



Doncaster and Bassetlaw
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Civility, Respect & Resolution Policy (Anti-Bullying & Harassment)

This procedural document supersedes CORP/EMP 58 v.1 Civility, Respect & Resolution Policy (Anti-Bullying & Harassment)



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Executive Sponsor(s):	Zoe Linton, Chief People Officer
Author/reviewer: (this version)	Ashleigh Tingle People Business Advisor Molly Houghton People Business Advisor GMTS
Date written/revised:	June 2026
Approved by:	Policy Formulation Group
Date of approval:	July 2026
Date issued:	September 2026
Next review date:	March 2029 (Policy Valid Until August 2029)
Target audience:	Trust-wide

Amendment Form

Please record brief details of the changes made alongside the next version number. If the procedural document has been reviewed **without change**, this information will still need to be recorded although the version number will remain the same.

Version	Date Issued	Brief Summary of Changes	Author
Version 2	July 2026	This policy was subject to extensive updates, please read in full	A Tingle & M Houghton
Version 1	May 2023	This is a new procedural document, please read in full	J Lang & S Strong

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Trust have agreed our organisational values and behaviours, making it clear that each of us needs to play our part in developing a high quality and compassionate culture that is required for delivering excellent standards of care. We are committed to creating a harmonious working environment and maintaining good working relationships built on the values of civility and respect for each other and for our service users. This means a working environment in which you can work and prosper without fear of unwanted and/or unacceptable behaviour such as bullying, harassment and victimisation. This is an important part of ensuring that as an organisation we are living the DBTH values of:

- **We** always put the patient first.
- Everyone counts – we treat each other with courtesy, honest, respect and dignity.
- Committed to quality and continuously improving patient experience.
- Always caring and compassionate.
- Responsible and accountable for our actions – taking pride in our work.
- Encouraging and valuing our diverse staff and rewarding ability and innovation.

If you witness any incidents of unwanted and/or unacceptable behaviour that you are either the recipient of or witness to in the workplace these should be reported to your immediate line manager or another appropriate colleague as listed in section 6.1.

2 PURPOSE

This policy aims to help you to:

- **Be aware** of what is unacceptable behaviour
- **Understand** that any form of harassment is unacceptable
- **Know** the process to follow to report matters for resolution
- **Apply** the process to enable proper investigation and resolve any matters raised

Review these bullet points when updated

This policy is also influenced by the NHS toolkit Supporting our People: A toolkit to promote cultures of Civility and Respect and relies on the NHS People Plan and the DBTH People Strategy that staff must feel valued, supported and empowered to carry out their work in compassionate and inclusive cultures.

The focus is on the restorative approach and informal manner in the first instance where possible to support you and your managers experiencing uncivil and bullying behaviours and the health and wellbeing of all colleagues.

There is a 2-fold purpose to this policy:

- To support the development of a culture and environment in which any form of unwanted and/or unacceptable behaviour is identified and eliminated.

- To have a process in place for you to raise concerns and to have these concerns managed appropriately under this policy

It is recognised that your work performance and productivity, general health and well-being, attendance at work and job satisfaction are all influenced by the organisational culture and working relationships.

This policy should be followed in line with the NHS Staff Standards

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-staff-standards> ensuring DBTH provide a supportive, fair, developmental and compassionate approach where colleagues feel safe and supported at work.

3 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy applies to all employees of DBTH and does not apply to ex-employees, however if an ex-employee raises serious concerns, the Trust may choose to investigate these.

Complaints of harassment by service users or members of the public are addressed through other policies and procedures, therefore will not be addressed by this policy.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of unacceptable behaviour, and we ensure that action is taken to address any situations as deemed necessary to fully support our employees.

This policy applies to everyone and includes all permanent and fixed-term contract employees; voluntary workers; secondments; locums; holders of honorary, observer or research positions.

4 DEFINITIONS

To assist colleagues in becoming aware of and understanding the nature of unwanted and/or unacceptable behaviour, the relevant terms and their definitions (within the context of this policy document) can be found in Appendix 1. These should not be considered extensive explanations or exhaustive lists and should also be considered in line with the behavioural framework 'DBTH Way'.

5 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 All Colleagues

- Have the responsibility to maintain a working environment in which the dignity of all colleagues is respected. You must always behave with civility and respect towards all your colleagues. In doing this, you must ensure that your behaviour does not cause offence to your colleagues or any other person with whom you come into contact during your employment with the Trust.
- Must discourage and/or report any unacceptable behaviour.

- Must be supportive to any colleague who is being subjected to unacceptable behaviour and intervene where appropriate.
- Must inform management if they have about any concerns that themselves or any colleague has been subject to unacceptable behaviour.

5.2 Directors

- Will need to ensure that this policy is widely known and implemented throughout their Directorate
- Are responsible for ensuring equal opportunities for all employees and for maintaining correct adherence to Trust policies and procedures.

5.3 Leaders & Managers

All Leaders & Managers have a responsibility to model the standards of acceptable behaviour expected of colleagues.

Leaders & Managers should ensure their own behaviour could not be construed as personal harassment by acting with fairness and equity. This includes using their judgement to correct standards of conduct or behaviour which could be seen as harassment, and to remind colleagues of these standards. Each colleague carries responsibility for their own behaviours.

Leaders & Managers are therefore responsible for the following:

- Promoting a team work ethic.
- Ensuring team meetings happen regularly where everyone is encouraged to participate.
- Setting team objectives.
- Planning regular 'team away days/time out'.
- Promoting an 'open door' environment where people are encouraged to raise concerns.
- Listening to what employees say and act where appropriate.
- Signposting employees to others if they feel unable to approach their line manager.

5.4 People & OD Team

- Will ensure that this policy is applied in a consistent manner across the Trust and will provide advice to colleagues and managers on the application of this policy both informally and formally
- Will provide learning and development activities regarding matters relating to Civility and Respect in the Workplace
- If it is identified through persistent low-level complaints or exit interviews that a culture of unacceptable behaviours may exist, the People & OD team are able to review the data and investigate with a view to take any required action which enables the development of a positive working environment

5.5 Trade Unions/Professional Organisations and Staff Representatives

- Support their members in dealing with concerns in respect of working relationships (for and against) promptly and appropriately in accordance with the principles of the policy.
- Help inform colleagues of the policy and encourage colleagues if they have problems, to use the facilities and support mechanisms available within the policy.
- Support the Trust in its efforts to provide a positive working environment free of bullying, harassment and intimidation.
- Will provide independent and impartial advice at any stage in which you raise a concern, if members wish to involve them.

6 PROCEDURE

A process flow chart of the procedure is available to view at Appendix 2.

Whilst the Trust acknowledges that it is often difficult for colleagues to seek help in circumstances where they feel they are being bullied and/or harassed, it is important that colleagues seek help with the issue in order for the Trust to facilitate an appropriate response and to identify the steps required to resolve the issue.

Where behaviour breaches the behavioural standards expected at the Trust this should be addressed; however, it is in the best interest of all parties concerned if this can be dealt with informally where possible.

The Trust will only consider concerns under the formal procedure where informal action has been unsuccessful or where there has been a significant breach of this policy.

