scheme via Joint Consultative Committee. • Trade Union reps also involved as advisers and/or mediators. • Mediation scheme piloted before being formally launched • Mediation allows staff experiencing problems an outlet for expressing concerns and releasing pressures on them without having to leave the organisation

Harassment Advisers

20. Many institutions favour the use of a system of initial contacts usually known as harassment advisers. Some advisers are used as a first point of contact, and have no further involvement if the case becomes formal. Others are required to support those involved through the entire process to its conclusion. It is important to remember that being accused of bullying or harassment may be as stressful as being the alleged target, so support and advice should be available to everyone involved at all stages of a bullying or harassment case.

University of Essex - Case Study

Details of provision	• Harassment Advisory Network • Service is available to staff and students but only uses staff in the advisory role • Advisers are recruited via normal recruitment procedure using a job description and person specification • Advisers are not paid but the time needed for the role is recognised by the University • Sabbaticals of variable duration are available for advisers who are going through a busy time (such as new parents, high pressure work period, etc.)
Key features	• Scheme developed in consultation with Law Department and trade unions • Role of harassment advisers clearly defined • Training for advisers involved a selection element to ensure only suitable people are used • Advisers have regular meetings and refresher training and have access to an external counselling service for supervision purposes • Dedicated phone line with distinctive ring tone is available for initial contact purposes • The scheme is widely publicised using a variety of methods – posters, promotional materials such as key-rings, etc., briefings to student groups, regular e-mails, pay slip attachments, adverts on PC's opening screens in open access areas and labs, and at staff induction sessions

In the application of a bullying and harassment procedure, key roles are played by confidential advisers and investigators. These should be representative of all the workforce and should be widely advertised (one channel should be via the trade unions). A proforma letter which may be used, with suitable adaptions, is outlined below.

Head of HR Management   Branch Secretary
and Employee Relations   UNISON/UCU

HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

I am writing to advise you that agreement has been reached on a new policy and procedure to deal with complaints of harassment and bullying. We aim to implement this from .... and launch it with a series of briefings for all staff.

In the procedure key roles are played by confidential advisers and investigators.

Confidential advisers

It is recognised that individuals suffering from harassment or bullying may feel too embarrassed to make a complaint, may worry that they will not be taken seriously or fear that they might be blamed for provoking the incident or incidents. Experiencing harassment or bullying as well as making a complaint can cause much distress. It can also be extremely distressing to be accused of harassment or bullying. For this purpose [   ] wishes to appoint confidential advisers to assist the individual employee and provide confidential support in cases of harassment - whether the employee is making a complaint, being accused of harassment or a witness to it.

Investigators

In order to investigate complaints of harassment effectively, [   ] will appoint a number of employees who will receive specialist training as investigators. The training will be designed to ensure that they are provided with the range of skills necessary to conduct, document and complete investigations in a fair and thorough manner.

The role of the investigators is to:

- ensure that investigations are carried out promptly and that time

scales for resolution are adhered to;

- ensure that all parties are communicated with and kept informed of progress as appropriate;

- protect the rights of both the complainant and complained-of and ensure that they are able to exercise their right to trade union representation throughout the process;

- clearly define the rights and responsibilities of witnesses;

- ensure that complainant and witnesses are provided with a fair opportunity to give their full version of events;

- ensure that details of the complaint are clearly outlined and that the complained-of gets a fair opportunity to answer the charges and identify witnesses;

- ensure that the commitment to confidentiality and non-disclosure of information ruling is evident during the investigation and after its completion;

- use judgement to ensure that all relevant facts and information are sought;

- be responsible for collecting all available evidence in a thorough manner;

- ensure that accurate note-taking and record keeping is carried out;

- draw as complete a picture of events as possible;

- objectively reach an informed conclusion as to whether the complaint is substantiated or not;

- provide the Designated Officer with a detailed report and appropriate recommendations.

Our purpose in writing is to ask for volunteers to take on one of these roles. Full training will be given and volunteers are sought from across the organisation. We are particularly keen to ensure we have a spread of people from across the organisation (both support and academic staff), and from different grades and a good balance of gender and ethnicity.

If you are interested please complete the pro-forma attached. If you would like further information, please contact [HR   ] or [trade union side]. Alternatively any of the HR Officers will be able to assist.

HARASSMENT PROCEDURE

Name

Job Title and Grade

Department/Region

Gender

Ethnicity

I am interested in becoming a confidential adviser/harassment investigator* and look forward to receiving further information.

*Delete as applicable

Please complete and return to

Support Networks

21.   Some institutions have introduced support networks for particular groups, such as women, BME and LGBT staff, international students, etc. Although these are not established with any direct relevance to the institution's dignity at work initiatives, they can provide a useful source of information and support for staff, particularly where harassment is concerned.

