

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Introduction

Swindon Dance will constantly strive to create an environment, representative of and responsive to different cultures and groups, where everyone is valued and has an equal chance to succeed.

We recognise that harassment can exist in the workplace as well as outside and that this can seriously affect employees working lives by interfering with their job performance or by creating a stressful, intimidating, and unpleasant working environment. These procedures are designed to inform you what behaviour is unacceptable and to provide you with a means of redress should you be the victim of any form of harassment.

Purpose, Scope and Principles

Bullying and harassment of any kind are in no-one's best interest and will not be tolerated within this Company. The procedure laid out in this document will outline the action that will be taken should unacceptable conduct occur.

Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect at work, and it is in all our interests to promote a safe, healthy, and fair environment. This affects all employees full and part-time.

Swindon Dance aims to ensure that:

- All employees and potential employees are treated fairly and with respect at all stages of their employment,
- All employees have the right to be free from harassment, including sexual harassment, and bullying of any description, or any other form of unwanted behaviour, whether based on sex, trans-gender status, marital status, race, disability, age, political or religious belief or
- sexuality

What are Bullying and Harassment

This is something that has happened to another that is unwelcome, unwarranted and causes a detrimental effect. It 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.

The actions are not necessarily face to face and may be by written communication, email, telephone, and automatic supervision methods that do not automatically apply to all individuals.

Examples of prohibited harassment are:

- Verbal or written conduct containing derogatory jokes or comments, including by email.
- Slurs or unwanted sexual advances
- Malicious gossip and any and all efforts to undermine or discredit colleagues to others'.
- Visual conduct such as derogatory or sexually orientated posters
- Photographs, cartoons, drawings, or gestures
- Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, or any interference because of sex, race, or any other protected basis
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment or to avoid some other loss and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favours.
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.
- Exclusion e.g., withholding information, not talking to someone, not including someone in discussions or meetings, exclusions from social occasions.
- Overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position e.g., making threats or comments about job security or performance without foundation
- Deliberately undermining a competent worker by setting an unrealistic volume of work tasks and constantly criticising

If you believe that you have been unlawfully harassed by anyone, whether colleague, customer, or supplier, you should make your line manager aware of it. The following details will be required:

- Details of the incident
- The name or names of the individual or individuals involved.
- The name or names of any witness or witnesses

Prevention

All employees have a responsibility to discourage harassment of any kind and prevent it from taking place by:

- Being aware of the problems that harassment can cause,
- Ensuring that all staff behaviour does not cause others to feel harassed, and
- Making work colleagues aware that certain conduct or behaviour is causing concern or offence to us or to others.

Managers have a particular responsibility to prevent harassment taking place by:

- Being alert to the possibility that harassment may be happening in their area,
- Using their judgement to correct behaviour that could be considered offensive, and
- reminding employees of the organisation's policy on this matter, and
- Taking prompt action to stop harassment as soon as it is identified dealing with all incidents quickly, seriously, sensitively and in confidence.

Swindon Dance will deal with all complaints of harassment promptly, fairly, sensitively and in confidence. Most people who complain that they are being harassed simply want the behaviour to stop. Where appropriate, they can be encouraged to take charge of the situation by themselves by informing the harasser that their behaviour is unacceptable and that it must stop.

If an employee feels that they are unable to deal with a particular situation without support, they should ask their line manager to explain to the person causing offence that their behaviour is unwelcome and must stop.

If this initial approach fails to resolve the problem, the next stage will be to take formal action, via the Organisations' Grievance and Allegations policy and procedures.

Disciplinary action will be considered in all cases where a claim of harassment is substantiated

Formal Procedure

Individuals suffering from harassment or discrimination are encouraged to use the grievance procedure and, if the grievance procedure would normally involve complaining to the harasser/bully, then you will be entitled to complain directly to a more senior person.

Any complaints that are made will be thoroughly investigated promptly and objectively by an independent manager, who, following completion of the investigation will make a decision as to the action that will be taken. They will notify all parties involved of that decision.

Disciplinary Procedures

Where it is not possible to resolve the matter informally or the individual's behaviour is more serious, then the disciplinary procedure will be followed at the appropriate level. As with any disciplinary matter the Company will follow a fair procedure. In any case of bullying or harassment the Company will operate a process that is fair to both the complainant and the person accused.

In cases where it appears that serious misconduct may be involved and there is a need to separate the parties, the Company may suspend the alleged bully/harasser for a short period, whilst the complaint is investigated.

Should an unfounded allegation be made for malicious reasons, this will be investigated and dealt with fairly and objectively under the disciplinary procedure.

The Company will ensure that individuals who have made complaints of harassment or bullying will not be victimised in any way, and any indication that this has occurred will be dealt with severely under the disciplinary procedure.

*Policy owner/nominated lead, V Slayford
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