The Trust encourages and promotes the early resolution of any issues which have occurred in respect of working relationships and working environments through informal resolution where appropriate. Seeking to address the situation informally can lead to a quicker resolution that causes minimal disruption to relationships. However, it is also recognised that there are times when a formal approach is necessary and as such, the formal procedure outlined below will be invoked.

All allegations of unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with seriously, swiftly and sensitively, with due regard to the rights of all parties involved. It is important to note that it may not always be the case that working relationships will be resolved and colleagues may wish to have or remain with differing views in regard to a situation which has occurred.

However, they must have had the opportunity to share their feelings/views either during the informal and/or formal procedure/s and the Trust must do all it can to support all parties, in order to move forward.

Any colleague who intimidates, victimises or retaliates against either anyone making a complaint or assisting in an investigation or against the subject of a complaint, whether the complaint is found to

be substantiated or unsubstantiated, will be dealt with under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy, as such conduct will be regarded as a serious offence.

Appendix 1 provides definitions of what may be considered unacceptable behaviour however this list is not exhaustive.

6.1 What to do if you experience unacceptable behaviours

Where a colleague believes they are the subject of unacceptable behaviour, it is helpful to keep a written record of incidents, including dates, times, locations, people present and what was said or done including their feelings at the time, their reactions to the incident, the reactions of the person considered to be harassing them. Colleagues should also keep copies of any relevant evidence e.g. e-mails, text messages etc.

Where possible, the Trust encourages records to be as factual and accurate as possible so that if the matter is not solved informally and a formal investigation is undertaken, this will help to establish what has happened and create a timeline.

Wherever possible, a colleague who considers that they are/have been subject to unacceptable behaviour should inform the individual responsible that their behaviour is unwelcome, that it is causing them distress and ask them to stop. The individual may be unaware of the effect of their actions, and an informal discussion can lead to a greater understanding and an agreement that the behaviour will cease.

The colleague may wish to ask a colleague to be present when they speak with the person concerned.

During this conversation the affected colleague should speak calmly with the individual displaying the unwelcome behaviours and describe what has been happening and why they object to it and/or how it is making them feel.

If the individual has simply not realised the effect of their behaviour this could be the necessary, step to resolve the situation before commencing with an informal or formal process.

After this conversation, it is important the colleague adds this to their record so that if the behaviour continues, they can demonstrate that they have asked the person to stop.

If, after feedback has been given, the behaviour continues, then the colleague should speak to their line manager.

If the colleague feels unable to approach the individual directly for whatever reason, then they should raise their concerns with their Line Manager in the first instance, if not appropriate to raise to your line manager, you may also raise your concern with the following:

- A different line manager
- Freedom to Speak Up Guardian

- Freedom to Speak Up Champion
- People Business Partner Team
- Staff Side / Trade Union Representative

Where the unacceptable behaviour is by their Line Manager, a higher-level manager may also be approached who will agree the approach to be taken and identify appropriate support for the employee.

6.2 What to do if you witness unacceptable behaviours

If a colleague feels they have witnessed unacceptable behaviour that may constitute bullying and harassment this should be raised as soon as possible with your line manager (or other appropriate colleague as listed in section 6.1).

Once a written concern has been raised this will be acknowledged in writing as soon as possible and the relevant manager may wish to speak with the colleague who raised the concern for further clarification, however due to confidentiality the manager may not be able to inform the colleague who raised the concern of any next steps.

6.3 Raising a Concern

If a colleague feels they have experienced unacceptable behaviour that may constitute bullying or harassment and have raised this to the colleague directly and feel this behaviour has not ceased or feel unable to speak to the colleague directly this should then be raised as soon as possible with their line manager (or other appropriate colleague as listed in section 6.1).

The colleague should be clear with the manager if they are raising this as a concern for further discussion and potential action. If this concern is raised verbally, it may also be useful to follow up with an e-mail.

The colleague may wish to provide any records of events as mentioned in section 6.1.

It is important to be aware that whilst all concerns regarding unacceptable behaviour will be taken seriously by management, a concern may not always result in a formal hearing depending on the information and evidence available.

Once a concern has been raised the manager will acknowledge the concerns in writing and arrange to speak with the colleague in a confidential setting as soon as is reasonably possible, this will normally be under the informal procedure as explained in section 6.4, depending on what is disclosed if the manager considers this to be serious enough, they move straight to the formal procedure after discussion with the People Business Partner team.

It is important to note the colleague who experience unwelcome behaviours will be informed of recommended actions the Trust will take to resolve the issue, however due to confidentiality, they may not always be informed of any disciplinary action taken against the individual/s.

7 INFORMAL PROCEDURE

As per section 6.1 colleagues are encouraged to raise issues directly in the first instance, however if they feel unable to do so or have already done this and the behaviour continues, they should raise the concerns with their line manager (or other appropriate colleague as listed in section 6.1).

Once a concern has been raised, an informal meeting should take place with the colleague who raised the concern and their Line Manager (where appropriate) to meet to discuss the issue in detail and identify the most suitable route for resolution.

The Line manager should acknowledge the colleague concerns in writing and contact them to arrange a meeting as soon as is reasonably possible.

The meeting should take place as soon as possible, but no later than 7 days of the concern being raised in the first instance.

Where, in exceptional circumstances a meeting cannot be arranged within this timeframe e.g. due to absence, the Line Manager should communicate this with the colleague and convene a meeting no later than 14 days from the date the employee initially raised their concern.

If the Line Manager is unable to meet this timeframe, then they should assign another manager who can conduct this meeting in their place. This should be communicated to the colleague.

If the colleague is absent from work a conversation should take place about if they would like to pause the process until they return or if they wish to discuss this during their period of absence.

Although this process is informal, we recognise this may be a stressful or unfamiliar process for colleagues therefore colleagues are able to be accompanied by a Trade Union Representative or work colleague who has had no prior involvement in the matters to be discussed, provided that this does not cause an unreasonable delay in the process. The colleague is responsible for making their own arrangements. In exceptional circumstances, the manager may be accompanied by a member of the People Business Partner team.

A summary of the discussion should be documented in writing and provided as an outcome letter which should clearly outline the concern, and any discussions of actions or outcomes. It may also be appropriate to agree a date by which the colleague and Line Manager may wish to meet again to review progress.

Dependant on what is agreed in this discussion the manager may need to meet with the colleague displaying unacceptable behaviours under this policy, however it may be discussed that it is more

suitable to not meet with the colleague displaying unacceptable behaviours and an alternative resolution be discussed, this is expanded on below.

Both the colleague who raised the concern and colleague displaying unacceptable behaviours (if met with) should receive an outcome letter of any meetings attended, these should ideally be sent within 7 days of the meeting.

Outcomes at the informal stage generally fall into one of the below three categories:

- **Outcome 1** - no substantive evidence of unacceptable behaviour on which to progress to the formal stages of the Policy. No further action will be taken on the matter, however learning opportunities may apply.
- **Outcome 2** - allegations are supported by evidence. However, the matter can be addressed through informal mechanisms. Therefore, the matter will be concluded at informal stage.
- **Outcome 3** - serious concerns have been identified which are not suitable to be addressed under the informal stage of the Civility, Respect and Resolution Policy. Therefore, this matter will be referred to a senior manager for a decision to be made regarding immediate escalation to the formal stage of the policy.

