



# Respect at Work: Harassment and Bullying Policy and Procedures for Staff

## 1. Scope and Purpose

1.1 This policy relates to all staff. It has been written to support the development of a working environment in which harassment, discrimination and bullying are known to be unacceptable and where individuals have the confidence to complain, without fear of reprisals, in the knowledge that their concerns will be dealt with appropriately and fairly.

1.2 This policy outlines the procedures to be followed by any member of staff who feels they are being harassed, discriminated against or bullied in the course of their employment, be that by another member of staff, club member, club official, committee member or director.

1.3 For the purpose of this document, 'during the course of employment' includes activities, occasions or events that are connected to work and the workplace but may not necessarily take place in the workplace or during normal working hours.

## 2. Poulton Park Golf Club's Commitment

2.1. Poulton Park Golf Club is fully committed to the development of positive policies and procedures to eliminate discrimination and actively promote equality of opportunity for our staff and contractors. We believe that where respect for diversity and equality of opportunity exists, all staff work in a more rewarding and less stressful environment; one where discrimination, prejudice and harassment are not accepted, and one more likely to enhance performance and achievement, allowing all to fully utilise their skills and talents and achieve their full potential.

2.2 Any allegation of harassment, discrimination or bullying will be treated very seriously and, if proven, may result in disciplinary action being taken against the perpetrator.

2.3 Any individual who is proven to have made a vexatious or malicious claim of harassment, discrimination or bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the Club's Disciplinary Procedure. This could lead to dismissal.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

3.1. It is the responsibility of every member of the Club and staff to help us achieve an inclusive and supportive environment, and to promote good relations between groups by being tolerant and having respect for diversity.

3.2. The Board of Directors and Committee Members have the responsibility to ensure that harassment, discrimination and bullying is not permitted within their sphere of management, and that incidents arising are dealt with firmly and fairly. Complaints should be taken seriously and investigations carried out in line with the Club's procedure.

3.3. All members of staff have a personal responsibility to ensure their own conduct does not cause offence. Issues of harassment, discrimination or bullying should be raised in a timely manner in order that any investigation is carried out at the earliest opportunity.

### **4. Definitions of Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying**

#### **4.1 Harassment**

4.1.1 Harassment is unwanted conduct which adversely affects the dignity of individuals in the workplace. It may be persistent or a single isolated incident. The key is that the actions or comments are viewed as hostile or intimidating, demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient. Employees can also complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, but at another member of staff.

4.1.2 Harassment may have either the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

#### **4.2 Discrimination**

4.2.1 Discrimination takes place when an individual or a group of people is treated less favourably than others because of their race, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, status as a civil partner, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation or other factors unrelated to their ability or potential.

## 4.3 Bullying

4.3.1 Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. While bullying and harassment are related, bullying is usually intentional.

4.4 It is recognised that differences in attitude, background and culture can often mean that what is perceived by one individual as harassment or bullying may not necessarily be perceived in the same way by another. It should be noted therefore, that when deciding whether bullying or harassment has occurred, the impact on the individual and whether the behaviour is unacceptable by normal standards will be the focus, rather than motive or intent.

## 5. Examples

5.1 Harassment, discrimination or bullying can be verbal and non-verbal. The following provides examples but is not an exhaustive list.

- Verbal abuse
- Insulting behaviour or personal insults
- Sexist jokes, racist jokes, or jokes about an individual's sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief or age
- Behaviour which incites racial hatred, e.g. wearing racist insignia or badges
- Offensive written or computer generated material, including the use of email
- Unreasonable, unfair or offensive expectations about an individual's disabilities or mischievous interference with personal aids or equipment
- Unwanted physical contact ranging from touching to serious assault
- Leering and offensive gestures
- Display or circulation of sexually suggestive or racially abusive material
- Coercive or menacing behaviour which interferes with dignity and privacy or which undermines an individual's self-confidence
- Asserting a position of seniority in an aggressive, abusive or offensive manner e.g. inappropriate or derogatory remark in connection with performance of duties / responsibilities.
- Withholding important work-related information
- Intrusion by pestering, spying and stalking.

