

ANTI BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

At Worcester Film Festival we do not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment, racism or other discrimination, or victimisation.

We uphold the following principles:

1. Everyone at Worcester Film Festival is responsible for creating a positive workplace that is inclusive and supportive of all colleagues.
2. We respect one another's dignity, regardless of role or seniority within the organisation.
3. Everyone has the right to feel safe, welcome and comfortable in their day-to-day work
4. Worcester Film Festival aims to prevent bullying and harassment and ensure that proper process is in place for the reporting and investigation of bullying and harassment if it occurs.
5. You should feel empowered to raise challenges and make complaints if you experience any behaviour that falls below this standard, and be supported and protected to do so as we understand that this can be a difficult experience.

What is bullying, harassment and victimisation?

Bullying is unwanted behaviour that makes someone feel uncomfortable. Sometimes bullying is classed as harassment, which is against the law and has a legal definition under the Equality Act (2010).

Harassment is unwanted behaviour related to 'protected characteristics' that has either violated the person's dignity or has created a hostile environment for the person (whether it was intended or not). The protected characteristics are gender, gender reassignment (i.e. transgender status), race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, pregnancy/maternity, and age.

Victimisation is treating a person badly because they have, in good faith, complained (formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing them or someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint.

Bullying and harassment may be physical, verbal or non-verbal. It may be conducted in person, remotely (e.g. on a telephone call or video call) or by letter, email, text messaging or via social media.

Sometimes bullying and harassment is behaviour which is obviously wrong, such as arguments, shouting, rudeness, or aggression.

But on other occasions it can be more subtle, such as ignoring or excluding people, overloading someone with work, spreading malicious rumours about someone, picking on someone or undermining them, or denying someone opportunities.

What to do if you think you have been bullied or harassed

We understand that it is not always easy to raise an incident of bullying or harassment, and want you to feel supported through the process.

The 4 steps below advise what you should do if you think you are being bullied or harassed.

1. Keep A Record

Write down what has happened, with details of when, how and involving who, and how it made you feel. Keep copies of any relevant emails, messages, images, screenshots or documents. If the bullying or harassment was verbal write down exactly what was said, to the best of your memory.

2. See If The Matter Can Be Resolved Informally

You may be able to sort things out informally. The person may not know that their behaviour is unwelcome or upsetting. An informal discussion may help them to understand the effects of their behaviour and agree to change it.

3. Make A Formal Complaint

If an informal approach does not resolve things, or you think the situation is too serious to be dealt with informally, you can make a formal complaint by using our grievance procedure.

4. In Serious Cases, Consider Notifying The Police

In cases of harassment, a criminal offence may have been committed and you may wish to speak to the police. If that's the case, a colleague can arrange for someone to accompany you.

What we will do if there is a complaint of bullying or harassment

We take all complaints of bullying or harassment extremely seriously. Any complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. If appropriate we will bring disciplinary proceedings against the alleged bully/harasser. We will support you during the process, and can take measures such as ensuring you and the alleged bully/harasser do not have to work together while the complaint is being investigated.

What we can all do to prevent bullying and harassment

We all have a responsibility to create and maintain a work environment free of bullying, harassment and victimisation, and to treat our colleagues with dignity and respect. Managers and senior staff have particular responsibilities to do this and set a good example in their own behaviour. You can play your part by being aware of your own behaviour, always treating colleagues with dignity and respect, intervening to stop harassment or bullying, and giving support to anyone who may have been bullied or harassed.

For this policy to be effective it has to be fully understood and acted upon by all members of staff. Please ask if you have any questions or comments on this policy, including suggestions for how it could be improved.