

Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Racism - Guidance for Games



Introduction

This checklist provides some simple achievable actions you can take in order to tackle bullying, harassment and racism in your workplace. No checklist, procedure or policy can guarantee that incidents of bullying, harassment or racism will not take place, but what we can all do is create the conditions which will prevent serious situations occurring. A workplace culture where everyone understands that:

- bullying, harassment and racism will not be tolerated
- reports of such behavior will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Our conversations with the industry revealed that there are still too many incidents of harassment which cross the line into criminal behavior – incidents of this type should always be reported to the police. However, nearly everyone we spoke to reported that they had worked in environments where aggressive, hostile, undermining behavior was commonplace – and it's reasonable to assume that this acceptance creates a more fertile ground for those who might engage in criminal acts. Tackling this culture of tolerating the intolerable is the focus of this guidance.

This is not about policing behavior or banning certain types of humour – it's about creating an environment where people feel valued and safe and that they have the space to make mistakes without being punished unjustly – a workplace where everyone can contribute to the best of their abilities without fear.

Each workplace is different so this checklist is designed to provoke thought and engagement. We encourage you to innovate and create an approach which works for your own workplace and personal approach.

This work forms part of an industry wide project, headed by the BFI and BAFTA.

Checklist

- **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES** - We all have a moral responsibility to look out for each other, but this responsibility is also enshrined in UK employment law. [The Dignity at Work Policy](#) outlines some of the legal landscape. Remember that criminal activity should be reported to the police.
- **DO THE GROUNDWORK** - Take some time to develop a toolkit which works for the size and type of company you are. At a minimum, this should include:
 - **PRINCIPLES** – These should be displayed openly and endorsed by leaders (see below).
 - **POLICY** – You can use the [Dignity at Work Policy](#) as a template.
 - **PROCESS** – This is outlined in the policy but you should ensure you have all of the infrastructure in place to conduct an investigation should the need arise. [ACAS](#) can provide additional support if you need to carry out an investigation.
- **TRAINING** - Take part in [ScreenSkills' training](#) which will help you identify bullying and harassment.
- **SHOW YOUR COMMITMENT** - Increasingly prospective employees are looking for evidence of your commitment to an inclusive workplace so this kind of public statement can be seen a feature of being an attractive place to work. You can do any or all of the following:
 - Use The Principles to create a poster (perhaps with your company branding) and display it prominently in communal areas.
 - Post The Principles on your website – e.g. in your About Us section and/or in job adverts.
 - Include The Principles and Policy in your on-boarding materials for all new staff.
 - Ensure The Principles and Policy are prominently featured within your project management system – e.g. pin a link within all Slack channels.

Don't just rely on posters and posts - important as they are. It's also important to state your commitment out loud - e.g. as part of your recruitment process, within your on-boarding for new staff or at the start of each project. You should ensure that all new employees:

- know where to find your policy
- know who they should go to report bullying, harassment and racism
- know where they can go for extra support.

Through our research, we found that one of the biggest barriers to reporting is that people don't feel confident in speaking up or speaking out, so you can help by making it feel part of the conversation and that it's a collective effort to create a good workplace culture, as important as getting the work done. You could:

- start each project with a meeting where you run through the process, highlight where people can find support and where they can find your policy
- model a form of words for people so that they know how to approach others in a professional manner if they are not comfortable
- encourage people to speak up on behalf of others.

- **DESIGNATED INDIVIDUALS** - We recommend having a minimum of one but ideally two or more 'Designated individuals' available to your team who can take reports of bullying, harassment and racism. These people:
 - should, if possible, be separate to the management/employers. If this is not possible, it's better to have a 'Designated Individual' than not
 - could be your HR team if you have one
 - do not have to be part of your company – if you're a small team without HR support, you might be able to enter into a reciprocal arrangement with another organization. Each company is different and each team is a different size so you need to find a solution which works for you
 - do not need special training – although [ScreenSkills online module](#) would be valuable – as would the Guardians training offered by the [Old Vic](#)
 - should be fully versed in your company's policy and process but are not responsible for carrying out an investigation.

The purpose of having 'Designated individuals' is not only to provide an independent voice to advise people about where to go next but also demonstrate to your staff that you are committed to tackling bullying, harassment and racism, and want to provide a safe forum for reporting.