Southampton University - Case Study

Details of provision	• A variety of support networks open to both staff and students in the University • Current networks support LGBT people, carers, women in SET, disabled people and people from cultural diverse backgrounds • Remit of networks – to act as consultation forum and to raise current issues
Key features	• Networks established in response to user demand • Supported by the Equal Opportunities Office, but essentially self-sustaining by the users themselves • Networks are very proactive at raising awareness of issues and feeding back to the University in respect of any particular problems identified by members – good source of qualitative information and ready made consultation forum for key issues • Source of informal support for members with similar issues, so people feel more secure about approaching them with individual problems

Counselling

22. Many counsellors believe that there are strong positive associations for those workplaces that provide a staff counselling service. Reports suggest that those who use such services are frequently experiencing high levels of distress, but that post-counselling, the level returns to within the usual expected range for more than half of those counselled. Though the provision of counsellors might appear to be an expensive option, there are a number of studies that demonstrate that counselling services are not only cost neutral, but actually have better than break even effects (that is, the costs are outweighed by the financial savings made).

23. It would, however, appear that currently although institutions routinely offer a counselling service for students, they do not always offer the same facility to staff. The suggestion is that not only would such provision have a beneficial impact upon the psychological well-being of significant numbers of employees, but that the reduction in absence rates and improved productivity also offer significant benefits to employers.

University of Hertfordshire - Case Study

Details of provision	• Life Skills coaching - working with individuals to improve their personal effectiveness in any situation • Helpful with harassment or bullying cases: - improve individual's confidence, self esteem, assertiveness and communication - reframe experience, thus enabling them to take responsibility and move from victim to equal mode
Key features	• Coaching identifies life skills that the individual wishes to improve or develop • Identifies and explores strategies to develop the desired skills • Strategies used include challenging and changing limiting beliefs that are blocking the individual, and developing alternative behaviours which focus on achieving the specific outcome • Highly effective method of challenging limiting self beliefs and changing behaviour within a short period of time

Employee Assistance Programmes

24. Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) have flourished in response to concerns about the effectiveness of harassment networks and as institutions seek to meet their legal obligations in relation to their duty of care to employees.

25. The advantages of EAPs is that they are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can be accessed from anywhere by all employees, including HR personnel. EAP services are confidential and allow all participants in bullying/harassment cases to be counselled by different counsellors within a secure, safe environment.

26. The major difficulty with EAPs is that not all staff will feel comfortable

discussing personal issues via a telephone – many people prefer face-to-face communication, particularly when taking the first difficult step of raising a bullying or harassment issue.

27.   EAPs are likely to be most effective as one of a range of integrated support services available, so that staff can use them according to their own personal preferences. They seem to work less well when introduced as a "one-size-fits-all", or as a stand-alone option that does not seem to be linked to any other provision offered by the institution.

Trade Union Representatives

28.   Trade unions have played a crucial role in the development of initiatives to tackle bullying and harassment in the workplace and local branch representatives continue to be the first point of contact for many members of staff who are experiencing difficulties at work. As such, union representatives have a vital role to play and employers should encourage all union members who are concerned about bullying or harassment in their workplace to speak to their representatives as soon as possible.

29.   Union representatives should be supported in their work by being permitted to attend training courses to enable them to effectively deal with bullying and harassment complaints. Institutions should also undertake joint working with union representatives to develop strategies for tackling work-related stress and other relevant issues to promote dignity at work, including the possible provision of joint training programmes.

30.   Unions are frequently extremely proactive in raising awareness of bullying and harassment issues in general and in identifying "hot spots" within the institution that may require special attention. You may wish to consider having regular agenda items on joint consultative committee meetings to look specifically at dignity at work and to develop joint strategies for dealing with identified issues. When policies or other support mechanisms are under consideration, the local representatives should be consulted at an early stage of the proposals.

Training

31. Training in dealing with bullying and harassment is essential for all staff. Prevention is always better than cure, so having a comprehensive training programme may prevent issues from developing and will save the time and stress involved in dealing with bullying and harassment complaints.

32. Although some institutions are now focusing very strongly on the use of on-line and other electronic forms of training, it is advisable to have a comprehensive training and education plan that utilises a variety of methods. Training that fails to take account of the needs and learning styles of the target audience as well as the cost and ease of delivery for the institution, is unlikely to be effective.

33. Some of the staff who are likely to benefit from training include the following:

   • Line managers, who need to understand the legal obligations of the institution as well as their potential personal liability), as well as understanding how to implement the Dignity at Work Policy and procedures;

   • Senior managers and members of the Governing Body, who also need to appreciate the impact of their decision making and behaviour on the culture of the organisation;

   • Professional HR staff, who need to understand how to effectively implement the Dignity at Work Policy, and how it interacts with the institution's existing disciplinary and grievance procedures;

   • Trade union representatives, who will be the first point of contact for a significant number of staff in relation to dignity at work issues;

   • Harassment Advisers, who need to be fully trained to effectively support complainants and alleged harassers;

   • Members of the investigation panel, who will consider any cases;

   • Specific groups of staff who may have a particular need to understand how your policies and procedures work, such as front line staff (security, accommodation office, etc.).

34. You will also need to ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and any available support available, and you may also wish to provide training for staff in general on behaviour at work and/or assertiveness, to reinforce the importance of appropriate behaviour

by and towards all. It is important to send out consistent, clear messages to the entire workforce. One way to achieve this is to ensure that staff induction and general equality and diversity training sessions include information about the institution's bullying and harassment policy, how it is applied, monitored and evaluated, emphasising that it applies to all staff.

