

Dignity and Respect in the Workplace Policy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The University of East Anglia is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive environment where all members of our community feel welcomed, respected, and treated fairly. We celebrate diversity and are committed to providing equal opportunities for everyone.
- 1.2 One aspect to protecting our people is seeking to eradicate bullying and harassment at work and developing a positive culture. This policy supports this aim by setting out the steps we will take to investigate and deal with complaints of bullying and harassment, and how we support those affected.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 We expect everyone in our campus community, including all University employees (including prospective employees), plus individuals who hold an honorary appointment, a secondment contract, individuals doing work experience, self-employed individuals, student workers, and those on temporary or associate tutor contracts to be treated and to treat each other with dignity and respect and to ensure we comply with the Equality Act 2010, and Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 which introduced a preventative duty for employers to take all reasonable practical steps to prevent sexual harassment of their employees alongside other relevant legislation including the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 2.2 The same approach applies to others on campus such as students, service users, and individuals employed by other organisations and suppliers/contractors (third parties).
- 2.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with other key University documents, including but not limited to the Dignity and Respect in the Workplace Guidance, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Personal Relationships between Staff and Students, Recruitment & Selection, Sickness Absence, Flexible Working and Capability.

3.0 Legal Obligations

- 3.1 The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination based on nine protected characteristics (Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation). Discrimination can take various forms, such as direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, bullying, harassment, and victimisation.

- 3.2 As an employer, under the Health and Safety Work at Act 1974 the University has a legal responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare of its employees. This 'duty of care' means that the University must make every effort to provide employees with a working environment that is free of bullying and harassment.
- 3.3 As a university, we are committed to upholding academic freedom, freedom of expression, and inclusion in line with the Education (No.2) Act 1986 (Section 43). Academic freedom is fundamental to the academic community and thrives in an environment that fosters tolerance and respect for a broad spectrum of views and beliefs.
- 3.4 Furthermore, every individual has the right to freedom of expression within the bounds of the law. Our commitment to inclusion requires us to exercise these freedoms responsibly and with respect, aligned with our values. This means that neither academic freedom nor freedom of expression can justify bullying, harassment, or any actions that constitute hate incidents or crimes.

4.0 Our Approach

- 4.1 The University operates a zero-tolerance approach to behaviours of discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying and victimisation. Zero tolerance means that:
- (i) we will act and
 - (ii) the action will be proportionate to the circumstances of the case.
- 4.2 The University takes complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination, or victimisation seriously and will thoroughly investigate all reports of inappropriate behaviour and conduct and will take appropriate action to address the situation that is proportionate to each case in line with the relevant Disciplinary, Dismissal, Grievance and Whistleblowing and the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.

5.0 Our commitment to you.

- 5.1 The University is committed to taking proactive measures to prevent all forms of bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment by:
- Mandatory completion of training for all employees upon joining the University as part of their induction, accessible via the LearnUpon platform, with refresher courses:
 - Diversity in the Workplace (every 2 years)
 - Safeguarding & Prevent (every 3 years)
 - Opportunities for further development of a positive work culture through in-person workshops offered by the Organisational Development Service, along with optional digital EDI training provided through LinkedIn Learning which includes allyship and unconscious bias.
 - Monitoring our workplace culture through surveys, exit interviews and return-to-work meetings to identify and address any issues.

- Providing additional training for line managers to ensure that they understand how to implement this policy and the accompanying guidance effectively and their role in preventing bullying and harassment from occurring in the workplace, and by third parties.
- Undertaking regular risk assessments to determine reasonable measures that can be implemented to minimise the risk of exposure to sexual harassment in the workplace and by third parties.
- Ensuring that our zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, and bullying and harassment, is regularly communicated to all employees and third parties.
- Encourage the reporting of unacceptable behaviour through the Report + Support platform, line managers, or via the HR Business Partnering Team and addressing issues raised.

5.2 We believe that fostering a culture of equality, diversity, and inclusion not only strengthens our organisation but also enhances the wellbeing of our employees. This allows them to perform at their best by being their authentic selves and feeling a genuine sense of belonging. We are dedicated to creating a safe, respectful workplace and cultivating an environment built on dignity and trust, free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, or victimisation.

6.0 What we expect from you

6.1 All members of the University community are responsible for ensuring that they behave in an acceptable manner, showing respect for staff, students and visitors (including third parties) in line with our values. They should consider their own behaviour and the impact it can have on others and ensure that all University policies and procedures are followed.

6.2 Legitimate, reasonable, and constructive criticism of performance or behaviour, or reasonable instructions given to employees or students at the University will not amount to unacceptable behaviour on their own.

6.3 Employees should:

- Draw to the attention of their line manager in the first instance (or relevant Associate/HR Business Partner) any issues/incidences which they believe to be unlawful discrimination, bullying or harassment (including sexual harassment).
- Make their manager aware of issues related to their personal circumstances, particularly where this relates to their wellbeing, health and safety in the workplace or a practice that could result in unlawful discrimination, bullying or harassment (including sexual harassment).
- Complete all mandatory training when requested to do so.

6.4 Managers (this includes any employee with line management responsibility) have an important role in ensuring the wellbeing of their employees and should:

- Be aware of and encourage their teams to be aware of the expected standards and the impact of negative behaviours. Managers should therefore lead by example to create a positive and inclusive culture.
- Foster good relations among all employees in line with the University values.

- Ensure that their team have completed all essential mandatory training.
- Take responsibility for taking appropriate, prompt, and proportionate action where instances of inappropriate behaviour are brought to their attention. Managers can seek advice and support from the HR Business Partnering Team in dealing with such matters.

7.0 Confidentiality

- 7.1 As a general principle confidentiality will be agreed and maintained wherever possible during and after any complaint of harassment or bullying.
- 7.2 There may be situations where confidentiality cannot be kept, and this will be made clear to complainants at the time. For example, if a complainant tells, in confidence, something which puts the health and safety of the complainant or others at risk, this will need to be drawn to the University's attention.

8.0 Malicious complaints

- 8.1 The University takes seriously any complaints of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation. Complainants who make false allegations with mischievous or malicious intent will be dealt with under the relevant disciplinary procedure.

9.0 Wellbeing

- 9.1 The University provide a range of wellbeing support including access to the Employee Assistance Programme. Further details can be found our [Employee Wellbeing pages](#) or employees can seek support from their line manager or HR Business Partner.

10.0 Monitoring

- 10.1 The University's People and Culture Division will monitor and review the implementation of this policy. The University will continue to monitor its policies, procedures, and practices and provide necessary training and awareness.

Governance	Detail
Policy owner	People and Culture Division (EDI Team)
Underlying legislation	Equality Act 2010
Approved by	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee
Review date(s)	October 2024
Future review date	October 2026 or sooner if legislative changes take place.
Enquires	Matthew Gooch, Head of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion