



## Bullying and Harassment Policy

### Managing Director's Statement of Intent on Bullying and Harassment:

British Institute of Recruiters recognises that bullying and harassment are potentially damaging to the health and wellbeing of employees and members of our learning community. As a result, we are totally committed to the elimination of bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination. In addition, it should be noted that bullying, victimisation, harassment or intimidation might well constitute a criminal act for which individuals may face prosecution through the Courts.

In addition to the personal costs to our staff there are economic costs that the company/ group is forced to bear in terms of low productivity, dissatisfied staff, poor quality of service and high staff turnover and the impact this negative behaviour will have on our learning community and participation in our 'safer learner' programme.

We all have a responsibility to ensure that bullying is not allowed to occur in the working and learning environment. Collective acceptance and collaboration is essential to identify where bullying may be occurring and to provide the support necessary to any potential victim. All staff and learners are actively encouraged to report instances of bullying whether directed toward them or a colleague. It is important to remember that a victim of bullying is likely to suffer an undermining of their self-confidence and may not feel able to report issues.

All managers, supervisors, trainers, assessors and mentors are required to take any allegation of bullying seriously. All allegations are to be reported to the Human Resources Department and the 'Safeguarding Appointed Person' immediately and documented as soon as is practicable. Where there is a potential conflict of interest in reporting through the Human Resources Department; managers and supervisors are to report the issue directly to a Director or the 'Safeguarding Appointed Person' who will ensure appropriate procedures are initiated.

All employees and learners have a right to dignity, consideration and respect and work free of intimidation. British Institute of Recruiters will therefore adopt a zero tolerance attitude to bullying. All incidence of bullying will be investigated and remedial action taken. Within the terms of employment, bullying may be classified as a disciplinary offence (up to gross misconduct) and will be a serious breach of behaviour for any member of our learning community which may result in withdrawal from the programme and qualification. British Institute of Recruiters welcomes the support of all staff and members of our learning community along with their suggestions in delivering a workplace and learning experience free from bullying and intimidation.

## Definition of Bullying:

Bullying may be defined as repetitive or persistent attempts to humiliate an individual or individuals.

Bullying may be enacted in a form of words or actions which seek to undermine personal self-confidence in a staff member or group. This may include, but is not limited to:

<b>Excessive criticism of performance</b>	<b>Verbal abuse</b>	<b>Undue performance monitoring</b>
<b>Undermining performance by withholding information or resources</b>	<b>Threats</b>	<b>Physical attacks</b>
<b>Ignoring the views of an individual</b>	<b>Persistent criticism</b>	<b>Shouting</b>
<b>Imposition of restrictions which are targeted at an individual</b>	<b>Exclusion of individuals</b>	<b>Reduction in duties or responsibility without reason</b>

## Identification of a Bully:

Bullies often lack confidence in their own ability and use bullying as a screen to these issues. Aggression is often used to counter views differing from their own, often perceived as a challenge to their position or opinion. Their insecurity often leads to envy of other people's ability or status and a misconception of other people's popularity or success as a threat to their own position.


Bullies will only succeed where we as an organisation allow the behaviour to continue with our consent, tacit or otherwise. If we allow bullying it will become engrained within our culture, along with all the negative effects that bullying can have. Bullying can often be identified where there is poor management, lack of adequate supervision, unreasonable workloads, autocratic management style and a lack of procedures for dealing with complaints.

Bullying ultimately undermines not only the individuals involved but also the organisation as a whole.

## Responsibilities:

The Tutor and Standards Manager is to consult with employees and trainers and mentors with our learning community wherever practicable to develop procedures to deal with bullying. It is envisaged that this policy will develop over time to account fully for changes in working conditions, legal requirements and other developments.

Where an issue of bullying or potential bullying is raised, The 'Safeguarding Appointed Person' is to initiate an investigation of the circumstances and agree an action plan with all concerned. The investigation is to be independent of the protagonists and, where necessary, external resources will be utilised. As required by our 'Safeguarding Policy' all investigations take priority over other areas of work especially where a vulnerable adult or children are involved.



The 'Safeguarding Appointed Person' is to ensure the investigation proceeds as quickly as is practicable and that all parties are regularly updated with regard to its progress.

On completion of the investigation a report will be made to board members and the action plan is to be implemented drawing on available resources as necessary.

The investigation will not necessarily result in disciplinary action where alternative solutions are appropriate such as the modification of behaviour, however, the sanctions set out in company disciplinary procedures and within the Independent Safeguarding Authority requirements will be used if appropriate. Persistent bullying by an individual will not be tolerated.

The Operations, Quality and Compliance Manager is to ensure that those persons conducting any investigation have received appropriate training, information and instruction to allow both a thorough and impartial examination of the facts as they present.

Where appropriate counselling services will be available to victims of bullying to ensure, where possible, a complete recovery.

### **Induction Training:**

All staff and new starters will be informed of the Company Policy with regards to bullying and informed of the procedures in place to deal with instances of bullying or abuse.

### **Informal Procedures:**

Staff who consider themselves to be subject to minor incidents of bullying or harassment may make an informal approach to the harasser or their line manager. This approach may be verbal or written and it may be advantageous to explain why a particular behaviour is distressing.

It is often the case that an individual may not realise that a particular behaviour is causing distress and will welcome the opportunity to resolve the issue informally.

### **Formal Procedures:**

Where informal resolution has failed or the issues are serious, a formal procedure is necessary. The individual raising the concern should notify the HR Dept. This may be verbally in the first instance but must be followed with detail in writing. Individuals may wish to seek the advice of their line manager or another senior manager in preparing the written complaint. The document should detail:

- **The name of the bully**
- **The nature or type of bullying with details of specific incidents**
- **Dates and times when the bullying occurred**
- **Names of witnesses to any incidents**
- **Any action already taken by the complainant to stop the bullying**

Where there is conflict of interest, the complaint should be made to a Senior Manager or Director.



## **Immediate Action:**

Where possible, on receipt of a complaint of bullying the complainant and the alleged bully should be separated. The alleged bully may be transferred or suspended on pay until the issue is fully resolved; alternatively, the complainant may be transferred where they prefer this course of action.

## **Investigation:**

Then investigation should be initiated as soon as possible post any allegation of bullying. In any case, a disciplinary interview should be undertaken within three days although this period may be extended where Managers agree that this would be in the best interests of the investigation. All parties must be informed of such a decision and given information, without prejudicing the investigation, supporting a delay.

The highest degree of confidentiality is to be maintained at all times during the investigation.

Both parties will have the right to be supported by a work colleague or recognised trades union representative.

## **Findings:**

Except where there is no case to answer the findings of the investigation are to be detailed in a written report to the board or most senior manager. Actions necessary will then be formulated into an action plan and the plan implemented forthwith.

## **Discipline:**

Under no circumstances is the fact that a complaint of bullying has been made to be entered onto an individual's record. Raising a complaint is to have no effect on the individual's status or future within the organisation. However, where the investigation finds evidence to support the view that the complaint was made in bad faith, as a malicious act or out of spite, the person making the complaint may be disciplined in line with current procedures.

Where possible, remedial action is to be taken to prevent recurrence of bullying, this may involve but is not limited to the usual disciplinary procedures. Where appropriate the Directors of British Institute of Recruiters will ensure full compliance with and the reporting of incidents as required by the Independent Safeguarding Authority reporting procedures and any local 'Safeguarding Panel' requirements.

## Contacts

Whistleblowing Officer  
**Azmat Mohammed**

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