Staffordshire University – Case Study (overleaf)

Staffordshire University provides diversity training for all staff, but offers a range of tailored programmes for particular staff groups, focusing on those with management responsibilities. Diversity training is seen as a priority activity and is strongly supported by the Vice-Chancellor and the senior management team, who not only attend relevant sessions but also contribute to all diversity inductions. On a broader front, the University has instituted an annual Celebrating Diversity programme and operates a diversity award scheme (now in its fourth year). Specific training is also provided on behaviour at work, but the general diversity training programme has a strong emphasis on the need to promote diversity and respect for all as a central tenet.ug

Details of provision	- Compulsory half day diversity induction for all new members of staff including Behaviour at Work Policy and Code of Conduct - Diversity workbook – hard copy distributed to all staff including telephone check for understanding - Comprehensive training programme on all aspects of diversity for line managers - Various activities such as drama and open sessions on specific topics available to a range of staff - More general awareness raising by means of the annual diversity awards and the celebrating diversity week, which showcases activities and performances across a range of diversity themes
Key features	- Range of types of training available – short leaflets, face to face sessions, diversity workbook, on-line training, open programme across a range of diversity activities - Training available for all staff - Training tailored to target group – concise briefings and presentations for Governors, individual sessions on each diversity strand, plus behaviour at work and stress management for senior level management group, etc. - Additional support (such as group activities, telephone helpline) available for staff for whom such training is not the norm - Diversity induction including contributions from the Vice-Chancellor and attendance by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Diversity - Activities often organised jointly in conjunction with the Students' Union, UNISON and UCU, involving student participants and the trade unions

Communication

35. Many institutions use a variety of different communication channels to publicise their dignity at work initiatives, in order to ensure that as many people as possible are aware of the University's stance in respect of bullying and harassment, and know where to obtain information and support should they need it.

36. You will need to ensure that the methods you select are appropriate to the needs of your institution and suit all staff. This means that focusing entirely on electronic communication will rarely be acceptable as the sole communication mechanism, as this will disadvantage those staff without easy access to e-mail and the internet.

37. You may wish to consider using several or all of the following methods in order to get your message across effectively:

- Staff leaflets, summarising the key features of the policy and associated support services, such as the availability of advisers, relevant contact details, etc. One way of ensuring that all staff receive such information, as well as having it available at key points such as catering outlets, libraries etc, is to attach an individual copy to the pay slip of all staff members.
- Roadshows or general meetings at which staff can obtain information, ask relevant questions and clarify any issues they may have. Don't forget you may need to arrange early evening/ evening sessions in addition to those during usual working hours to offer flexible and/or part-time workers the opportunity to attend.
- Articles in newsletters/internal bulletins;
- Communications and publications by the unions, including newsletters, branch meetings and websites;
- Faculty/service/departmental meetings;
- Posters;
- Internet/intranet/shared drives;
- Various types of promotional material can be useful – keyrings, coasters, etc. provide a constant reminder of important contact details and keep the issue of dignity at work at the forefront of people's minds;

- Staff induction offers a good opportunity to make new employees aware of the institution's commitment to dignity at work and to introduce the relevant policies and support services at an early stage of their career. This also helps to reinforce the culture of the organisation to new starters right from the beginning of the employment relationship.

38. It is important to send out consistent, clear messages to all of the workforce throughout the range of communications used. Staff induction and general equality and diversity training sessions should include information about the institution's bullying and harassment policy, how it is applied, monitored and evaluated. As the policy applies to all staff, care should be taken to also include those working in contracted out services, such as estates, catering, grounds maintenance, etc. Suitable ways to communicate the policy to such staff will need to be devised and they should also have opportunities to access briefings and training events in relation to dignity at work.

39. Procurement/tender documents should contain a specification that not only covers equality and diversity issues, but includes a reference to the institution's bullying and harassment policy.

40. Much of the recent equalities legislation is predicated upon a duty to eliminate discrimination and to positively promote equality of opportunity. This requires an institution to take proactive steps to assess whether there is equality of opportunity for everyone: staff, students, the public, and partner organisations and businesses, and to make changes where this is not the case. Contractors themselves must not discriminate, but they do not necessarily have the same legal obligation to promote equality of opportunity as public bodies. Therefore, it is incumbent upon institutions to build relevant equality considerations into the procurement process to ensure each function meets the statutory and equality standards required of all HEIs.

Monitoring and Evaluation

41.   It is essential to give some consideration to how you intend to monitor and evaluate any dignity at work initiatives you wish to introduce. It is important to involve the staff unions (for both academic and support staff) in the development of the survey, and to work with them in the analysis and action planning that will/may arise from the findings. You will not be able to demonstrate whether or not the steps you have taken to tackle bullying and harassment have been successful if you have no evidence to support this view. Monitoring is important to provide basic data on the numbers of users of the service, broken down into various categories (e.g. harassment of lesbians and gay men, sexual and/or racial harassment, etc). This will enable you to identify any particular patterns of complaints, and thus alert you to areas on which you need to concentrate additional attention and/or resources. It will also enable you to identify what resolutions were achieved in each case and those where complainants decided not to proceed with formal complaints.