However, this list is not exhaustive, and different outcomes may be explored.

Acceptable informal resolutions for Outcome 2 can differ depending on the situation, but examples may include the following:

- Line Manager agrees to observe the interactions between the parties involved and provide relevant feedback as appropriate to gain further understanding of the issues
- Line Manager or another appropriate person facilitates an informal meeting between the employees involved to agree a positive way of working professionally together moving forward
- Informal discussion with all colleagues in the department which should be done sensitively and without breaching confidentiality
- Line Manager recommends that mediation with a trained mediator is explored between the parties involved
- Line Manager holds a private discussion with the employee displaying unacceptable behaviours to re-set expectations
- Coaching, training and/or other development tools

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, nor should it prevent alternative resolutions being explored. The ultimate aim of the meeting is to support the colleagues to resolve the concerns without the need to invoke a formal process. Should the informal process be unsuccessful, this does not prevent the matter being taken through the formal process at a later stage.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the concerns raised are so significant that the formal process needs to be invoked immediately. This should only take place following discussion with the People Business Partner team.

8 FORMAL PROCEDURE

The formal procedure should only take place where informal action has been explored and has been unsuccessful or where there has been a significant breach of this policy and it is felt appropriate to proceed formally on this basis.

Colleagues must notify an appropriate Senior Manager or their representative, in writing, that they wish to make a formal complaint, which must include what actions, if any, have already taken place as part of the informal procedure to address the concerns that have been raised.

8.1 Preliminary Stage

After receipt of a formal complaint the manager in receipt of the complaint should discuss the concerns with a member of the People Business Partner Team before deciding whether to start the formal procedure.

A formal conduct case should not normally be initiated until preliminary stage fact finding has been undertaken or commissioned by the senior manager who received the complaint.

The manager may assign an alternative manager to perform the preliminary stage.

The relevant manager will write to meet with the colleague who raised the concern as a preliminary meeting. The meeting should take place as soon as possible, but no later than 7 working days from the concern being raised in the first instance.

Where, in exceptional circumstances a meeting cannot be arranged within this timeframe e.g. due to absence, this should be communicated this to the colleague, and a meeting should be convened no later than 21 days from the date the employee initially raised their concern.

Preliminary Stage Fact Finding involves initial consideration to establish whether, on first impression, a case exists which, if substantiated this could lead to disciplinary action being taken. This involves informal gathering of statements, speaking to involved individuals and other relevant factual evidence from any individuals involved or any witnesses to the allegations. This may involve speaking to the colleague who is the subject of the complaint.

On completion of the Preliminary Stage Fact Finding the manager will confirm an outcome, at the preliminary stage outcomes generally fall into one of the below three categories:

- **Outcome 1:** Revert to informal process

- **Outcome 2:** No substantive evidence of unacceptable behaviour on which to progress. No further action.
- **Outcome 3:** A full and thorough formal investigation to take place

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, nor should it prevent alternative outcomes being explored.

Any outcome will be communicated to the colleague who raised the concern firstly and subject of the complaint if necessary.

8.2 Formal Investigation

Should the decision be taken to formally investigate the concerns (Outcome 3), the colleague who is the subject of the complaint will be informed by a senior manager in their area of work, that a formal complaint has been submitted.

It is important to note at this point the colleague who is the subject of the complaint will not be able to view statements provided by the colleague who raised the concern.

A full investigation will be initiated as timely as possible by the Senior Manager. An appropriate, independent Investigating Officer may be appointed, with consideration given as to whether they require knowledge of the area concerned. This may be a different Investigating Officer from the Preliminary Stage. The Investigating Officer will produce a findings report at the end of the investigation to submit to the Senior Manager for a decision on outcomes. If a conflict of interest is identified a different investigating officer will be appointed.

The colleague has the right to be accompanied to the formal investigation meeting by a colleague or trade union official not acting in a legal capacity provided that this does not cause an unreasonable delay in the process and the colleague is responsible for making their own arrangements. The manager may be accompanied by a member of the People and OD team.

As far as reasonably practicable, formal investigations should be completed within 6 weeks of commencement. However, it is recognised that in some cases the complexities involved may mean this is not achievable. In the event of a formal investigation taking longer than 2 months the Investigating Officer will be responsible for keeping all parties informed of the delay and anticipated time frame for completion. The colleague who raised the concern and the colleague who is the subject of the complaint should be informed of progress at regular intervals. This timeframe should be individually agreed between the colleague who raised the concern and the manager at the start of the process however we would recommend that contact be made every 7 days at a minimum unless exceptional circumstances arise.

The Investigating Officer will seek to establish the facts of the case promptly, before recollections fade, taking account of available evidence and written statements from the colleague who raised the concern, the colleague who is the subject of the complaint and from any witnesses. They may also explore the actions taken as part of the informal procedure (as appropriate).

Once the investigation has been completed, the Investigating Officer will submit their findings and recommendations to the Senior Manager.

8.3 Possible Outcomes

In any scenario, after a formal investigation has occurred the colleague who raised the concern will be the first to be informed of the outcome of the investigation.

At the Formal stage outcomes generally fall into one of the below categories:

- **Outcome 1 – Upheld but not deemed bullying or harassment** - If the complaint or allegations are found to be upheld but not deemed to be bullying or harassing, both the complainant and the subject of the complaint will be informed in writing that the investigation has been concluded and provided a summary of the findings and recommended actions.
- **Outcome 2 – Complaint Unsubstantiated** - Where a complaint is unsubstantiated the complainant and the subject of the complaint will be informed in writing that the investigation has been concluded and provided a summary of the findings and recommended actions.
- **Outcome 3 - Complaint Substantiated (disciplinary not recommended)** - If the complaint is found to be substantiated and disciplinary action is not being recommended, both the complainant and the subject of the complaint will be informed in writing that the investigation has been concluded and a summary of the findings and recommended actions.
- **Outcome 4 - Complaint Substantiated (disciplinary action recommended)** - If the complaint is found to be substantiated and the recommendation is to address this under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy, both the complainant and the subject of the complaint will be informed in writing that the investigation has been concluded and a summary of the findings and recommended actions. The subject of the complaint will be informed in writing of the next steps.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, nor should it prevent alternative outcomes being explored.

It is important to note in the case of Outcome 4 if the case progresses to a disciplinary hearing the subject of the complaint will be able to view relevant information to the case so that they may respond appropriately to the complaint, however this must be in line with confidentiality and Data Protection requirements. Witnesses and the colleague who submitted the concern should also be made aware that their statements may be shared.

As previously explained it is important to note the colleague who submitted the concern will be informed of recommended actions the Trust will take to resolve the issue, however due to confidentiality, may not always be informed of any disciplinary action taken against the individual/s.

Following the conclusion of any action following the investigation, colleagues involved in the investigation, should be supported and offered a debrief after the outcome of the Hearing (which must not breach confidentiality) where appropriate. The outcome and feedback should focus purely on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations in respect of the allegations made by the complainant.

