



Holden Knight Healthcare Ltd

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Human Resources v1.2 November 2026

Review Date: November 2026



Bullying & Harassment Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Harassment or victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation is unacceptable.
- 1.2 Personal harassment takes many forms ranging from tasteless jokes and abusive remarks to pestering for sexual favours, threatening behaviour and actual physical abuse. Whatever form it takes, at Holden Knight Healthcare personal harassment is always taken seriously and is totally unacceptable.
- 1.3 We recognise that personal harassment can exist in the workplace, as well as outside, and that this can seriously affect employees' working lives by interfering with their job performance or by creating a stressful, intimidating and unpleasant working environment.
- 1.4 Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.

2. Policy

- 2.1 We deplore all forms of bullying and harassment and seek to ensure that the working environment is sympathetic to all our employees. Staff must treat colleagues and others with dignity and respect and should always consider whether their words or conduct could be offensive. Even unintentional harassment or bullying is unacceptable.
- 2.2 We have published these procedures to inform employees of the type of behaviour that is unacceptable and provide employees who are the victims of personal harassment with a means of redress.
- 2.3 We recognise that we have a duty to implement this policy and all employees are expected to comply with it.

3. Examples of Personal Harassment

- 3.1 Personal harassment takes many forms and employees may not always realise that their behaviour constitutes harassment. Personal harassment is unwanted behaviour by one employee towards another and examples of harassment include:
 - a) insensitive jokes and pranks;
 - b) lewd or abusive comments about appearance;
 - c) deliberate exclusion from conversations;
 - d) displaying abusive or offensive writing or material;
 - e) unwelcome touching; and
 - f) abusive, threatening or insulting words or behaviour.
- 3.2 These examples are not exhaustive and disciplinary action at the appropriate level will be taken against employees committing any form of personal harassment.

4. Complaining About Harassment

4.1 Informal complaint

If you are being bullied or harassed, you should initially consider raising the problem informally with the person responsible. You should explain to them that their behaviour is not welcome or makes you uncomfortable. If this is too difficult or embarrassing to do on your own, you should speak to your Manager, who can provide you with confidential advice and assistance in resolving the issue informally or formally. If you are not certain whether an incident or series of incidents amount to harassment or bullying, you should contact a more senior manager informally for confidential advice. If these informal steps have not been successful or are not possible or appropriate, you should follow the formal process.

4.2 Formal complaint

If you wish to make a formal complaint about harassment or bullying, you should submit it in writing to your Manager, whose role is to achieve a solution wherever possible and to respect the confidentiality of all concerned. If the matter concerns that person, you should refer it to a more senior manager.

4.3 Your written complaint should set out full details of the conduct in question, including the name of the harasser or bully, the nature of the harassment or bullying, the date(s) and time(s) at which it occurred, the names of any witnesses and any action that has been taken so far to attempt to stop it from occurring.

4.4 As a general principle, the decision whether to progress a complaint is up to you. However, we have a duty to protect all staff and may pursue the matter independently if, in all the circumstances, we consider it appropriate to do so.

5. Investigation

5.1 On receipt of a formal complaint we may take action to separate you from the alleged harasser to enable an uninterrupted investigation to take place. This may involve a temporary transfer of the alleged harasser to another work area or suspension on contractual pay until the matter has been resolved.

5.2 The person dealing with the complaint will invite you to attend a meeting, at a reasonable time and location, to discuss the matter and carry out a thorough investigation. You have the right to be accompanied at such a meeting by a work colleague of your choice and you must take all reasonable steps to attend. Those involved in the investigation will be expected to act in confidence and any breach of confidence will be a disciplinary matter.

5.3 On conclusion of the investigation which will normally be within ten working days of the meeting with you, the decision of the investigator detailing the findings will be sent, in writing, to you.

5.4 You have the right to appeal against the findings of the investigator in accordance with the appeal provisions of the disciplinary procedure.

6. General Notes

6.1 If the decision is that the allegation is well founded, the harasser will be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with our disciplinary procedure. An employee who receives a formal warning or who is dismissed for harassment may appeal by using our disciplinary appeal procedure.

6.2 If you bring a complaint of harassment you will not be victimised for having brought the complaint. However if it is concluded that the complaint is both untrue and has been brought with malicious intent, disciplinary action may be taken against you.