42.   You will also need to undertake some qualitative analysis, as the statistical data alone will be insufficient to provide enough details about user satisfaction. Below you will find some suggestions on how to undertake user monitoring, as this is an area commonly neglected or poorly undertaken by even the most committed organisations. However, you may also wish to do a more substantial staff survey on a two-three year cycle, covering a range of issues including dignity at work. This will give you a much better overview of staff satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with the institution, and will enable you to track the progress of your support services in a way that will inform your review of service delivery.

Devising a User Survey

43.   Many institutions have introduced initiatives such as harassment networks to address issues of bullying and harassment. Monitoring systems are often in place, but these were usually based on statistics provided by the advisors themselves and few schemes appear to have a comprehensive evaluation process from the recipients of the service. This is a missed opportunity because as well as providing invaluable information about the service to allow co-ordinators to

constantly improve it, user monitoring is a very powerful tool to justify the continued need and importance of a service within the institution. One of the reasons it is frequently omitted is because it is fraught with ethical and logistical difficulties, as the monitoring process will involve asking people for their opinion at the end of what may well have been a particularly difficult and sensitive time for them. This means that the process must be handled with some care, but it is an effort worth making.

- **Organise the process**

  Firstly, some things to consider when setting up the system. If you are planning a questionnaire (which is probably the easiest system to implement), consider:

  - when will it be distributed and by whom?
  - how will it be reviewed to ensure one has been sent to everyone using the service?
  - who will monitor any returns and collate the information?
  - and what will happen to the information once it has been collated?

  The key is to have a designated person to co-ordinate the system, who can monitor its effectiveness and make changes if it does not appear to be working. Ideally, the co-ordinator would send out a form to all users of the harassment advisory network a short time after an advisor closes a case, keeping a log of who has been sent one. Returns would then be made to a designated person who should not be the co-ordinator (particularly if the co-ordinator is an advisor themselves).

- **Decide what you want to survey**

  With successive redrafts of any questionnaire, it is easy to lose sight of the original reasons for doing it. Decide what you think are important factors in your scheme – are you concerned about the scheme's visibility, its accessibility, the personal qualities of the advisers, the outcomes for people, suggestions from people about how to improve the survey (or all of the above plus a bit more). Try not to repeat statistics or information which can be gathered from the advisers' case notes unless they are absolutely necessary to the statistical analysis – this is a user survey and as such the over-riding premise should be gathering

personal opinions rather than statistics. There is also the added complication that asking individuals for their personal details could allow for their identification, especially in smaller institutions, - how many female Muslim lecturers are there in the Physics department?

- **Make any document user friendly**

  The layout of any document is extremely important – remember you want people to fill it in and return it, so the easier and more accessible any questionnaire is the better chance of getting it back correctly completed. At the beginning of any questionnaire, indicate roughly how long it will take to fill in, which should ideally be no longer than 5 or 10 minutes). Text should conform to accessible guidelines in terms of size and font, and you should use plain English wherever possible, to avoid alienating or confusing respondents.

  Returns will be significantly higher if the information is anonymised but make sure any questionnaire explains clearly what the information will be used for and the confidential nature of the information. Stress that the information will be used to make the service better, but also ensure that if someone has any specific individual concerns about the service they received they have a point of contact to discuss it should they so wish.

  Make the information you are asking for useful. Consider whether you want yes/no answers or a continuum scale to enable you to compare responses over time, e.g. scales of 1-5 rated "excellent" to "very poor". Both methods have their merits, but also their limitations, so spend some time working out exactly what information will be useful. Also, ask yourself if you want quantitative or qualitative information. Statistics are easier to collect, collate and understand, but the latter will give you lots of subjective information about why someone had a poor experience or holds a particular opinion. Qualitative data takes longer to analyse but is essential in obtaining genuine feedback that can help to improve services.

- **Dealing with Returns**

  Make sure that anyone filling in the questionnaire knows what to do with it afterwards. Make it easy to get the information back – consider enclosing an SAE or using freepost– it's probably only a few pounds over the year but free returns will vastly increase return rates. Be wary of internal mail or internal e-mail for returns - whatever safeguards are in place, people will be wary and there may be issues with confidential information being held on institutions' servers, so you are advised to sticking to using postal questionnaires. Make sure the SAE has confidential on it and is clearly marked for the attention of the relevant person.

  With confidential material concerning bullying and harassment issues, people are likely to be very sensitive about its use. Even if you have spelt out exactly who will have access to the information, people may still worry about what will happening to their personal information. You may wish to consider using a third party to collate the responses, or perhaps have a reciprocal arrangement with another local institution, so that respondents can be assured that the process is impartial. The format of any data produced could then be worked out between institutions.

Bullying vs Firm Management

44. Many managers are concerned about the possibility of being accused of bullying when they are required to discipline staff or deal with poor performance. This is not only unhelpful for the manager concerned, it may lead to a situation whereby staff are allowed to behave in ways which is detrimental not only to the organisation but for other individuals working within the manager's area of responsibility. Bullying is frequently prevalent where the management style is autocratic and overbearing but may equally be a feature of departments where the management style is weak and laissez-faire.