If it is considered that the complaint has been made with malicious or frivolous intent, this will be investigated and, if necessary, addressed under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.

9 CONSIDERATION OF ADJUSTED DUTIES

Where a concern or complaint is raised regarding behaviour that may constitute unacceptable behaviours, consideration will need to be given in relation to appropriate action in order to relieve the stress and pressure on involved individuals and to prevent the risk of further incidents occurring whilst the investigation takes place.

This may include the following:

- Temporarily restricting or amending the duties of both parties
- Re-arranging duty rotas or arranging temporary workplace transfers in order to minimise contact between both parties for the duration of the investigation. Due consideration will be given to travel arrangements and working hours.
- Arrangements for all individuals to ensure that they are fully supported throughout the investigation, this may include counselling, Occupational Health, Employee Assistance Programme, Staff side/union support, the support of a Mentor/coach. This is not an exhaustive list, and the Line Manager, Investigating Officer or Responsible Manager must ensure that adequate support arrangements are implemented
- Suspension of the subject of the complaint would be an exceptional step only to be considered in serious cases. Such action will not be prejudicial, rather a measure to protect any involved individuals and to establish the facts of the matter without delay. Further guidance on suspension is available in the Disciplinary Policy.

10 RIGHT TO APPEAL

The colleague who submitted the concern will have the opportunity to appeal any outcomes if they feel any part of the process was wrong or unfair.

Any appeal should be made to the next higher level of management not previously involved. The appeal is to be lodged within 21 calendar days of the date of the outcome letter

Appeals should normally take place within five weeks of the receipt of the appeal by the Trust although it is acknowledged that there will be circumstances when it is required for this period to be extended. The individual shall be given at least 7 calendar days' notice of the appeal hearing. The outcome of any appeal hearing will be confirmed in writing.

This process will be detailed within relevant Outcome letters.

The subject of the complaint will be able to appeal any formal outcome if the case progresses to a disciplinary hearing, in line with the disciplinary policy.

11 UNWELCOME BEHAVIOURS

Further definitions and examples of unwelcome behaviours can be found in Appendix 1.

Examples of bullying or harassing behaviour include:

Bullying and harassment is behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated or offended. Harassment is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010.

Bullying itself is not against the law, but harassment is. This is when the unwanted behaviour is related to one of the following:

- Age
- Sex
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Bullying and harassment can range from physical violence to less obvious forms which could be as simple as ignoring somebody. (Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) 2010). This can be delivered in a variety of ways with or without witnesses and can include **(THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE)**:

- Unwanted, unwelcome, inappropriate or intimidating, physical contact
- Unwelcome, inappropriate or intimidating remarks about a person's age, sexuality, dress, appearance, race or marital status, e.g. sexual innuendos or threatening words.
- Unwanted, unwelcome, inappropriate, intimidating non-verbal actions e.g. emails, texts, images or gestures
- Jokes, offensive language, gossip, slander, sectarian songs and letters
- Posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags, bunting and emblems
- Isolation or non-cooperation and exclusion from social activities
- Coercion for sexual favours
- Pressure to participate in political/religious groups
- Intrusion by pestering, spying and stalking
- Failure to safeguard confidential information

- Shouting at people
- Setting impossible deadlines
- Persistent criticism
- Personal insults

Bullying can occur in a number of different ways. Some are obvious and easy to identify. Others are subtle and difficult to explain. The behaviours may be carried out as a deliberate act or unconsciously.

Bullying is when someone says or does something hurtful and they keep doing it when asked to stop or you show you are hurt. It is not a one-off act.

Bullying and harassment can happen:

- Face-to-face
- By email or letter
- By phone
- Online or via social media

12 MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

Management actions may sometimes be perceived as bullying and harassment; a manager who is consistent and fair is not necessarily guilty of bullying and/or harassment. The leadership behavioural style expected of managers in the Trust is characterised by the following:

- Mentor, guide, coach, lead by example, inspire their team, set out expectations clearly on an informal basis, through 121s and Appraisals
- Deals fairly and effectively with performance issues
- Communicates well, and a good listener
- Accepts feedback
- Creates an environment where people can make suggestions for improvement and implement ideas
- Providing guidance and support
- Value and recognise contribution of colleagues and provide praise where appropriate
- To give and receive balanced and constructive feedback to enable learning and development
- Loyal to organisation – prepared to defend interests of team
- Accepts responsibility for actions of team
- Good interpersonal skills and able to manage tensions between team members
- Technical competence with broader leadership skills
- Maintains positive communication style and motivates in challenging times
- Gains loyalty and cares about the health and wellbeing of the team
- Determined to achieve the best result, but is reasonable and flexible
- Insists on high standards of service in quality and behaviours

13 IMPLEMENTATION

13.1 General Principles

Positive working environments and working relationships have a positive impact on employee wellbeing and engagement. A positive working environment can also lead to better performance, improved retention and reduced stress related sickness absence. Focusing on resolution is beneficial for the Trust, employees, patients, and service users.

The Trust recognises that conflict in the workplace may occur. In the event that this does happen, we endeavour to support colleagues and managers to work together to resolve issues and conflicts informally, constructively and in a timely manner.

This policy provides a framework of the process the Trust will follow to resolve issues without resorting to a formal process wherever possible.

It is against the policy of the Trust for any employee to bully and/or harass another employee both directly and indirectly. Such conduct will not be accepted. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal for serious and recurrent offences, will be considered against any individual who is found to have violated this policy.

Similarly, an employee who raises a concern which is proved to be vexatious or malicious may find themselves subject to disciplinary action.

13.2 Maintaining A Positive Working Environment

There are steps that everyone can take to maintain a positive work environment:

- Think about how you communicate, use transparent and open communication
- Respect each other and appreciate we are all different
- Listen to each other
- Provide positive reinforcement to your colleagues where it is needed
- Make a commitment to prioritise your health and wellbeing
- Take the time to celebrate team successes
- If you witness or hear any behaviour/language that isn't in accordance with the spirit of this policy or our Trusts' values, take responsibility and challenge this behaviour to prevent escalation. The challenge should be in a non-confrontational style and approach

14 RIGHT OF REPRESENTATION

At all stages of the procedure, colleagues may be accompanied to meetings by a Trade Union Representative or work colleague who has had no prior involvement in the matters to be discussed, provided that this does not cause an unreasonable delay in the process, individuals should make arrangements for this directly.

Colleagues representation are entitled to confer with the colleague during meetings, put forward a case on their behalf and sum up the case. However, they representation are not permitted to answer questions on individuals behalf.

15 SUPPORT SERVICES

15.1 Support for colleagues submitting a concern

For additional support, colleagues can seek help and advice form ViVup & the Employee Assistance Line.

Our employee assistance service (ViVup) offers immediate online and telephone support 24/7 to all staff. This is a totally confidential service, where a team of trained wellbeing and counselling practitioners offer independent and unbiased information and guidance to support people to address their concerns.

