

## A02: DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY (MAY 2023)

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to encourage an organisational culture that is tolerant, open, and inclusive, where people feel safe and are encouraged, valued, and respected, to prevent bullying or harassment, and provide an effective response if it does happen.

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to:

- All staff employed by REDRESS.
- Associated personnel while they are engaged with work or visits related to REDRESS, which includes but is not limited to: trustees, consultants, volunteers, interns, and contractors.

#### **Principles**

REDRESS will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying. Harassment (including sexual harassment) and bullying damage the health, confidence, morale and performance of employees who are affected by them. They may also be criminal offences or contravene other relevant national laws in the UK and the Netherlands.

#### **Definitions**

Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), and it may be related to age, disability, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Behaviour may amount to harassment when it is unwelcome, uninvited, and unreciprocated. Harassment is behaviour which the person knew or ought reasonably to have known might be perceived as such.

Examples of harassment include, *inter alia*:

- Threatening behaviour;
- Mocking, mimicking or belittling a person;
- Jokes that are racist, sexist, ageist, faith-based, homophobic, transphobic, or other derogatory or stereotypical comments;
- Offensive phone calls, emails, text messages or social media content;
- Unwanted physical conduct or 'horseplay', including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing.

Examples of sexual harassment include, *inter alia*:

- Unwelcome sexual attention;
- Subjecting someone to insults or ridicule because of their sex or gender;

- Suggesting that there is any link between submission to sexual advances and conditions of employment, promotion, professional development, or other career progression;
- Lewd, suggestive or over-familiar behaviour;
- Display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures or written material;
- Repeated compliments or comments about a colleague's personal appearance or physical features.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened, and which the person knew or ought reasonably to have known might be perceived as such. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation. This means that bullying and harassment can happen between peers, and also between supervisors and supervisees.

Examples of bullying include, *inter alia*:

- Any offensive, abusive, malicious or insulting behaviour which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable;
- Subjecting someone to insults or ridicule, or spreading malicious rumours;
- Physical or psychological threats or intimidation;
- Persistent or unwelcome contact;
- Overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision;
- Derogatory remarks about someone's academic or professional performance;
- Copying or sharing emails that are critical about a colleague without good reason;

Legitimate, reasonable and constructive criticism of a person's performance or behaviour, or reasonable instructions given in the course of their professional engagement, will not amount to harassment or bullying on their own. If such feedback or action is unduly biased or used as retaliation against an individual it may constitute harassment.

## **2.2 COMMITMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITY**

REDRESS promotes a good and harmonious working environment in which our employees are treated with dignity and respect.

Our aim is:

- a) To ensure a safe working environment, free from harassment and bullying.
- b) To ensure equality for all those who work within REDRESS.
- c) To ensure that each employee is respected and valued and able to give their best as a result.

REDRESS commits that it will:

- a) Seek to create a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for all staff members, associated personnel, partners and clients, and that is free from harassment and bullying.
- b) Not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment.
- c) Seek to ensure that staff feel valued, listened to and supported.
- d) Encourage anyone who feels that they have been subject to harassment or bullying to raise their concerns so that appropriate action can be taken.

- e) Respond to all incidents of harassment and bullying and ensure that all reports are dealt with promptly, seriously and confidentially, in accordance with our grievance and disciplinary policy (See A6: *Grievance Policy* and A7: *Disciplinary Policy*).

## **Responsibility**

All staff and associated personnel hold equal responsibility for implementing and upholding this policy. Everyone has a responsibility to:

- a) Treat others with dignity and respect.
- b) Not commit any acts of harassment or bullying against any person, such as our co-workers and our clients.
- c) Discourage harassment and bullying by making it clear that they find such behaviour unacceptable and by supporting co-workers who suffer such treatment.
- d) Report harassment and bullying that they witness.
- e) Help identify wrong practices or procedures and bring these to the attention of a manager or supervisor.
- f) Line managers and supervisors also have a special responsibility for enforcing this policy on a day-to-day basis, especially in setting a good example for other employees to follow and for intervening where necessary to protect and reassure employees.

## **2.3 ENSURING COMPLIANCE**

REDRESS will inform all staff and associated personnel at the commencement of their engagement with REDRESS of the dignity at work policy and that they are obliged to comply with its requirements.

It is the responsibility of Senior Management to ensure that REDRESS staff and associated personnel understand this policy and to encourage compliance with it. The board of trustees is ultimately responsible for overseeing the operation of the policy.

If any staff or associated personnel consider that they have experienced or witnessed harassment or bullying, they can use the grievance procedure to make a report (See A6: *Grievance Policy*). This includes an informal and a formal procedure.

In the case of behaviour which the employee may consider to be a one-off or relatively mild example of misconduct, the employee concerned may choose to explain to the person engaging in the unwanted conduct that the behaviour in question is not welcome, that it offends them or makes them uncomfortable, or that it interferes with their work; and that if it is repeated, it will have the effect of converting unwanted attention into harassment. Such direct feedback can be effective in some situations, but if inappropriate conduct is more serious or persists then the formal procedure should be used.

REDRESS will take any report seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. Those raising a grievance will not be penalised, even if it is not upheld, unless the report is untrue and made in bad faith.

If, after a reasonable and proportionate investigation, Senior Management take the view that staff or associated personnel are in breach of this Policy, disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with the disciplinary policy (See A7: *Disciplinary Policy*).

## **2.4 ASSOCIATED POLICIES**

Staff should be aware of the following associated policies.

- A1: Equality Policy
- A5: Whistleblowing Policy

- A6: Grievance Policy
- A7: Disciplinary Policy
- A8: Safeguarding Policy
- A13: Complaints Policy

## **2.5 TRAINING**

All staff and associated personnel will receive training on this policy as part of their induction.

A refresher training session is conducted for all staff at least annually to remind them of the policy and to inform them of any changes.

## **2.6 POLICY REVIEW**

This policy was originally approved by the Board of Trustees on 14 April 2023. The revised policy was reviewed by the Risk Committee in June 2023 and approved by the Board of Trustees on 25 July 2023.

This policy is subject to revision at any time REDRESS considers it necessary.

In any event, the policy will be reviewed again in May 2026.