45. The key principles for managers are to treat staff fairly, communicate effectively and use appropriate measures to deal with those who are struggling to deliver to target. If you adopt the following principles, you are very unlikely to be accused of bullying. If you are unfortunate enough to be in this position, you can be confident that you can defend your actions and your approach if you have acted appropriately and fairly at all times.

- Remember that managing other people's performance is a legitimate part of your job, and there will be times when you are required to take unpopular decisions. You should however appreciate that being told you are not performing well is stressful for the member of staff and do this as tactfully and sympathetically as possible.

- Address any issues in the appropriate way. You should not lose your temper or gossip about your staff's shortcomings behind their back, but discuss each specific problem in turn, before agreeing a course of action.

- Be a good listener. Make sure that your staff understand and agree with what you discuss – it needs to be a two-way conversation, not a monologue. If staff have personal issues that are affecting their work, take an interest and make a genuine effort to help them cope. Recent research suggests a link with work-related stress for staff that feel they are without a voice, or their views are not heard.

- Praise your staff as often as you can – it is very easy for managers to fall into a pattern of relating to staff in a generally negative way. If this happens, staff will regard an invitation to your office as a cause for concern, when it can just as easily be an opportunity for a positive interaction. Motivating staff is a key feature to promoting a healthy and productive culture in the workplace and thus is a primary management responsibility. People respond to positive attention much more readily than to criticism, so when you do have an unfavourable comment to make, try to use the "positive sandwich" approach whereby you start and end with something good and put the criticisms in the middle.

- Keep communication channels open. Ask yourself if your manner is as approachable as it could be and if not, what you can do to improve it. It should go without saying that if you have a sensitive issue to address that you should take the member of staff aside and do it in private.

- Be fair and avoid favouritism. Do not allow yourself or other staff to take credit for someone else's work.

- Make sure all members of the team are included when you organise events. This should include social activities.

- Try hard not to be moody or temperamental. One of the most difficult types of behaviour to deal with for staff is that of a manager who has extreme mood swings. If you are feeling fragile, upset or simply having a bad day, don't be afraid to let people know. A self deprecating comment is much more likely to win you sympathy and understanding than losing your temper over a trivial matter for no apparent reason.

- Finally – don't forget that everyone makes mistakes and you are no exception. No-one is perfect, so if you do get it wrong, don't be afraid to say so. An acknowledgement and an apology are often all that are needed if you have approached an issue in the wrong way or at the wrong time or place. If you are prepared to acknowledge your mistakes, it will make it easier for your staff to do so too. This will help to establish a culture that avoids blame when things go wrong, and in which everyone pulls together with a focus on putting things right rather than finding scapegoats.

- The table below summarises the key differences between managers who use appropriate and inappropriate methods to get results:

Good Manager	Bullying Manager
Consistent	Inconsistent
Shares information	Withholds selectively
Fair	Has favourites
Truthful	Distorts and fabricates
Delegates	Dumps
Builds team spirit	Creates fear, divides
Leads by example	Sets a poor example

Conducting Investigations

46. The way in which any investigation is conducted will be a key element in the success of your dignity at work strategy – there is no point in introducing a comprehensive policy, training a network of harassment advisers and communicating widely and successfully if you do not have good, fair and transparent procedures for conducting investigations into complaints. Such investigations are very sensitive and there should be procedures separate from your normal disciplinary and grievance procedures to investigate such complaints, using people who have had specific training in investigating bullying and harassment complaints. You should bear in mind that many complainants and witnesses will be fearful not simply about the outcome but about any repercussions of making the complaint in the first place and they should be reassured that the institution will protect them and make every effort to deal effectively with the aftermath and minimise trauma after the investigation has taken place and the outcome is known. Therefore you should consider:

- Providing compulsory training for investigators and panel members;
- Ensuring that the investigation is conducted by two people, to gain the maximum benefit from the interviews. If you have investigators who are relatively new, try to team them with someone who has a lot of experience.
- Dealing with complaints in a sensitive, objective manner, respecting the rights of all parties involved;
- Keeping all the participants, including the witnesses, well briefed about the process and ensure that everyone involved is aware of how the findings will be communicated. Ensure that both the accused and the complainant are aware of what information they will receive at the conclusion of the investigation.
- Maintaining confidentiality – this is particularly important in a small institution, where the parties are likely to be well known to many other employees;
- Ensuring that complainants and witnesses are fully protected from victimisation. It is not sufficient to state in your policy that those concerned will be protected – you must have robust systems in place to ensure that this actually happens in the event of an

allegation of bullying or harassment.

- Using open questions to elicit the facts of the case and ensure that all questions are as neutral as possible. In particular, try to avoid questions that appear to allocate blame, which will make the respondent overly defensive and will obscure the facts.

- Concluding the proceedings within a reasonable timescale;

- Making every effort to ensure, if possible, that the investigatory team and the panel are balanced in terms of race, gender, etc (this is particularly important in cases where sexual/racial harassment are at issue). Members of the Investigatory team and panels should also include staff from all levels of the institution and represent both support and academic staff.