You can access the HELP Employee Assistance services through the telephone helpline 0800 028 8761

15.2 Support for Colleagues Accused of Bullying

Being accused of bullying can be a stressful experience for colleagues. During the investigation process, support will be offered to the subject of the complaint as well as the colleague raising the concern, and they can access the Vivup Wellbeing Support outlined above. Their manager may also assign a colleague as a form of pastoral and wellbeing support during the process if appropriate.

If a colleague is accused of bullying, the Trust will investigate the allegations promptly and carefully and give a proper chance to respond. The more serious the allegations, the more thorough the investigation must be. The colleague will also have a right to be accompanied to investigation meetings by their trade union representative or, if they do not have a trade union representative, a work colleague.

If the allegations proceed to a formal disciplinary hearing, the subject of the complaint will be able to see copies of witness statements and any other evidence and discuss these with their Trade Union Representative in good time before the hearing date.

The subject of the complaint is also advised to keep a journal of events and keep copies of any letters or emails. Unless they are suspended or instructed otherwise, they should continue to attend work as normal.

16 LEARNING/SUPPORT

Learning requirements for colleagues will be determined by their role and the competencies required to work safely and effectively. These requirements include national, local and role-specific mandatory learning and are set in line with Trust and professional standards.

Role-specific learning will be defined by the relevant subject matter expert or topic lead and coordinated through the Trust's agreed governance arrangements.

All mandatory and role-specific learning requirements, completion status and competency records will be held in the colleague's personal Electronic Staff Record (ESR).

For further guidance, please see: **CORP/EMP 66 – Mandatory Learning Policy and DBTH Mandatory Learning Framework**

Managers should speak to their People Business Partner Team if they require any further guidance or support.

17 MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROCEDURAL DOCUMENT

What Is Being Monitored	Who Will Carry Out The Monitoring	How Often	How Reviewed/ Where Reported To
All Bullying & Harassment Cases	Responsible Line Manager	Commencement of the Informal Stage	People Business Partnering team
Application of policy	HR Business Partners / Senior Managers	Monthly	As part of Divisional/Directorate Leadership Team meetings
Content and relevance	People Business Partner Team	Ongoing	Monitor developments in good practice / legislation
Overview of cases	People Committee	Annually (or exceptionally)	Report considered and actions / changes commissioned.

18 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Trust aims to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, population and workforce, ensuring that none are disadvantaged over others. Our objectives and responsibilities relating to equality and diversity are outlined within our equality schemes. When considering the needs and assessing the impact of a procedural document any discriminatory factors must be identified.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted on this procedural document in line with the principles of the Equality Analysis Policy (CORP/EMP 27).

The purpose of the EIA is to minimise and if possible, remove any disproportionate impact on employees on the grounds of race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation or religious belief. No detriment was identified. (See Appendix 3)

19 ASSOCIATED TRUST PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS

CORP/EMP 1 – Sickness Absence Policy
 CORP/EMP 2 – Disciplinary Procedure
 CORP/EMP 3 – Grievance and Resolution Policy
 CORP/EMP 14 – Freedom to Speak Up
 CORP/EMP 27 – Equality Analysis Policy

20 DATA PROTECTION

Any personal data processing associated with this policy will be carried out under 'Current data protection legislation' as in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2021.

For further information on data processing carried out by the trust, please refer to our Privacy Notices and other information which you can find on the trust website: <https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/about-us/our-publications/information-governance/>

21 REFERENCES

CIPD Harrasment and Bullying at Work
<https://www.cipd.org/uk/knowledge/factsheets/harassment-factsheet/>

Data Protection Act 2018
<https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/about-us/our-publications/information-governance/>

Equality Act 2010
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Equality Act 2010: Guidance
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

NHS Staff Standards
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-staff-standards>

Supporting Our Staff: A Toolkit to Promote Cultures of Civility and Respect
<https://www.socialpartnershipforum.org/system/files/2021-10/NHSi-Civility-and-Respect-Toolkit-v9.pdf>

APPENDIX 1 – DEFINITIONS& ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

The definitions and explanations given in this appendix are not intended to be exhaustive lists and should be read alongside the behavioural charter 'The DBTH Way'

Respect

Due regard for the feelings, wishes, or rights of others

Civility

Formal politeness and courtesy in behaviour or speech including verbal and written communication

Resolution

The action of solving a problem or contentious matter.

Just Culture

The term 'Just Culture' derives from Professor Sir Norman Williams's Review into Gross Negligence Manslaughter in Healthcare report in 2018 where he stated, 'A just culture considers wider systemic issues where things go wrong, enabling professionals and those operating the system to learn without fear of retribution'.

His report goes on to say "...generally in a just culture inadvertent human error, freely admitted, is not normally subject to sanction to encourage reporting of safety issues. In a just culture investigators principally attempt to understand why failings occurred and how the system led to sub-optimal behaviours.

However, a just culture also holds people appropriately to account where there is evidence of negligence or deliberate acts'.

Positive Working Environment

A positive working environment is a workplace that promotes employee safety, growth and goal attainment. These environments are most conducive to a successful workforce as they encourage employees to perform to their highest ability.

A positive working environment has several important factors. These could include:

- The relationship with colleagues and managers
- Positive Organisational culture
- Room for personal development
- Physical environment such as how much light and fresh air and space there is in the workplace
- Recognition for good work
- Open and honest communication
- Cooperation, support, and empowerment
- Flexibility
- Good work / life balance
- Positive leadership

Positive Working Relationship

There are several characteristics that are necessary in creating good working relationships. This can include:

- Trust - Where you trust the people you work with, you can be open and honest in your thoughts and actions
- Respect - Where you respect the people who you work with, value their input and ideas, and they value yours. In working together, you can develop solutions based on your collective insight, wisdom and creativity.
- Mindfulness – Being aware of what we say. Where we take responsibility for our words and actions and not let our own negative emotions impact the people around us.
- Inclusion - People with good relationships not only accept diverse people and opinions, but they welcome them.
- Open communication - We communicate all day, whether just sending emails, or meeting people face to face or on video calls. The better and more effectively we communicate with those around us, the richer our relationships will be. All good relationships rely upon honest communication.

Mediation

Mediation is a confidential, informal and voluntary process where an impartial third party, the mediator, communicates between two or more people in dispute to assist them in developing mutually acceptable agreements to improve their future working relationship. Any agreement comes from those in dispute, not from the mediator.

The mediator is not there to judge, to say one person is right and the other wrong, or to tell those involved in the mediation what they should do. The mediator is in charge of the process of seeking to resolve the problem but not the outcome.

Mediation seeks to provide an informal and speedy solution to workplace conflict, and it can be used at any point in the conflict cycle. What the process offers is a safe and confidential space for participants to find their own answers. It does this in a number of ways, by:

- Exploring the issues, feelings and concerns of all participants and rebuilding relationships using joint problem-solving
- Allowing those involved to understand and empathise with the feelings of those they are in conflict with
- Giving participants insights into their own behaviour and that of others and opening up opportunities for change
- Helping participants develop the skills to resolve workplace difficulties for themselves in future
- Encouraging communication and helping the people involved to find a solution that both sides feel is fair and offers a solution that favours them
- Using energy generated by conflict in a positive way to move things on.

