

Spliceteq South Communications Ltd (hereinafter in this document referred to as the Company) has implemented this Policy to define the Company's commitment to supporting and maintaining a working environment which promotes equal opportunities and treats harassment of individuals as a serious matter.

This policy outlines an atmosphere in which all staff can fulfil their duties and obligations of their contract of employment free from harassment, discrimination, victimisation and to enable the company to comply with the UK & European Law in particular to the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), the Race Relations Act (2000) and the Equality Act (2010), Employment Equality Regulations (2006) and The Age Discrimination Act (2006).

The Policy contains these sections:

- Policy Statement
- Policy Definition
- Identified Categories of Harassment against Individuals
- Sexual
- Racial
- Bullying
- Other forms of Harassment.

Policy Statement:

Under the 'Duty of Care' the Company has a legal obligation to provide both a safe place and a safe system of work and any bullying that is reported will be investigated. The policy applies to all persons within the organisation and is linked to the current disciplinary procedures. All matters relating to bullying will be dealt with in confidence and this confidence is guaranteed.

In the event of any person who believes they are suffering from personal harassment as detailed within the policy will need to advise their Manager who will instigate procedures in accordance with the two-tier system.

The two-tier procedure: will incorporate an informal stage and then, if the informal stage is not sufficient or the offence is of a serious nature, a formal procedure will be implemented with time scales applied.

Any person who feels the need to resort to informal or formal procedures will have the services made available of individuals not connected with the alleged bully.

In the event of the investigation, the person making the accusation will be reminded that by making a false or malicious complaint of bullying and harassment will in itself be regarded as serious and will be related to the current disciplinary procedures.

This however should not deter any person from making a complaint whereupon they feel that he or she or they have been bullied or received harassment as defined in the policy.

The Company is committed to review and monitor this policy, procedures and complaints. The Company will provide training for all employees at all levels to ensure bullying is non-existent within the organisation. They will also provide training to Managers to act as trained counsellors where required and will review all working practices within the workplace to reduce and eliminate bullying and stress related incidences.

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Any procedures instigated by the Company do not alter the legal rights of the individual to taking further action regarding victimisation should they wish to do so.

Policy Definition:

The most widely used definition of bullying at work is as follows:

"Persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behavior, abuse of power or unfair penal sanctions which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable which undermines their self-confidence and which may cause them to suffer stress."

As strong as these words may be they do not convey the sense of devastation of an individual, family and friends which can result from workplace bullying.

Examples of bullying behavior are:

- Intimidation and aggression setting impossible deadlines or task
- Disparaging comments or remarks, often in front of others
- Blocking promotion or staff development opportunities
- Constantly changing objectives and goals
- Taking credit for others achievements or initiatives
- Constantly changing the remits and responsibilities of others
- Isolating individuals and limiting consultation on important issues

Harassment is behavior which is inappropriate, offensive and demeaning, is unwanted within the Company since it causes insult or injury, and creates an unpleasant or intimidating working environment. It may threaten a person's health; work or promotion prospects and the Company is committed to ensuring that working relations within the organisation are such that all forms of harassment will not be tolerated.

Harassment can come from colleagues, management, clients and members of the public and it can happen because of the sex of the victim, race, ethnic origin or nationality, age, sexual orientation, religious, political or trade union beliefs and activities, physical or mental ability or disability.

All forms of harassment are totally unacceptable and in the event of any case being brought to the attention of Senior Management of the Company, the individual perpetrating such action will be subject to disciplinary action.

Categories of Harassment:

Sexual Harassment

There is no legislation which uses the term sexual harassment but a remedy may be found in the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) if there is less favorable treatment or detriment.

Women are overwhelmingly the victims of sexual harassment and the harasser is usually male. However, harassment can happen to men by women, to women by women or to men by men.

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Sexual harassment is about power, asserting superiority and exerting control and is an ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature within the Company. It can be physical, verbal or non-verbal and it can include, unnecessary touching, sexual advances, suggestive comments, displays of pornographic posters or offensive graffiti.

Any incident of sexual assault, rape or ‘stalking’ is a criminal offence and the Company will report any incident that it feels is an offence of this nature directly to the police

Racial Harassment:

Racial Harassment is unacceptable and any incident of physical assault or intentional racial harassment is a criminal offence. It is rooted in racism, ignorance and prejudice and is offensive and threatening to the recipient. Racial Harassment is both humiliating and degrading and when the behavior is intended or unintended the effect on the victim is the same. There are no excuses for racist banter and abuse at work and there can be no degree of acceptability.

Racial Harassment may be interpreted as direct discrimination within the terms of the Race Relations Act (2000) and consists of treating a person, on racial grounds less favorably than others are or would be treated in the same or similar circumstances. Racial grounds are grounds of race, colour, nationality including citizenship or ethnic or national origins.

Behavior may include racist jokes or remarks, graffiti, exclusion, offensive literature, and physical assault.

Harassment of Mentally or Physically Challenged Individuals:

A person may be harassed or intimidated because they are mentally or physically challenged. This behavior is grounded in ignorance, is offensive and intimidatory to the recipient.

The term “challenged” can refer to physical, mental, emotional, behavioral or learning difficulties.

A lack of understanding of physical and mental conditions often leads people to make offensive remarks or jokes which can undermine the work and esteem of their colleagues. It may lead to affected individuals being denied promotion, training or other job opportunities.

The Disability Discrimination Act may provide remedy for these employees through industrial tribunal if the behavior can be shown to constitute discrimination.

Harassment Based on Sexual Orientation:

Harassment of people based on their sexual orientation may include assumptions about health, lifestyles, or gossip and innuendo which will undermine the dignity of those affected. It may lead to opportunities for promotion being withdrawn, lack of job opportunities or other forms of discrimination. This is not acceptable under any circumstances in the organisation.

Apart from a possibility of unfair dismissal there is no law which prevents discrimination against lesbians, gay men or transsexuals, however, the EC code on the protection of the dignity of men and women at work may ensure that it falls within the scope of anti-discrimination legislation.

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