

Glasgow Life

Bullying and Harassment Guide

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1. Introduction

Our vision

Everyone deserves a great Glasgow Life

Our values

We are inclusive



We are committed



We are ambitious



At Glasgow Life, our behaviours guide how we work together—and at the heart of these is respect. We are committed to creating an inclusive, safe, and supportive environment where everyone is treated with dignity.

Bullying, harassment, and victimisation have no place in our workplace. This guide is here to help managers and colleagues understand how our **Bullying and Harassment Policy** supports those behaviours and what steps we can all take to uphold them.

If you experience or witness behaviour that doesn't align with our values, please speak up. Reporting concerns isn't just about policy—it's about protecting our culture and supporting one another. Together, we can ensure Glasgow Life remains a place where everyone feels valued and respected.

2. About this guide

This guide sets out '5 key steps' employees are encouraged to take if they experience or witness harassment, bullying or victimisation during the course of their work.

It also outlines the procedures and support framework that Glasgow Life has in place to effectively address incidences of harassment, bullying and victimisation and help prevent a recurrence of these.

The guide should be read alongside our Bullying and Harassment Policy which provides clear definitions of harassment, bullying and victimisation; sets out the types of behaviour that constitute harassment, bullying and victimisation; and uses practical examples of how these behaviours can happen at work. There are 5 key steps to stop bullying and harassment.

1	2	3	4	5
Don't ignore the problem	Confide in someone	Know the policy and options open to you	Keep a record	Consider taking action
Once bullying or harassment starts, it's likely to continue unless you take action to stop it. That's why if you experience or witness bullying and harassment you should never ignore it as it could become worse.	Don't suffer alone or in silence. You can seek confidential advice and support from: ➤ your manager or a more senior manager ➤ a trusted colleague ➤ our EAP helpline 0800 247 1100 ➤ your TU rep	Our Bullying and Harassment Policy provides an overview of your rights and responsibilities. Also, the types of behaviors that may constitute bullying and harassment, and the support routes available if you have concerns.	You should always keep a record of the incidents which are causing you distress. Take note of the date, time and place of the incident, exactly what was said or done, the context in which it was said or done, how it made you feel and the action you took (if any). You should also note the names of any witnesses who were present and retain any related documents. This information will be relevant if you decide to talk to someone or make a formal complaint.	In most cases, depending on the nature and frequency of the behaviour, it's usually better to tackle it informally, and as early as possible. If you feel the behaviour is serious and is happening repeatedly, you can make a formal complaint by completing the Bullying & Harassment form found here The following sections explain what you can do if you are affected by Bullying or Harassment.

3.Support for you

If you are experiencing or have witnessed bullying, harassment or victimisation at work, help is available from

- Your line manager.
- A trusted colleague.
- Our My Wellbeing pages on bullying, found [here](#)
- Our Employee Assistance (Call **0800 247 1100** free, anytime), further information found [here](#)
- A Trade union representative, contact details can be found [here](#)

For cases of bullying and harassment that are so serious, you feel there is no route to report it, refer to our [Whistleblowing Policy](#)

Informal approach

Conflict can happen during the course of our work as we all have different personalities, values, and communication styles.

It is healthy to openly discuss, and debate work issues, and this can prove to be a positive part of the creative and change process.

However, conflict can also be unhealthy. It can sometimes spiral out of control and lead to unacceptable behaviour if not dealt with effectively at an early stage.

If this happens, the employee should try to address this informally by talking to the person concerned through an informal discussion.

They can choose to do this alone, with support, or through someone else acting on their behalf.

Preparing for the discussion

The employee should:

- Prepare and read through any notes they have of the incident(s)
- Gather any supporting evidence
- Think about what they will say to the person
- Think about what they want from the discussion. Are expectations reasonable? Are they willing to compromise to reach a resolution?

They should let the individual know if they are planning on taking someone along for support to the discussion, or are sending someone else on their behalf - this can be a trusted work colleague, manager or trade union representative. Our guidance [Working well together- having a difficult conversation](#) , may help all parties prepare for and achieve a resolution acceptable to both parties.

At the discussion

Tips for the employee raising the complaint
➤ Politely but firmly let the employee who the complaint is directed towards know that their behaviour is unwelcome, offensive or is interfering with work. ➤ Clearly explain the behaviour you found unacceptable and why. ➤ Talk through any records of the incident(s), state what happened, and how this made you feel. ➤ Explain that you'd like the unacceptable behaviour to stop and would prefer to resolve it informally at this stage.

Tips for the employee who the complaint is directed to

- Listen carefully to what's said and don't dismiss the complaint just because you didn't intend on causing offence.
- Ask what aspects of your behaviour they found unacceptable.
- Try not to be defensive even if you feel the complaint is not justified.
- Remain calm and ask for time to consider the matter if you do feel emotional.
- Discuss ways in which you could resolve the matter and work together more positively in the future.
- Review the way you've behaved and consider whether you can make changes.

Manager led informal meeting

Managers should be mindful of any conflict arising within their team and work to resolve issues at an early stage. Where a manager may be unaware of an issue, an employee can seek support from them (or a more senior manager as appropriate) to make an informal approach to resolve conflict at this stage.