Freedom to speak up

This is the national integrated whistleblowing policy that standardised the way NHS organisations support staff who raise concerns.

It defines how NHS organisation should encourage staff to speak up and set out the steps they will take to get to the bottom of any concerns

Can include but is not limited to whistleblowing and duty of candour

At Work

Includes any situation that can be identified with either the requirements of the employer, or with social events linked to the same employment. It includes any place where NHS care is delivered.

Disrespectful behaviour

Rude or discourteous behaviour that causes you to feel belittled or insulted or to have your reputation damaged. If left unchecked, it creates an uncomfortable or even hostile work environment and could develop into bullying and harassment. Examples include use of demeaning or offensive language, shouting, openly disregarding other's views, frequent interrupting, being deceptive or manipulative, gossiping behind another's back (including online), being disruptive or not making a full contribution in the workplace to the detriment of colleagues

Bullying (see section 9)

Bullying is persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, abuse of power or unfair penal sanctions which makes you feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable, which undermines your self-confidence, and which may cause you to suffer stress and may have a detrimental impact on patient care.

Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying is bullying online and any form of anti-social behaviour over the internet or via a mobile device. It is an attack or abuse, using technology, which is intended to cause another person harm, distress or personal loss.

Forums and tools used often vary and include a range of electronic devices often linked to forums or chat rooms. The tool may be a computer or laptop, a mobile phone, a camera or recording device, a tablet or games-console or simply email or mobile text messaging.

Typically, the bullies use social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and other interactive forums to target an individual or group. Some examples of cyberbullying can include:

- Spreading malicious and abusive rumours and gossiping
- Emailing or texting you with threatening or intimidating remarks
- Mobbing (a group or gang that target you)
- Harassing you repeatedly
- Intimidation and blackmail
- Stalking you on-line and continually harassing you
- Posting embarrassing or humiliating images or videos without your consent
- Posting your private details on-line without consent
- General Bullying or Stalking

- Grooming (enticing or goading you on-line to self-harm or commit a crime)
- Setting up a false profile, Identity fraud or identity theft
- Using gaming sites to attack or bully you
- Theft, Fraud or deception over the internet
- Telephone calls
- Posting comments on websites e.g. Facebook or Twitter
- Hacking into other people's accounts and sending viruses.

Definition of harassment

Harassment is against the law under the equality act 2010. (GOV.uk) This is when the unwanted behaviour is related to one of the following:

- Age
- Sex
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage And Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy And Maternity
- Race
- Religion Or Belief
- Sexual Orientation

Harassment in the workplace can be defined as:

Unsolicited or unwelcome remarks or actions by an individual or group, which causes a colleague to feel threatened, humiliated, patronised, harassed or otherwise distressed or which interferes with job performance, undermines job security or creates an intimidating or otherwise unpleasant working environment.

It is acknowledged that, on occasions, employees may be genuinely unaware that their behaviour causes offence. However, it is the duty of each individual to be sensitive to the impact they have on their colleagues and to recognise that some apparently trivial incidents, repeated over time, can create an unpleasant, intimidating or frightening atmosphere. Wherever possible, at any early-stage employees should highlight the behaviour/actions which they find unacceptable /offensive, in the aim of immediately addressing the situation.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination.

The Equality Act sets out two specific definitions of sexual harassment, which are:

- conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment; and
- less favourable treatment related to sex or gender reassignment that occurs as a result of a rejection of or submission to sexual conduct.

In determining whether or not the unwanted conduct has the effect referred to, the factors that must be taken into account are:

- The perception of the complainant.
- The other circumstances of the case; and
- Whether or not it is reasonable for the conduct to have that effect.

Examples may include:

- Unwelcome sexual attention
- Suggestions that sexual favours may further your career, or refusal may hinder it
- Remarks, insults, derogatory comments, jokes, innuendoes or ridicule of a sexual nature
- Lewd, suggestive or over-familiar behaviour
- Leering, eyeing up a person's body
- Passing, display or circulation of sexually suggestive messages (including via email), or other literature or material e.g. pin-ups

Indeed, a key problem is that different people often have different ideas as to what behaviour may be regarded as sexual harassment. However, the fundamental concept is that sexual harassment refers to conduct which is unwanted and unwelcome to the recipient.

In general, unwanted sexual attention is harassment if it continues after it has been made clear that it is found unacceptable. However, one incident can be enough to constitute sexual harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

Both men and women have been known to be sexually harassed.

Racial Harassment

Racial harassment is a form of racial discrimination. It includes a wide range of abusive and/or threatening behaviour. It can be defined as any hostile act or expression on racial grounds by a person of one racial or ethnic origin against another, or incitement to commit such an act, where there is an indication that the motivation is racial dislike or hatred.

Such behaviour may be contrary to the Equality Act 2010.

Examples may include:

- Remarks, jokes, derogatory comments, abuse,
- Wearing of offensive badges or insignia,
- Display or circulation of offensive publications,
- Racist graffiti,
- Insulting behaviour or gestures,
- Ignoring or shunning a colleague on the grounds of race,
- Denying access to benefits such as training and overtime.
- Use of social media in respect of any of the above

In the Equality Act, race can mean your colour, or your nationality (including your citizenship). It can also mean your ethnic or national origins, which may not be the same as your current nationality. For example, you may have Chinese national origins and be living in Britain with a British passport.

Race also covers ethnic and racial groups. This means a group of people who all share the same protected characteristic of ethnicity or race.

A racial group can be made up of two or more distinct racial groups, for example black Britons, British Asians, British Sikhs, British Jews, Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers.

You may be discriminated against because of one or more aspects of your race, for example people born in Britain to Jamaican parents could be discriminated against because they are British citizens, or because of their Jamaican national origins.

Other Forms of Harassment

Individuals can also experience harassment based on, for example:

- Age
- Marriage or Civil Partnership Status
- Gender Reassignment
- Disability
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Religion
- Sexual Orientation
- Social/Health Inequalities
- Physical attributes

Harassment also includes the following:

Harassment Based On Association

It is unlawful to discriminate against or harass any individual for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and (according to guidance from the Government and ACAS) pregnancy and maternity). For example, if an employer denies an employee a promotion because she is taking care of a disabled relative and the employer thinks that the employee will not have any time for new duties, this would amount to associative discrimination as disability is one of the specified protected characteristics. Similarly, if an employer harasses an employee because his brother is gay, this would be unlawful as associative harassment as sexual orientation is another of the protected characteristics.

Harassment Based On Perceptions

It is unlawful to discriminate against or harass any individual based on a perception that he or she has a particular protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) when he or she does not, in fact, have the protected characteristic.

For example, a male employee may look much older than his age. If the organisation does not allow him to make presentations to clients because his line manager thinks that he is too old, the employee has been discriminated against because of a perception of the protected characteristic of age, even though he may be relatively young.

Similarly, if an employee is called names and made fun of because his colleagues believe that he is a transsexual, he may have a claim for perceptive harassment related to the protected characteristic of gender reassignment, even though he is not a transsexual.

Discrimination

This can be described as the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics.

