



Harrow House & Oldfeld Dealing with Abusive Behaviour Policy



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Parties Responsible: Directors and Management team.

Linked policies: Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Data Protection, Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Student Behaviour, Equal Opportunities

Harrow House is committed to the continuing development of a positive and productive learning environment that encourages good working relationships for staff and students. All members of the College community (including but not limited to staff, students, leaders, agents and homestay hosts) and visitors to the College are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect and we are committed to promoting a culture that supports and encourages this.

We recognise that a comfortable learning environment needs to be free from discrimination, harassment and bullying. Harassment of one member of the College community by another or a visitor is unacceptable behaviour. All members of staff and students are responsible for helping to ensure that individuals do not suffer any form of harassment.

Any incidents of harassment may be regarded as grounds for disciplinary action which may result in dismissal or expulsion from the College. Victimisation of any individual who makes a complaint of harassment or bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

This policy also recognises the particular relationship of trust and authority between staff and students. If a student feels that they are being subjected to harassment by a member of staff or vice versa they may use the steps outlined in the guidelines for dealing with personal harassment.

We define harassment as unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of:

- a) violating dignity
- b) creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment

Harrow House has a close working relationship with the police and will not hesitate to involve them should this be deemed necessary. Should an offence be committed, this will be dealt with in the confines of English Law.

Different forms of harassment

Personal harassment

Takes many forms, and can range from subtle, derisory remarks to violent behaviour. The behaviour may be persistent or may be by its nature or severity, e.g. violence, be unacceptable even on a single occasion. Differences in culture, attitudes and experience, or the misinterpretation of social signals can mean that what is perceived as harassment by one person may not seem so to another.

Sexual harassment

Always involves unwanted sexual attention which emphasises sexual status over status as an individual or colleague. It can be physical, ranging from suggestive looks to indecent assault or rape, or verbal, ranging from belittling or suggestive remarks and compromising invitations to aggressively foul language or unwanted demands for sex. Sexual harassment occurs when any such behaviour creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for employment or for social life. Any behaviour that makes the recipient feel themselves viewed as a sexual object is liable to cause offence even if offence is not intended.

Racial harassment

May be defined as any hostile or offensive act or expression by a person of one racial group or ethnic origin against a person of another, or incitement to commit such an act. Such behaviour includes derogatory name-calling, insults and racist jokes, racist graffiti, verbal abuse and threats, physical attack, and ridicule of an individual for cultural differences. Racial

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harassment occurs when any such behaviour creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for employment or for social life.

Harassment of disabled people

May be defined as conscious or unconscious conduct towards people with disabilities which undermines their dignity, self-confidence and career opportunities. Such behaviour includes offensive language, derogatory name-calling, 'jokes' and mockery, uninvited, patronising or unnecessary assistance with duties, unfair or impractical work expectations.

Harassment on the grounds of Sexual Orientation

May be defined as any behaviour, conscious or unconscious, pertaining to sexual orientation, which is found to be offensive or objectionable to recipients and which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Such behaviour includes homophobic remarks or jokes, innuendo or gossip, threats of disclosing sexuality, exclusion from College or Departmental activities.

Harassment on the grounds of age

Is based on attitudes or assumptions and stereotyping which are prejudicial to older or younger people. Some examples of ageist harassment are derogatory remarks or behaviour, expressing prejudicial assumptions about abilities or excluding people from social activities.

Religious Harassment

Includes the use of embarrassing or derogatory remarks, drawing unwelcome attention to an individual's religious beliefs, exclusion from social activities, ridicule or religious jokes.

Bullying

Is threatening, abusive, intimidating or insulting behaviour, which may be an abuse of power, position or knowledge. Bullying can happen in public or in private and attacks are often irrational and unpredictable and serve to undermine an individual's self-confidence and ability. Such behaviour includes instantaneous rages, often over 'trivial' matters, derogatory or belittling remarks, constant criticism, shouting or sarcasm, setting impossible deadlines or workloads and making threats associated with failure to achieve, public humiliation, removing areas of responsibility without consultation.

Other Forms of Harassment

The College wishes to discourage all forms of harassment and therefore harassment of any kind and on any basis will not be tolerated. The College also regards the inappropriate use of modern technology as a form of harassment such as offensive e-mail, text messages or faxes.

Steps to take if you feel you are being harassed or bullied

If you feel that you or others are being subjected to harassment in any form, do not feel that it has to be tolerated. Nor should you be deterred from making a complaint because of embarrassment or fear of intimidation or publicity. The College will treat all complaints sensitively and appropriately and take all reasonable action to protect you. There are various steps that you or the College can take to deal with harassment, both on an informal or formal level.

- Talk to your Departmental Supervisor or the Welfare Officer.
- Should you wish to talk to someone not connected to Harrow House, contact our Independent Counsellor, Diana Jones, on 01929 439368.
- If you wish to lodge a formal complaint, please submit it in writing to one of the Senior Managers or Directors.