



Anti-Bullying & Anti-Harassment Policy & Procedures

1. Introduction

London Studio Centre (LSC) seeks to promote a culture where bullying and harassment are recognised as unacceptable behaviours and are not tolerated under any circumstances. Where allegations of such behaviour occur, this policy seeks to ensure that they are dealt with without fear of victimisation.

2. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to specify our commitment to valuing and protecting the wellbeing of the individual. Encouraging diversity in both students and staff in an inclusive and safe learning and working environment, where everyone can achieve their full potential and feel equally respected. LSC does not accept or tolerate bullying or harassment and every effort is made to prevent it in any form. LSC is committed to promoting a supportive and open environment where individuals are able to report incidents in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and dealt with in confidence.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all aspects of life at LSC including all applicants, students, employed staff and freelance workers.

4. Definitions

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour of one person or group, usually repeated over a period, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. There is no legal definition of bullying. Bullying can take place between students, between students and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyber-bullying methods.

Harassment is defined as the act of systematic and/or continued unwanted and upsetting actions of one party or a group, including threats and demands or violating a person's dignity.

The seriousness of bullying or harassment cannot be emphasised enough. Bullying or harassment impacts on the attendance and attainment of the person affected, marginalises those groups who may be targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on people.

Specific types of bullying/harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying related to race, religion, or culture
- Bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities
- Bullying related to physical appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation or gender identity (e.g., homophobic, or transphobic bullying)
- Bullying that is sexist in nature
- Sexual misconduct, particularly sexual harassment
- Cyber-bullying (via social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email)

5. Legal Requirements

LSC is committed to a teaching, learning, and working environment free from discrimination, harassment and intimidation and thereby complies with the regulations of the Protection from Harassment Act (1997), Crime and Disorder Act (1998), Sexual Offences Act (2003) and Equality Act (2010). The Equality Act has brought together the areas previously covered in the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), the Race Relations Act (1976) and the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).

Procedure

It is LSC's intention to try to resolve such issues by bringing all the parties together in a safe environment, to discuss the events and their causes and to seek reconciliation.

What to look for:

Students who are being bullied or harassed may show changes in behaviour, for example becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, or taking unusual absences. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or absence from LSC. All stakeholders must be alert to the signs of bullying or harassment and act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with LSC's policy.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- a. Physical (including sexual) assault e.g., hitting, kicking, spitting, removing belongings, or damaging property.
- b. Verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing, insulting, writing notes, or making offensive remarks.
- c. Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour intended to harm others. Examples include using social websites (such as Facebook and Twitter), text messaging, photographs, video, and e-mail.
- d. Indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours.
- e. Initiation ceremonies intended to cause pain, anxiety, or humiliation.
- f. Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for example, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidatory but is often hidden and subtle.

What to do:

The way to eliminate bullying or harassment is for people to be aware of the issues involved, and to be clear in their own minds what action to take should cases arise.

If a student is affected:

In the first instance, if the bullied/harassed student (the allegator) feels able to, they can verbally inform the bully that what they are doing is inappropriate, even if it is awkward to do so, using language that is clear and articulate: e.g. "That is not appropriate – it makes me feel uncomfortable." The allegator is encouraged to discuss the situation with a member of staff with whom they feel comfortable. If the allegator would prefer not to go straight to a member of staff, they can talk to friends or the Head of Pastoral Care.

If a student witnesses bullying/harassing behaviour:

They can support the person affected and if they feel comfortable doing so, may challenge what is happening as wrong. Following the same advice as for those affected by bullying/harassment, they should not feel ashamed and should use language that is clear and articulate. They should encourage them to speak to the Head of Pastoral Care or another member of staff, or with their permission accompany them.

If a member of Staff witnesses an incident of bullying/harassment or it is reported to them:

The staff member is required to inform the student that it would be beneficial to pass details on to the Assistant Director and ask them to write down their allegation. In meetings with anyone who is affected by bullying/harassment, staff are advised to:

- a) Choose a place to talk where the talk will not be interrupted but also where the member of staff is safe from allegation.
- b) Listen carefully and patiently to the student, no matter how difficult the member of staff finds what they are saying.
- c) Show the student they believe them and take their disclosure seriously.
- d) Stay calm and reassuring and maintain neutral body language.
- e) Not promise to keep the conversation secret, no matter how insistent the student may be. The staff member must explain that they are ready to listen but that when they have heard the account there may be parts that they have to tell somebody else to get the help required.
- f) Not press for information, cross-examine, or lead the student, as well-intentioned questions could prejudice further investigations. It is particularly important not to use leading questions or to put words into the student's mouth. If the member of staff needs to respond verbally, they should feed back to the student what they have said.
- g) Ensure the students' immediate safety.
- h) Make careful notes immediately after the conversation, giving an accurate and full account of what was said. These notes should include all relevant information regarding the setting and circumstances of the communication, including the time and the persons present.
- i) Inform relevant staff immediately of the disclosure, allegations, or suspicion, give them a copy of the written notes and ensure that they are aware of any immediate medical needs. They will coordinate an immediate investigation into the circumstances of the complaint.
- j) Take no further action, including discussing their suspicions with anyone else involved with the student, until the decision has been taken how to proceed.

LSC Action:

Any bullying or harassment reported to LSC is likely to be invoke disciplinary procedures by the Disciplinary Committee. The allegator will be reassured that they will be listened to, taken seriously and dealt their allegation will be dealt with confidentially and respectfully. They should feel confident to raise an issue without risk of disadvantage.

6. Responsibilities

Management staff, Head of Pastoral Care and Head of Student Welfare are responsible for ensuring that the policy is communicated effectively and is being implemented whenever necessary. All staff are expected to understand and abide by this policy. Final responsibility for the maintenance of the Anti-bullying and Anti-harassment Policy rests with the Director of LSC.

7. Complaints

In the first instance, students should try to resolve any example of harassment or discrimination with the person who has allegedly acted in this manner. If the matter cannot be resolved immediately then it should be referred to the Head of Pastoral Care, the Assistant Director or the Director of LSC as appropriate, who would consider whether the disciplinary code of conduct was considered to have been breached (See Disciplinary Procedures for further details).

Staff should try to resolve any example of harassment or discrimination with the person who has allegedly acted in this manner. If the matter remains unresolved, then staff should address any complaint in writing to the Assistant Director providing clear evidence about the event or circumstance.

8. Review

This policy is reviewed annually at the Senior Management Group and aligned to legislative changes.

9. Related Policies, Procedures and Guidelines:

Code of Conduct

Complaints and Appeals Procedure
Disciplinary Procedure
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
Freedom of Speech Policy
Personal Relationships Policy
Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manual
Safeguarding Policy & Procedures
Sexual Misconduct Policy & Procedures
Social Media Policy

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