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination is the legal term that applies if you treat someone less favourably than someone else has been treated (or would be treated) because the person belongs to one of the protected groups.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination is when there is a practice, policy or rule which applies to everyone in the same way, however, it has a worse effect on some people than others. The Equality Act 2010 says it puts you at a particular disadvantage.

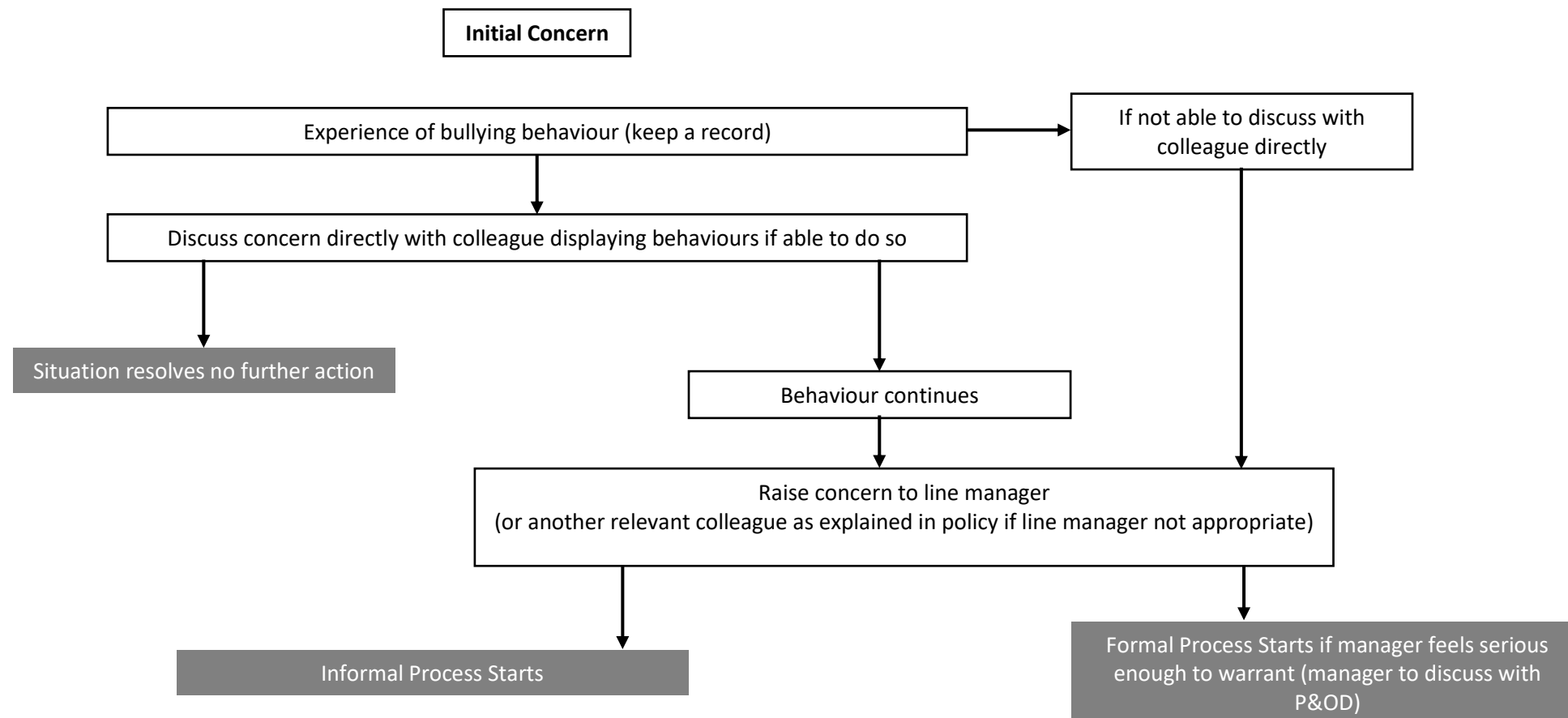
Victimisation

Victimisation' is being treated unfairly because you made or supported a complaint, someone thinks you did or you are supporting someone else taking action.

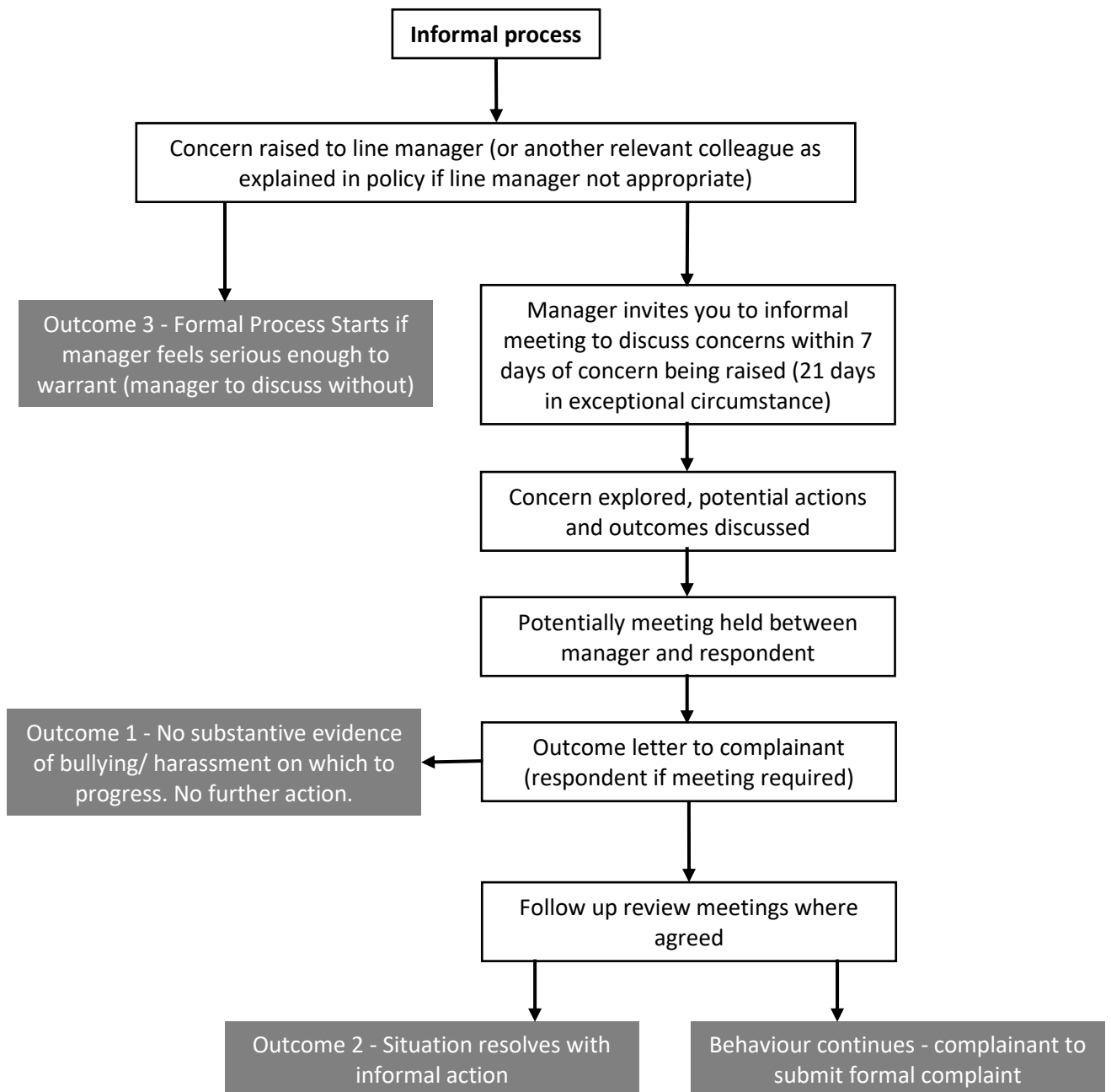
For example, a colleague makes a sexual harassment claim against your boss. After you give evidence as a witness to support their claim, your boss starts treating you unfairly.