- Ridicule, isolation or non-cooperation, exclusion from everyday social interaction or activities

5.2 Any difficulty in defining harassment, discrimination or bullying should not deter a member of staff from seeking support or complaining of behaviour which causes them distress. They should also not be deterred because of embarrassment or fear of intimidation.

5.3 The Club will respect the particular sensitivity of complaints of harassment, discrimination or bullying, and their consequences, and will treat any complaint with the utmost confidentiality and in line with the provisions of the Data Protection Act. Complaints will not normally be taken further than the complainant wishes.

## **6. Advice and Support**

6.1. Whilst the Club is a small business it can offer support for staff who feel they have been subject to harassment, discrimination or bullying. It is recommended that staff seek advice and support in the first instance, through the chair of the relevant committee or contact the Welfare officer.

## **7. Procedures for making a complaint about Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying**

### **7.1 Principles**

7.1.1. Staff should raise complaints of harassment, discrimination or bullying in a timely manner and without unreasonable delay. Unless incidents of harassment, discrimination or bullying are notified within a reasonable length of time, the Club may find itself unable to adequately investigate and take steps to prevent or eliminate harassment, discrimination or bullying.

7.1.2. All parties involved should act in good faith to seek a successful resolution of the complaint at as early a stage as possible.

7.1.3. All parties will be treated fairly, consistently and with respect.

7.1.4. A member of staff raising a complaint under this procedure has the right to have the complaint investigated and handled appropriately and meetings, decisions and confirmation of decisions will not be unreasonably delayed.

7.1.5. The individual or individuals against whom the complaint is made has the right to respond to the allegations.

7.1.6. Every effort should be made to resolve complaints informally or at the early formal stages of the procedure.

7.1.7. Use of a third party to help resolve the problem, whether internal or external, may be considered where appropriate.

7.1.8. It is not possible, unless the circumstances are exceptional, for a complaint to be investigated if the complainant does not wish for the individual against whom the complaint is being made to be informed.

7.1.9. A malicious or vexatious complaint may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.

## **7.2 Informal Stage**

7.2.1 **Informal Stage One** the member of staff should discuss the matter with a trusted colleague; Committee Chairman or Club Secretary. It may be helpful for you to keep a note of the details of any relevant incidents which cause offence, including dates, times and the names of any witnesses; and any relevant emails, notes etc.

7.2.2 Often, people are unaware that their behaviour is perceived as harassment, discrimination or bullying. In some cases speaking to the person concerned to let them know their behaviour is unacceptable to you, can be sufficient to remedy the situation. A note of such discussion should always be kept. If this is not the case, or if the harassment, discrimination or bullying is of a more serious nature, a more formal approach may be appropriate.

7.2.3 **Informal Stage Two** Alternatively, and if appropriate, speak or write to your Committee Chairman or Club Secretary and ask that they speak to the person concerned.

7.2.4 If these steps fail to resolve the matter, you may request an informal investigation to be carried out by your Head of Department or Club Secretary.

7.2.5 In the event that the complaint is against the Committee Chairman or Club Secretary, you should speak, or write to, the Club Chairman, who will appoint an appropriate person to investigate.

7.2.6 There is no right to representation at informal meetings, but the member of staff may be accompanied if he/she wishes.

7.2.7 The Committee Chairman or Club Secretary will meet with the individual against whom the complaint is made to advise him/her of the allegations and invite a response.

7.2.8 If appropriate, the Head of Department or Club Secretary may set up a meeting with both parties with the aim of facilitating a discussion and reaching a resolution.

7.2.9 the outcomes of the informal stage may include:

- Complaint not founded
- Situation mutually resolved
- Complaint founded

7.2.10 Where a complaint is founded, and where appropriate, action short of disciplinary action may be considered to offer a more suitable resolution. This may include one or more of the following:

- The person against whom the complaint was made offering a written apology
- The person against whom the complaint was made undertaking additional training or receiving personal counselling

### **7.3 Formal Stage**

7.3.1 In the case of complaints regarding members of staff, where the informal approach is unsuccessful, or if you wish to move straight to a formal stage the disciplinary procedure of the Club will be followed. This can be found on the Club's Web site or a copy provided by the Club Secretary.

## **8. Review**

Poulton Park Golf Club will monitor all reported incidents of harassment, discrimination and bullying and will review the effectiveness of this policy regularly.