



QUALITRAIN LTD
32-46 KING
STREET
ALFRETON
DERBYSHIRE
DE55 7DQ

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY (INCORPORATING THE WORKER PROTECTION (AMENDMENT OF EQUALITY ACT 2010) ACT 2023

Harassment Policy Statement

At Qualitrain, we are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and supportive working environment that enables our staff to reach their full potential. This environment cannot thrive where any member of staff experiences harassment, intimidation, aggression, or coercion. We fully support the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion, and view harassment as a serious form of discrimination.

In compliance with the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act) Act 2023, effective from October 26, 2024, Qualitrain has a positive duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. This duty includes preventing harassment by both employees and third parties, such as clients or customers. Non-compliance with these obligations can result in significant penalties, including a potential 25% uplift in compensation awards during Employment Tribunal claims.

We will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying, and we are committed to implementing robust preventive measures.

Harassment Definition

Harassment is defined as unwanted behaviour that violates an individual's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment. This behaviour may be related to sex, marital status, race, disability, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, age, or gender reassignment. The list of protected characteristics is not exhaustive, and harassment on any grounds will not be tolerated.

Harassment can be persistent or isolated, obvious or subtle, face-to-face, or indirect, such as through unfair application of policies or procedures.

Examples of Harassment:

- Spreading malicious rumours
- Professional or social exclusion
- Insulting behaviour or derogatory remarks
- Unwelcome sexual advances or physical contact
- Unfounded threats related to job security
- Undermining an employee's competence through unreasonable workloads
- Physical assault

- Verbal abuse or threats
- Offensive emails, text messages or visual images
- Display of derogatory or offensive material

Proactive Steps to Prevent Harassment

In accordance with the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act) Act 2023, Qualitrain is committed to taking proactive steps to prevent harassment, including:

1. Annual Training and Awareness:

All employees and leaders will receive training on harassment prevention and company policies. Training modules will be part of the Qualitrain-U Personal Development programme, emphasising positive behaviours and awareness and via SkillsHub

2. Effective Reporting Mechanisms:

We will provide clear and accessible channels for employees to report harassment, including a confidential hotline. Employees will be informed about how to raise concerns and how their complaints will be handled.

3. Annual Risk Assessments:

We will conduct annual risk assessments to identify potential harassment risks and take preventive measures. This process will include evaluating third-party interactions, such as with clients and customers.

4. Management Responsibility:

Leaders are responsible for enforcing this policy and ensuring that any complaints or concerns are addressed promptly, confidentially, and fairly. Leaders will also ensure that all staff understand their obligations under this policy.

5. Monitoring and Review:

The harassment policy and its effectiveness will be reviewed annually, with updates communicated to all employees. This will include bi-annual reviews and anonymous staff surveys to identify any gaps or issues.

Unlawful Grounds of Harassment and Bullying

The following grounds are expressly unlawful, and harassment or bullying on any of these bases will not be tolerated:

- Sex
- Marital Status
- Gender Reassignment
- Sexual Harassment
- Race
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion or Belief
- Age
- Grievance

Complaint Procedures

Informal Procedure:

Employees are encouraged to address harassment directly if they feel comfortable doing so. (See Prevention of Sexual Harassment real time incident reporting procedure) This can be through a direct conversation with the individual or via written communication. Employees may also seek assistance from a manager or colleague.

Formal Procedure:

Employees who prefer or need to address harassment formally can do so at any time, regardless of whether informal steps have been taken. Formal complaints will be handled prevention of Sexual Harassment real time incident reporting procedure

Consequences of Breach

Harassment is a disciplinary offense and will be handled in accordance with the company's disciplinary procedures. Depending on the severity of the behaviour, consequences may include summary dismissal. Harassment or bullying may also constitute a criminal offense, leading to further legal action.

Employee and Manager Responsibilities

All employees are expected to comply with this policy and contribute to a respectful workplace. Leaders have an additional responsibility to enforce this policy, ensure all employees are informed, and promptly address any complaints.

Confidentiality

All complaints will be treated confidentially. Employees involved in investigations are expected to respect confidentiality. Breaches of confidentiality will result in disciplinary action.

Policy Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure ongoing compliance with legal requirements and effectiveness in preventing harassment. Any updates will be communicated to all employees.

Employment Law Changes 2024:

From October 2024, employers are required to take proactive steps to prevent sexual harassment, including by third parties. Failure to comply may result in an uplift in compensation awards by up to 25%. Qualitrain is committed to fostering a safe and respectful workplace through continued education, effective reporting mechanisms, and proactive risk management.

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