The manager will facilitate the discussion in a safe environment, allowing both parties to discuss their point of view with the aim of achieving an agreement about behaviour and future conduct.

Facilitated Support Meeting

A facilitated support meeting is a voluntary, confidential process where an independent person helps two (or more) people in dispute to attempt to reach an agreement.

This type of meeting can be a good way of supporting employees in conflict where earlier informal discussions have failed to resolve the matter satisfactorily, or where you feel that the matter needs addressed more formally.

It is most likely to be successful if both parties:

- understand what facilitation involves.
- enter the process voluntarily.
- are seeking to repair the working relationship.

It is unlikely to be appropriate in dealing with serious and/or deliberate or malicious acts of bullying, harassment or victimisation.

Mediation

We have an impartial third-party ACAS (Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service) they are trained mediators who can help find a way forward and rebuild working relationships.

Mediation can possibly be arranged through an employee's line manager and the Employee Relations Team in the first instance. They can help employees to decide if their situation is suitable for mediation and help organise it if appropriate.

4. Formal Complaint

Complaint Assessment

If the complaint falls within the definition of bullying and harassment as outlined in the policy a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation will commence. If it is decided that the complaint doesn't fall under the definitions, it will be referred back to management in the first instance or the Employee Relations team who will then consider the most appropriate route to resolve the complaint.

Precautionary Action

If the investigator feels that either party is at risk, there may be decision taken to take some form of precautionary action pending the outcome of the investigation. This could be the suspension of the employee who the complaint is directed towards, or a temporary move of either party.

Where a temporary move is being considered this will be in consultation with employee involved. If the complaint is about a third party, such as a customer or visitor, then action will be taken to protect the employee as far as possible. This may include reallocating work, changing rotas, ensuring that they are working with another team member where possible, and signposting to specialist support services such as our Employee Assistance Provider. It's good practice to work with the employee to identify what they need to feel safe.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is of prime importance and there will be no disclosure of information to anyone who is not involved with the investigation. Exceptions to this are where it is considered that an individual or individuals are in immediate danger or if there are potential criminal activities or safety implications.

Any other breach of confidentiality may result in disciplinary action.

Duty of Care

Any discussions with a manager, or a member of the Employee Relations team are treated as confidential with the decision to progress a complaint being the employees. In exceptional circumstances where an employee may be unwilling to pursue a complaint, this must be balanced with our duty of care to ensure the welfare of all our employees.

Where there are unacceptable risks, steps may have to be taken to pursue the matter further in consultation with the employee concerned.

5. Investigation

Meeting with the employee raising the complaint:

- After the complaint, the investigator will arrange to meet with the employee to discuss their complaint in detail. The employee may take a colleague or trade union representative to this meeting.
- The investigator will ask the employee to confirm what happened, when it happened, who was involved, and how the employee felt as a result.
- Any record of the incident(s) will be discussed at the meeting, and the names of any witnesses should also be provided.

Meeting with the employee who the complaint is directed towards

- The employee can bring a work colleague or trade union representative to the meeting if they choose.
- The investigator will ask the employee to provide their recollection of what happened - including details about the incident(s), if there were any witnesses, and any written evidence the employee has collected.
- The employee may refute the allegations made against them and feel they are the one being subjected to unacceptable behaviour – in which case counter allegations may be made during the meeting and will be fully explored.

Meeting with Witness

- The investigator will also speak with any witnesses they feel are appropriate. Even if the witness hasn't reported what they observed, they may still be called to give evidence during a formal investigation. This would be in circumstances where the person experiencing the behaviour submits formal bullying and harassment complaint and provides your name as a witness to the events.
- They will request a witness's attendance in writing, confirming the date, time and location of the meeting. The witness can bring a representative to this meeting.
- The investigator will not ask for the witness's opinion on whether or not they feel bullying, or harassment occurred but will ask them to confirm what was witnessed - if anything.
- The investigator will limit the details of the complaint to a "need to know" basis to preserve confidentiality.

The investigator may need to meet again with the employee who raised the complaint and/or the employee who the complaint was directed towards, to clarify any points, or if further information emerges.

Notes taken at each interview will be typed up to form separate statements of each party's version of events. These statements will then be checked with each of the employees to confirm their accuracy.

Every effort will be made to complete the investigation in a timely manner to help reduce stress to those involved.

If circumstances out with the control of the investigator arise, all parties involved will be notified of revised timescales.

Investigation outcome

Once the investigation is complete, the investigator will review all the information and come to a decision.

They may meet separately with the employee who raised the complaint and the employee who the complaint is directed towards to inform them of the outcome of the complaint. Or this may be done in writing.

Remember:

- Absolute proof isn't necessary by law when considering evidence in bullying and harassment investigations.
- The outcome will be determined on the balance of probabilities that incident is more likely have occurred than not.
- This is unlike criminal law, in which the standard of proof is beyond reasonable doubt.

The complaint will either be:

- **Upheld**, as there is a case to answer; or
- **Rejected**, as there is no case to answer.

Complaint upheld

If the complaint against an employee is upheld, then appropriate action will be taken. The investigator may recommend discipline, or action short of discipline such as training or behavioural coaching.

Management will be responsible for carrying out any actions that are required such as arranging any training, taking the matter to a disciplinary hearing, or any actions in relation to third parties.

The employee who raised the complaint will be advised that further action will be taken but won't be told what that action is. What will be important to the employee who raised the complaint is that harassment, bullying or victimisation should stop.

If the complaint progresses to a disciplinary hearing, then the employee who raised the complaint may be called as a witness as explained in our [Code of Discipline \(Disciplinary And Appeals Procedure\)](#)

If a disciplinary hearing is recommended, the investigator would usually present the case for management. The employee who raised the complaint, or their representative, would put forward their case.

If the chair of the hearing finds that there is a case to answer they have several options available to them.

They may issue a disciplinary warning, or they may consider action such as a disciplinary transfer or demotion. In very serious cases, dismissal may be considered.

The employee who the complaint is directed towards will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action that is taken. Further details of this can be found in the code of discipline.

During the bullying and harassment investigation the identity of witnesses may be protected. If, however the complaint is upheld and progresses to a disciplinary hearing, they may be named and called as a witness as set out in our code of discipline.

Complaint rejected - appeals procedure

If the complaint is rejected, the employee who raised the complaint has the right to appeal this decision on the grounds that the procedure wasn't followed, the assessment was flawed, or that the behaviour wasn't stopped.

They should submit their appeal in writing, detailing the grounds for appeal within 7 working days of receipt of the letter confirming the outcome of the investigation.

A nominated person will be appointed to review the case.

The decision of the appeal is final.

6.Keeping Our Workplace Safe and Professional

Every one of us plays a part in creating a workplace where respect and dignity are the norm. If you see or experience behaviour that concerns you, speak up and use the support available—whether that's a trusted colleague, your manager, or someone from the HR team. Acting early helps prevent harm and ensures issues are resolved fairly. Keep this guide as a reference and remember together, we can maintain a safe, positive, and professional environment for everyone.

Appendix 1: Policy Support Framework – Responsibilities

Employees
➤ Read and understand the Bullying and Harassment Policy and its arrangements so they know their rights and responsibilities under the policy and what to do if they experience bullying or harassment or see it happening to someone else. ➤ Set examples and standards of positive behaviour in line with the policy and in our code of conduct. ➤ Raise with your manager any difficulties with your working environment as soon as possible. ➤ Follow the five key steps to stop bullying and if you experience or witness unacceptable conduct.
Managers
➤ Read and understand the Bullying and Harassment Policy and its arrangements and ensure these are communicated to all employees within their area of responsibility so they know what to do if they experience or witness bullying or harassment. ➤ Participate in training and development activities as and when required to support the implementation of our policy and procedures. ➤ Set examples and standards of positive behaviour in line with the Bullying and Harassment Policy and in our Employee Code of Conduct, competencies framework and individual role profiles. ➤ Be aware of working relationships within their teams and intervene promptly to any issues or concerns that arise at an early stage to avoid unnecessary escalation of these into bigger problems. ➤ Take prompt action to stop any unwanted behaviour from anyone connected with the workplace, and to also prevent it happening again. This may include conducting a risk assessment to determine how best to manage risks.
Employee Assistance Provider (EAP)
➤ Provide a free, independent and confidential helpline for our employees - available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 0800 247 1100. ➤ Provide online information and advice to assist employees in a range of personal matters at work and at home, please find details of PAM Assist's app here

Trade Union Representatives

- Read and understand our Bullying and Harassment Policy and its arrangements so that they know how to support members who may be affected by bullying and harassment.
- Help inform the workforce of our policy and encourage employees who may have a problem seeking to resolve this through the policy, procedures and support available to them.
- Advise members of their rights and responsibilities under the policy and represent members as and when appropriate.
- Participate in training and development activities as and when required to support the implementation of the policy
- Work with the Employee Relations team to raise any issues with the implementation of the policy and contribute to finding an appropriate solution.

Appendix 2: Document Library, Additional Information & Useful Contacts

Documents referenced throughout this document can be found below with details on where they can be accessed.

Document Name	Location
Bullying & Harassment Policy	Colleague Information Pages
Bullying & Harassment Reporting Form	
Whistleblowing Policy	
Equal Opportunities Policy	
Code of Discipline (Disciplinary and Appeals Procedure)	
Colleague Information Pages- My Wellbeing- Bullying	
Working well together- having a difficult conversation guide	
Resolving conflict guide	
Bullying & Harassment Letter Templates	Glasgow Life Intranet
Additional Information	
Signposting to different organisations supporting bullying	Colleague Information- My Wellbeing- Bullying
Information on PAM Assist	Colleague Information- PAM Assist
NHS.co.uk	NHS- bullying at work
Useful Contacts	
Employee Relations Team email address	Employee Relations Team
Related Policies and Guides	
Acceptable Use of IT and Information Security Staff Guidelines	Glasgow Life Intranet
Social Media Guidance	Glasgow Life Intranet
Code of Conduct	Code of Conduct