Ten Top Tips for Promoting Dignity at Work

1. It is essential to have **senior management support** for any initiatives you put in place – as well as the executive team, you may find it useful to involve governors in raising the profile of dignity at work issues. If the head of your institution and your governing Body are actively involved, for example in attending training sessions, it is much easier to encourage all other members of staff to do so too.

2. Having a well-written **policy** is vital – but this is only the first step, not an end in itself. Even the most skilfully crafted policy is useless if no-one within the institution has the confidence to use it. The chances of any policy being successful are much greater if it is part of a wider institutional approach that includes consideration of issues such as stress management, the use of advisers and the investigation process.

3. Help your managers to understand the **differences between firm management and bullying** – focus attention on how staff are managed and the ways in which communication takes place, as well as on the formal processes and procedures.

4. Emphasise the **role of every member of the institution** in combating bullying and harassment – those who witness it have as important a role to play as those who experience it directly. Include dignity at work as one of your core organisational values.

5. Offer a **variety of sources of information and ways of accessing support**. Not everyone will be comfortable talking to a stranger on the telephone, but others will prefer to discuss sensitive issues with someone who is not involved.

6. Communicate your policy and support services as widely as possible, using as many different types of media as you can. Some people do not have easy access to e-mail and the internet, so don't confine your efforts solely to electronic means of communication.

7. Monitor and evaluate any initiatives you put in place – you will not have any evidence that they are working unless you are able to effectively measure your progress. Think carefully about how you are going to monitor the usage of every service you have in place and ensure you track your statistics over time to identify trends.

8. Consider having a **staff attitude survey** on a regular (every two or three years) basis. In this way, you will have an indication of how staff feel about working at your institution and you will have valuable data about a range of significant issues by which to track your progress in a qualitative way.

9. Train all your staff in the operation of the policy, placing emphasis on the organisational culture you are aiming for – and make sure that you include refresher training in your plans.

10. The **culture of your institution** must reflect what you say in your policies in order to effectively tackle bullying and harassment issues. Ensure that you work in partnership with the trades unions to promote these values and to identify any issues that need to be addressed. Make sure that you treat everyone fairly, irrespective of their status and position within the institution.

Appendix 1 – Steering Group Membership

Jill Scott
ECU
(Chair)

Paul Andrew
University of Sunderland

Naseem Anwar
Liverpool John Moores University

Denise Bertuchi
UNISON

Vikki Burge
Higher Education Funding Council for Wales

Doreen de Bellotte
Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication

Elaine de Sousa
Universities and Colleges Employers Association

Erica Halvorsen
ECU

Kate Heasman
UCU

Alison Johns
Higher Education Funding Council for England

Laurie Macleod
University of York St John

Fiona Waye
Universities UK

Appendix 2 – Participating Institutions

- Anglia Ruskin University
- Bristol University
- Cambridge University
- Cardiff University
- Coventry University
- Cranfield University
- Goldsmiths College, University of London
- Institute of Education
- Keele University
- Liverpool John Moores University
- Loughborough University
- London South Bank University
- Open University
- Queen Mary College, University of London
- Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication
- Salford University
- Southampton Solent University
- Southampton University
- St Mary's College, Twickenham
- Staffordshire University
- The Institute of Cancer Research
- University of Central England, Birmingham
- University College for the Creative Arts
- University of Birmingham
- University of Chester
- University of Essex
- University of Hertfordshire
- University of Newcastle upon Tyne
- University of Plymouth
- University of Reading
- University of Sunderland
- University of Wolverhampton
- University of Worcester

Thanks are also due to all the other institutions involved in the project in other ways, including completing the baseline survey.

Appendix 3 – Recognised Trade Unions in Higher Education

Amicus

35 King Street,
Covent Garden,
London WC2E 8JG
Telephone: Tel. 0845 850 4242
Website: **www.amicustheunion.org.uk**

BDA (British Dental Association)

64 Wimpole Street
London W1M 8YS
Telephone: 020 7563 4138
Fax: 020 7563 4561
Website: **www.bda-dentistry.org.uk**

BMA (British Medical Association)

BMA House
Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9JP
Telephone: 020 7387 4499
Fax: 020 7383 6400
Website: **www.bma.org.uk**
E-mail: **info.web@bma.org.uk**

GMB

22/24 Worple Road
London SW19 4DD
Telephone: 020 8947 3131
Fax: 020 8944 6552
Website: **www.gmb.org.uk**

TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union)
Transport House
128 Theobalds Road
Holborn
London WC1X 8TN
Telephone: 020 7611 2500
Fax: 020 7611 2555
Website: **www.tgwu.org.uk**
E-mail **ckaufman@tgwu.org.uk**

UCU (Universities and Colleges Union)
UCU
Egmont House
25-31 Tavistock Place
London WC1H 9UT
Telephone: 020 7670 9700
Fax: 020 7670 9799
E-mail: **cnielsen@ucu.org.uk**
Website: **www.ucu.org.uk**

UNISON
UNISON Education Workforce Unit
1 Mabledon Place
London WCIH 9AJ
Telephone 020 7551 1364
Fax 020 7551 1252
UNISON Direct 0845 355 0845
E-mail **education@unison.org.uk** or **healthandsafety@unison.org.uk**
Website: **www.unison.co.uk**

Appendix 4 – Relevant Legislation

Although there is currently no specific legislation in the UK relating to the issue of workplace bullying, various types of harassment are covered and these and other areas of both general and employment law may also apply in cases of both bullying and harassment.

