

DH Associates Bullying and Harassment Policy



Statement

DH Associates Ltd is committed to ensuring that learners are treated with dignity and respect and that all learning takes place in a supportive environment. Bullying and harassment is not acceptable, and all learners should expect to be treated with courtesy and politeness by their colleagues, managers and by the staff/ representatives of the Company.

Promoting Good Practice

DH Associates Ltd has a code of practice and equal opportunities policy that clearly define the values and standards of customer care expected of its employees. All sub-contractors will be given copies of these documents and must comply with the requirements of these policies.

Bullying and Harassment Definitions

“Bullying can be described as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, intimidate, denigrate or injure the recipient” ACAS

“Harassment is unwanted... conduct affecting the dignity of individuals in the workplace. It may be related to age, sex, race, disability, religion, nationality or any personal characteristics of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident.” ACAS

DH Associates considers the following to be examples of unacceptable behaviour

- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone
- Unwelcome sexual innuendo or attention
- Unfair treatment
- Exclusion or victimisation
- Overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position
- Making threats or comments about job security without foundation

Responsibilities

DH Associates is responsible for ensuring that the learning experience is free from bullying or harassment by any of its employees and employees of subcontractors.

Any learner who feels they are the victim of harassment and/or bullying needs to know that this will be taken seriously and that they will not be treated unfairly because they have made a complaint.

Employees of the company or subcontractors who are the subject of a complaint need to be told what is alleged and to be given a chance to explain their actions.

Learners may feel they are experiencing bullying or harassment within their place of work. They may disclose their experiences and feelings to employees of DH Associates Ltd or its subcontractor. Such disclosures should be taken seriously, and the learner should be given support and guidance on how to make a complaint to their employer.

Employers have a duty of care for all workers and a liability under legislation for the actions of managers and employees. Some forms of harassment and bullying may be a criminal offence.

Dealing with Complaints

Informal Approach

In some cases, it may be possible to deal with matters informally. Sometimes people are not aware their behaviour is unwelcome and sometimes behaviours arise unintentionally. In the first instance learners are encouraged to resolve issues themselves. For example, they can:

- Raise the issue with the person, stating what the person is doing to harass/ bully them and explain how they feel
- Listen carefully to the persons response
- Ask the person to adapt or stop the behaviour

It is recognised that individuals can have difficulty raising issues on their own behalf directly with the person concerned and may need support. Learners may need to involve someone else in this informal stage. For example:

- If they are experiencing problems with their Trainer, they can contact the internal verifier or quality assurance co-ordinator to mediate.
- If they are experiencing problems with a colleague their supervisor can be contacted to mediate.

Formal Approach

Where an informal approach is not possible the learner can take formal action.

1. In relation to employees of DH Associates Ltd and its subcontractors the learner can use the complaints procedure. Learners are given information about this procedure at induction and a copy is in the candidate handbook.
2. In relation to colleagues or supervisors in the workplace the employer's complaints procedure should be used.

Learners who are feeling harassed or bullied will need to know that their concerns will be dealt with promptly, investigated and will be treated in the strictest confidence. They may wish to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative.

Actions

Action taken in response to formal procedures can include counselling, training, suspension, discipline, written warnings or dismissal. It may be that no action is required as the allegation is unfounded.

DH Associates Ltd will consider the suitability of employers or subcontractors for current or future learner provision. Serious or persistent complaints under this policy may result in withdrawal of services.