APPENDIX 2 - PROCESS FLOW CHART - CIVILITY, RESPECT & RESOLUTION POLICY (ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT)

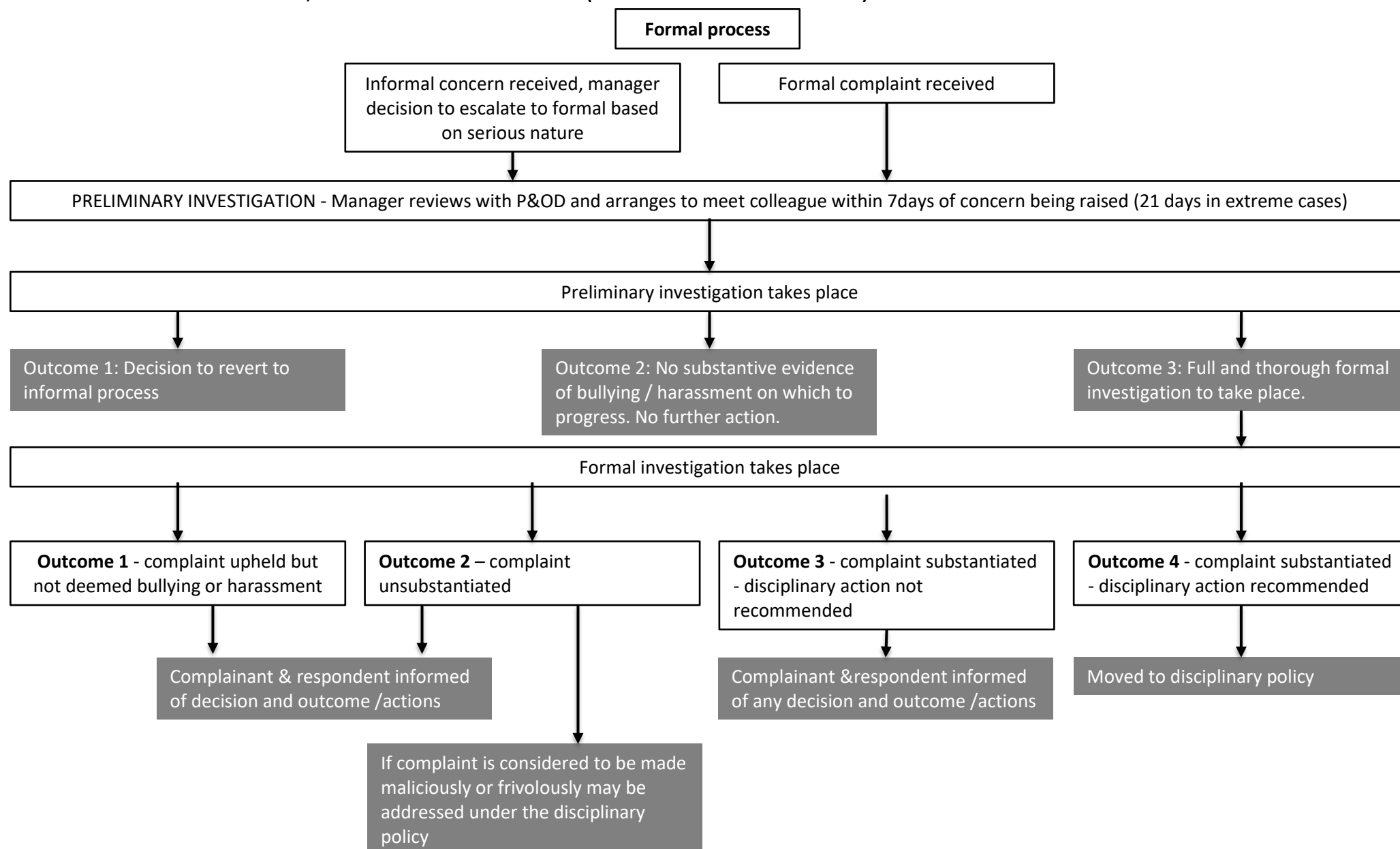
Initial Concern Raised - CIVILITY, RESPECT & RESOLUTION POLICY (ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT)



Informal Process - CIVILITY, RESPECT & RESOLUTION POLICY (ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT)



Formal Process - CIVILITY, RESPECT & RESOLUTION POLICY (ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT)



APPENDIX 3 - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT PART 1 INITIAL SCREENING

Service/Function/Policy/Project/Strategy	Division	Assessor (s)	New or Existing Service or policy?	Date of Assessment
Civility, Respect & Resolution Policy	P&OD	Ashleigh Tingle	Existing	July 26
1) Who is responsible for this policy? Name of Division/Directorate: People and Organisational Development				
2) Describe the purpose of the service / function / policy / project/ strategy? Who is it intended to benefit? What are the intended outcomes? Policy to support staff around resolution of bullying and harassment and to understand the expected levels of behaviour and what to do if these levels are not maintained				
3) Are there any associated objectives? Legislation, targets national expectation, standards: Resolution of issues around bullying and harassment				
4) What factors contribute or detract from achieving intended outcomes? – Awareness of policy, self-awareness.				
5) Does the policy have an impact in terms of age, race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy and religion/belief? Details: No, is open, applicable and available to all colleagues				
If yes, please describe current or planned activities to address the impact [e.g. Monitoring, consultation] –				
6) Is there any scope for new measures which would promote equality? [any actions to be taken]				
7) Are any of the following groups adversely affected by the policy?				
Protected Characteristics	Affected?	Impact		
a) Age	No			
b) Disability	No			
c) Gender	No			
d) Gender Reassignment	No			
e) Marriage/Civil Partnership	No			
f) Maternity/Pregnancy	No			
g) Race	No			
h) Religion/Belief	No			
i) Sexual Orientation	No			
8) Provide the Equality Rating of the service / function /policy / project / strategy – tick (✓) outcome box				
Outcome 1 ✓	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	
<i>*If you have rated the policy as having an outcome of 2, 3 or 4, it is necessary to carry out a detailed assessment and complete a Detailed Equality Analysis form – see CORP/EMP 27.</i>				
Date for next review:	March 2029 (Policy Valid Until August 2029)			
Checked by:	Adam Evans			
Date:	30 th July 2026			