Contract law includes an implied duty on the part of the employer to provide an appropriate and safe working environment for staff. This is even more explicit in the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), which places a general duty on employers to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees and the Employment Rights Act, which includes the right to claim "constructive dismissal" in the face of an employer's breach of contract which could include a failure to protect health and safety.

Equality legislation can be applicable in particular cases where the bullying and harassment are on grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief or age. The Criminal Justice and Public Order, Protection from Harassment Acts and other specific pieces of legislation may also be relevant.

Unlawful harassment

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation or age is unlawful. Harassment is defined as behaviour which is unwanted and which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not have to be intentional to be unlawful. Conduct will only amount to unlawful harassment when all the circumstances are taken into account, including in particular the views of the person who is being subjected to the unwanted behaviour.

Protection from Harassment Act 1997

This Act was passed following concern that stalking was not effectively dealt with under existing legislation. However, the Act does not refer

solely to stalking and can cover other forms of harassment providing the following three elements are all proven beyond reasonable doubt:

- the defendant has pursued a course of conduct;
- the course of conduct amounted to harassment of another person;
- the defendant knew or ought to have known that the course of conduct amounted to harassment.

The Act can apply just as much inside the workplace as outside it.

Malicious Communications

A particularly unpleasant and increasingly common form of bullying or harassment is that involving malicious communications either through the post, telephone, fax, via the internet or by sending text messages to mobile phones.

Under the Malicious Communications Act 1998, it is an offence to send an indecent, offensive or threatening letter, electronic communication or other article to another person and under section 43 Telecommunications Act 1984, it is a similar offence to send a telephone message which is indecent offensive or threatening.

Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

This is a criminal offence that covers intent to cause harassment, alarm or distress. It can lead to a sentence of up to 6 months imprisonment or a fine of up to £5000.

Appendix 5 – Model Leaflet for Staff

Introduction

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect at work.

Workplaces should be places where employees can expect to be protected from treatment which demeans them, or which is unfair or intimidating, and all educational institutions should have a suitable policy in place to deal with bullying or harassment.

How can I recognise bullying or harassment?

Bullying and harassment can often be hard to recognise. Bullying and harassment do not necessarily have to be face to face. They may take the form of written or telephone communications, and may increasingly have an electronic dimension through e-mail.

- **Harassment** is generally defined as unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of the recipient. It may be related to sex, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation, age or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident. The key element of harassment is that the actions or remarks are regarded as unacceptable by the recipient.
- **Bullying** is a type of harassment. Most bullying behaviour relates to the individual, and include spreading malicious rumours, or insulting, ridiculing or demeaning someone, singling them out or setting them up to fail. Bullying can also involve isolating someone, victimising them or treating them unfairly, or deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading them or giving constant criticism.

Some features of bullying relate to the organisation, when it takes unreasonable advantage of its employees. This can include coercing employees to work excessively long hours on a regular basis, setting impossible deadlines or ignoring rising stress levels.

There is an important distinction to be made between bullying and firm management. Firm management may involve setting demanding performance targets, but these must be fair, achievable and appropriate to the person's job role and level of responsibility. When it is necessary for poor performance to be addressed, this should be done in a fair, supportive and constructive manner, using the institution's appropriate appraisal, performance management and, where necessary, capability or disciplinary procedures

How will I feel if I am the target of bullying or harassment?

If you are subjected to bullying or harassment, you are likely to feel very isolated, anxious and vulnerable. You may feel powerless and believe that you are not in a position to take any action to make things better. This is perfectly normal – these feelings are common to most people in your situation. You are likely to feel that taking even the first step towards resolving the issues is beyond you and that you are completely at the mercy of events. However, if you are able to start by talking it over with a trusted friend, family member or colleague, you are on the way to taking control of a situation that is disturbing your current peace of mind and could affect your future career and wellbeing. You may wish to approach your trade union for help at this stage.

How do I know if I am the target of bullying or harassment?

Prior to taking action, you should consider carefully in what ways the treatment you are experiencing may constitute bullying or harassment. You should also think carefully about whether the source of your stress is related to an individual or group of people at work, or if you find yourself under stress for other, more personal reasons. (In this situation, you should contact your HR/Personnel Department, who will be able to recommend additional sources of advice and assistance for your particular circumstances).

However if you feel you are experiencing bullying or harassment at work you should try to be specific about what is causing you distress, and not wait too long before taking action. Prompt action will stop situations from escalating. Although it may seem as though doing nothing is the easiest and least harmful course of action, this rarely helps to resolve the situation and may often make it worse.

What can I do if I feel I am the target of bullying or harassment?

If you ever feel that you are in a situation where you are at risk of physical assault or your personal safety is under threat, you should take immediate action by following your institution's procedures in relation to emergency situations. If you do not know what these are, you should take steps to find out and keep any security numbers available

If the nature of the bullying or harassment is less threatening you should keep notes or a diary of particular incidents, and be able to explain how the ways these were handled created stress and anxiety for you. You should also note who else was present and the names of any witnesses.

Anyone who experiences bullying or harassment should be able to go to their line manager for support and help, although this assumes, of course, that the line management relationship is healthy. You may also receive support from a trusted colleague, friend, or union representative, or the institution may have specially trained harassment advisers to support staff. HR/Personnel staff, Health and Safety representatives and Equal Opportunities/Diversity practitioners are also likely sources of advice and support.

Dealing with bullying and harassment on an informal basis

If you feel able to, the best approach is often to approach the person(s) concerned and inform them that their behaviour is causing you distress and unhappiness. In some cases, the inappropriate behaviour may be the result of a misunderstanding, and the person(s) concerned may not have realised how you felt about their behaviour. Bullying behaviour is frequently a result of lack of interpersonal skills and/or insecurity, and may be resolved by a calm and civilised approach on your part. However, this is frequently the hardest step for most people to take and why it is useful for staff to have support from someone they trust.

If you do not feel able to confront the other person directly, you may find it easier to compose a suitable letter to explain what your issues are, with perhaps a follow up meeting after time for due reflection.

Bullying and harassment frequently take place behind closed doors, which is another good reason to discuss your situation with friends or work colleagues. One of the things that many targets find most difficult is feeling

isolated and alone in a challenging situation and by talking to others you may discover that you are not alone in finding your situation difficult. This may help you find the necessary support to take appropriate action, as well as making it possible for you to take action together.

Dealing with bullying and harassment on a formal basis

If, despite the informal approaches, the bullying or harassment does not stop, you may have to make a formal complaint. Your institution may have a specific policy on bullying and harassment or you may need to pursue a complaint via the grievance procedure. If you do take this route, you should ensure that you take a colleague, friend, harassment adviser or union representative to all meetings connected with the complaint to act as a supporter and as a witness.

Finally, please remember your own responsibilities to treat your colleagues, students and all guests to the institution with the dignity and respect you yourself expect to receive. You can play your part by being sensitive to the views of others, which may frequently differ from your own, and ensuring that your own behaviour, language or conduct does not create any offence or misunderstanding. Where misunderstandings do occur, a speedy apology often resolves the situation with no further problems. It is the responsibility of every member of the institution to help create an inclusive community where everyone is enabled to achieve their full potential and mutual respect is the norm.

Appendix 6 – Resources

There are a variety of useful resources available to those interested in developing provision within their own institution. The following list is not exhaustive, but will provide a good starting point to effectively tackling bullying and harassment

General Sources

ECU's website has a wealth of information and guidance material, **www.ecu.ac.uk**

UCEA includes stress management as one of its specific areas of interest in its Health and Safety Reports (published annually), **www.ucea.ac.uk/index.cfm/pcms/site.Publications.Health_and_Safety**

The BBC has a useful website **www.bbc.co.uk/health/work/emotional_bully1.shtml**

A regularly updated guide to the relevant legislation can be found at **www.harassment-law.co.uk**

ACAS has a **guide for managers and employers (www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=794)** on bullying and harassment and a **guide for employees (www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=797)**.

The **Andrea Adams Trust** is a charity dealing specifically with workplace bullying. **www.andreaadamstrust.org**

Bully Online is a website on bullying in the workplace and related issues. **www.bullyonline.org**

Business Link in relationship with the DTI has **guidance** on bullying and harassment. **www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1074038578**

Aspects of human rights legislation are explained in **www.yourrights.org.uk**

Trade Unions

Amicus is working in conjunction with the DTI and Portsmouth University on a large scale project researching bullying and harassment, **www.dignityatwork.org**. A report has been published on the project's initial findings

The TUC has produced a series of helpful documents and information on bullying and harassment issues, **www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/rights_bullyatwork.cfm**

The AUT stress survey publication can be accessed via the link below. One respondent in five reported having experienced bullying or intimidatory management behaviour **www.aut.org.uk/media/pdf/4/7/workingtothelimit.pdf**

UCU have a good model policy with a number of additional references on specific areas of interest at **www.natfhe.org.uk/?entityType=Document&id=150**

A number of health & safety and equality publications can be downloaded from UCU's website. **www.ucu.org.uk**

UNISON's website has a wide range of useful resources, including a checklist of what a harassment/bullying policy should include, which can be downloaded from the **Bullying at Work Higher Education Resources**. This website also includes a toolkit and research previously undertaken by UNISON, all of which can be downloaded. The health and safety unit has produced guidance for branches, stewards and safety representatives, entitled *Bullying at Work*. **www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/13375.pdf**

Draft Bullying Survey for Branches
www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/B842.pdf

Draft Agreement on Bullying at Work
www.unison.org.uk/safety/doc_view.asp?did=943

Other useful information is available from the UNISON health and safety web pages **www.unison.org.uk/safety/index.asp**

Disclaimer

The information provided in this publication is not intended to be either legally binding or contractual in nature. Should you require more specific advice regarding the application of equalities legislation, it is recommended that you consult an appropriate qualified legal professional.

DIGNITY AT WORK

A Good Practice Guide for Higher Education Institutions on Dealing with Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace