



## Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy

Title	Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy
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### 1. Introduction

Innov8 Workshops is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment free from all forms of bullying, harassment and discrimination. We believe that every employee, volunteer, and student has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

This policy supports our legal obligations under the **Equality Act 2010**, the **Protection from Harassment Act 1997**, and the **Employment Rights Act 1996**. It applies to all Innov8 Workshops employees, trustees, volunteers, students, and anyone working on our behalf.

### 2. The purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to:



- Make clear our **zero-tolerance** approach to bullying, harassment, and discrimination.
- Outline the **behaviours** considered unacceptable.
- Set out **clear procedures** for reporting and responding to incidents.
- Provide information about **support** for anyone affected.
- Promote a culture of **respect, safety and inclusion**.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees (full-time, part-time, temporary)
- Volunteers and contractors
- Students and service users
- Visitors and third-party stakeholders

It covers all interactions, including those:

- In person
- Online (e.g. social media, emails, messaging platforms)
- Outside of the workplace if related to work (e.g. events, travel, offsite sessions)

### 4. Definitions

#### Harassment

Harassment is defined as **unwanted conduct** related to a protected characteristic (e.g. race, sex, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment) which has the **purpose or effect** of:

- Violating a person's dignity, or
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Examples include:

- Patronising, offensive, or belittling comments
- Intimidating body language
- Racial or homophobic slurs
- Sharing offensive or explicit materials
- Repeated unwanted attention



## **Bullying**

Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed at an individual or group that creates a risk to health and safety or wellbeing. It can be:

- **Verbal** – shouting, name-calling, sarcasm
- **Non-verbal** – gestures, exclusion, ignoring
- **Physical** – threats or actual violence
- **Digital** – abusive messages, cyberbullying

## **Upward Bullying**

Upward bullying is when a subordinate employee or group of employees undermines or targets someone in a more senior or managerial position, including:

- Deliberate non-cooperation or sabotage
- Passive-aggressive resistance
- Intimidation or personal attacks
- Public or digital undermining

Innov8 Workshops recognises that all employees — regardless of position — deserve to feel respected, and upward bullying will be taken as seriously as any other form.

## **5. Unacceptable Behaviour**

The following are **strictly prohibited** at Innov8 Workshops:

- Verbal abuse, threats, or intimidation
- Derogatory jokes, slurs, or negative stereotyping
- Exclusion or isolation of individuals
- Public humiliation or persistent criticism
- Sabotaging work or reputation
- Unwelcome physical contact

## **Sexual Harassment – Specific Statement**

Sexual harassment is any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal, or physical, that makes someone feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated.

Examples include:

- Unwanted sexual comments or jokes



- Inappropriate touching, groping or hugging
- Leering or suggestive gestures
- Circulating or displaying sexually explicit materials
- Repeated and unwelcome sexual advances

**Sexual harassment is never acceptable. It is a serious disciplinary offence and may also be a criminal matter.**

## **6. Reporting and Procedures**

### **6.1 Informal Resolution**

Where appropriate and safe, individuals are encouraged to raise concerns informally in the first instance, either by:

- Speaking directly with the person involved
- Writing to them (if preferred)
- Discussing the situation with a line manager or trusted colleague

This approach may help to resolve misunderstandings before escalation.

### **6.2 Formal Procedure**

If informal action is not appropriate or fails, the following steps should be taken:

1. Report the concern to a member of the Senior Management Team.
2. Provide a written account including dates, times, locations, and witnesses (if any).
3. The matter will be treated under the grievance procedure.
4. A confidential investigation will be conducted.
5. If the allegations are substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action will follow, which may include dismissal.

### **6.3 False or Malicious Allegations**

If, after a full investigation, an allegation is found to be made maliciously, disciplinary action may be taken against the complainant.

## **7. Confidentiality and Protection from Victimisation**

- All complaints will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- Only those directly involved in the investigation will be informed.
- No one who reports bullying or harassment in good faith will suffer any form of retaliation or victimisation.



- Retaliation against complainants or witnesses will be considered a serious disciplinary offence.

## 8. Support for Employees and Students

Innov8 Workshops is committed to supporting the wellbeing of anyone affected by bullying or harassment. Support includes:

- A designated safeguarding lead for students
- A trusted management contact for employees
- Signposting to external services such as:
  - Counselling or therapy services
  - ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)
  - NSPCC or Childline (for younger students)
  - Occupational health or GP support
- Reasonable adjustments (e.g. changes to work duties or environment) during investigations
- Designated Safeguarding Leads are Daniela Symons [daniela@innov8workshops.com](mailto:daniela@innov8workshops.com) and Rebecca Reiman [rebecca@innov8workshops.com](mailto:rebecca@innov8workshops.com)

## 9. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Head of Provision and Trustees to ensure:

- Compliance with current legislation
- Effectiveness in practice
- A safe and respectful workplace culture

Feedback from employees and students is welcomed and may be used to inform revisions.