



## **Harassment and Bullying Policy**

At The Lir Academy, we are committed to providing a safe and respectful work environment for all whether an employee, a student, a contractor, a supplier, or a member of the public. No one has the right to harass anyone else, at work or in any situation related to employment.

Harassment is against the law. It occurs where a person engages in unwanted conduct or language which has the purpose or effect of violating another's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for a colleague. It may be related to age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, disability, religion, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident. The key is that the actions or comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient. Remember that one person's joke is another person's harassment.

[Definitions of Bullying](#)

[Definition of Sexual Harassment](#)

[Definition of Racial Harassment](#)

[Other forms of Harassment](#)

### **Effects of bullying and harassment**

Bullying and harassment can make someone feel anxious and humiliated. Feelings of anger and frustration at being unable to cope may be triggered. Some people may try to retaliate in some way. Others may become frightened and demotivated. Stress, loss of self-confidence and self-esteem caused by harassment or bullying can lead to job insecurity, illness, absence from work and even resignation. Job performance is almost always affected and relations in the workplace suffer.

### **Confidentiality**

Allegations of bullying or harassment will be investigated fully, fairly, quickly and confidentially. However, in most instances there will have to be some communication with the alleged 'harasser' or 'bully', named witnesses and in some cases with the appropriate senior staff. The complainant's wish for confidentiality will be protected as far as possible, though where a complaint identifies unlawful discrimination, a safety concern or a potentially criminal act, there is a legal responsibility to take appropriate action which might mean that confidentiality cannot be preserved.

Confidentiality is important to all parties affected, particularly in the early stages when an individual feels concerned about the behaviour of another and wishes to seek advice and explore the seriousness of the situation. However, as soon as any attempt is made to deal with the situation in a way that directly involves the individual who is accused, that individual must be informed of the nature of the complaint. Thereafter, as far as possible, there should be an attempt maintain confidentiality in respect of all parties while seeking a solution.

### **Procedure for making and dealing with complaints of harassment and bullying**

If an individual thinks that he or she is being subjected to harassment or bullying, they should not feel that it is their fault or that they have to tolerate it without question.

Attempts will be made to resolve complaints as quickly and informally as possible and at the level at which they occur.

#### **Complaints from students (Informal stage)**

If a student wishes to seek advice before talking to the Administrator or Director, they are advised to seek support from Student Services at Trinity College Dublin

Students are advised to keep a record of any incidents as they occur; what happened, dates, times, places, witnesses, your response and the impact on you.

Where possible students are advised to make it clear to the perpetrator that the behaviour is unwelcome and unacceptable and ask them to stop. (if this is not possible, proceed directly to informing the administrator or director of The Lir)

The person you contact will

Listen to your complaint without judgement

Provide support and help to resolve the situation

Advise and give information on other sources of help

Only act with your consent

Encourage an open discussion to create a balanced view of the situation.

#### **Complaints from students (formal stage)**

For serious complaints or where the problem is not resolved through any of the informal methods, the formal complaints process may be used.

A formal complaint involves providing a written statement confined to the precise details of the allegations.

All formal complaints will be investigated.

The alleged perpetrator will be notified in writing that an allegation of bullying, sexual harassment or other form of harassment has been made against them. They will be advised that they shall be afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the allegations.

## **Reporting Complaints**

Students should report their concerns/complaints to one of the following

Administrator – [anne.fitzpatrick@thelir.ie](mailto:anne.fitzpatrick@thelir.ie)

Director of The Lir Academy – [louglin.deegan@thelir.ie](mailto:louglin.deegan@thelir.ie)

Head of Course/Department.

The issue will then be brought to the attention of the perpetrator.

Serious issues that might involve abuse of power can be emailed to the Chair of the Board of Directors, Dermot McCrum at [dermot.mccrum@thelir.ie](mailto:dermot.mccrum@thelir.ie) or to the Chair of the Gender, Diversity and Respect Sub-Committee, Roise Goan at [inconfidence@thelir.ie](mailto:inconfidence@thelir.ie)

## **Complaints from staff (informal stage)**

In the first instance, the individual should consider how best to deal with the situation and might seek advice from their line manager, the Director or other suitable person.

The individual should then consider an approach to the person concerned to explain that his/her behaviour is unwanted or is causing distress and asking that it should be stopped. This could be done by the person alone or with the help of one of the people listed above.

If the matter remains unresolved through this informal approach, or if the problem continues after an agreed resolution, the matter should be referred to the formal stage.

## **Complaints from staff (formal stage)**

Members of staff who wish to refer their complaint to the formal stage should do so through the Grievance Procedure modelled on the [Dignity and Respect Policy](#) from Trinity College Dublin

## **What to do if you are accused of harassment, bullying or discrimination**

Differences in attitude, background and culture or misinterpretation of social signals mean that what is perceived as harassment by one person, may not be or seem so to another. Even though your behaviour may seem harmless to you, the other person's reasonable reaction to your behaviour is important.

Listen carefully to the complaint and the particular concerns expressed and consider whether the complaint can be justified in any way, and whether it would be advisable or appropriate to change your behaviour.

The first indication you may have that there is a problem may be when a colleague tells you that he/she is offended or upset by certain aspects of your behaviour and asks you to stop behaving towards them in a particular manner, which is insulting, degrading or offensive to them.

Alternatively, you may first be made aware that there is a problem when approached by a member of staff attempting to resolve the issue or informing you that a formal complaint has been made.

If you are accused of harassment or bullying, you may wish to consult your line manager, the Director, or other senior member of staff.

Disciplinary action will be taken where The Lir Academy considers it appropriate to do so.