

Quality Procedures and Policies	HS-021	Issue Number	2
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Bullying and Harassment		Originator	PH
		Amended by	PH
		Approved by	TS

## 1. Scope

As part of SETA's overall commitment to Equality of Opportunity, it is fully committed to promoting a fair and harmonious working environment, in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity, and in which no individual feels bullied, threatened or intimidated. The aim of this policy is to prevent harassment and bullying in the workplace which, includes harassment and bullying of/by Apprentices, Staff, contractors, visitors, other customers and third parties.

Harassment and bullying has a negative impact on the health, confidence, morale and performance of those affected by it, including anyone who witnesses or has knowledge of the unwanted or unacceptable behaviour. Therefore, harassment or bullying at SETA in any form is unacceptable behaviour and will not be permitted or condoned. It will be viewed as a gross misconduct offence which may result in Staff dismissal, Apprentice withdrawal, or removal from site and SETA's services of external contractors, other customer, visitors and third parties, immediately without notice.

## 2. Definition

### Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct based religion or belief, age, race or disability for example, which affects the dignity of anyone at work or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Many forms of behavior can constitute harassment, and a single incident of unwanted or offensive behaviour can amount to harassment. Such include are:

- *Physical conduct, ranging from touching, pushing or grabbing to punching or serious assault*
- *Verbal or written harassment through jokes, offensive language, defamatory remarks, gossip, threats or letters*
- *Inappropriate posts or comments on or via social media commonly known as 'cyber bullying'*
- *Isolation, non-co-operation at work or exclusion from social activities*

### Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted behavior of a sexual nature, and could be a one-off incident or an ongoing pattern of behavior.

It can happen in person or in other ways, for example online through things like email, social media or messaging tools.

Such examples include:

- *Flirting, gesturing or making sexual remarks about someone's body, clothing or appearance*
- *Asking questions about someone's sex life*

- *Telling sexually offensive jokes*
- *Making sexual comments or jokes about someone's sexual orientation or gender reassignment*
- *Displaying or sharing pornographic or sexual images, or other sexual content including e-mails, text messages, video clips, photographs, posters, emblems/symbols or any other offensive material*
- *Physical conduct such as touching or grabbing parts of another individual's body against their will*
- *Unwelcome sexual behavior, including unwanted suggestions, propositions or advances*
- *Coercion, including pressure for sexual favors*
- *Inappropriate personal contact, including intrusion by pestering or spying*

It should be noted that it is the impact of the behavior that is relevant and not solely the motive or intent behind it.

### Bullying

Bullying is persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating or insulting behaviour, which, through the abuse of power, makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable. Bullying can be a form of harassment and can undermine an individual's self-confidence and self-esteem, and cause them to suffer stress.

Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. As with harassment, there are many examples of bullying, which can include:

- *Shouting at or humiliating others*
- *High-handed or oppressive levels of supervision*
- *Unjustified, offensive and/or insulting remarks about performance*
- *Exclusion from meetings, events or communications without good cause*
- *Physical or emotional threats*
- *Gaslighting and other forms of psychological manipulation*

Bullying can occur in the workplace and outside of the workplace at events connected to the workplace, such as social functions or business trips.

### **3. Rights of an Individual**

All individuals have the right to work in an environment which is free from any form of harassment or bullying. SETA recognises the right to complain about harassment or bullying should it occur. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

Every effort will be made to ensure that, when a complaint is made, the complainant will be protected from further acts of bullying and harassment. If others also give evidence or information in connection with the complaint, they equally will be protected. Perpetrators of these acts will be subject to disciplinary action which may warrant dismissal.

### **4. Responsibilities of an Individual**

All individuals have a responsibility to help ensure a working environment in which the dignity of everyone is respected. Each individual must comply with this policy and ensure that their behavior to colleagues and anyone connected to SETA does not cause offence, and could not in any way be considered to be harassment or bullying.

All individuals should discourage harassment and bullying by making it clear that such behavior unacceptable. Colleagues who suffer such treatment and are considering making a complaint should also be supported. Any individual suffering at the hands of harassment or bullying should report it immediately as highlighted in **Section 5** of this policy, to enable SETA to deal with the matter promptly and effectively.

SETA will ensure that adequate resources are made available to promote respect and dignity in the workplace, and to deal effectively with complaints of harassment and bullying. This policy and procedure will be communicated effectively to all, and SETA will ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities. Appropriate training, where necessary, will be provided.

## **5. Procedure**

### Apprentices

Apprentices should report to Pastoral Support Services who will begin the investigation.

### Staff

Staff should contact their Line Manager, who will begin the investigation.

### Contractors, Visitors and Third Parties and Other Customers

Contractors and visitors should contact their host or the Staff member responsible for their visit who will in turn contact their Line Manager, who will begin the investigation.

### Conflicts of Interest

Should the person being reported to be involved or connected with the complaint/allegation, the individual should ask to speak directly to the Centre Compliance Manager, who in turn will begin the investigation.

## **6. Investigation**

The Investigating member of Staff receiving the complaint/allegation will carry out interviews with all involved parties in the strictest confidence and will decide if the relevant Disciplinary process will be instigated.

## **7. Appeals**

Appeals will be brought before the appeals panel, namely the Chief Operating Officer and Chief Executive Officer, who will call upon the Centre Compliance Manager for assistance where required. They will investigate the appeal and decide the outcome.

The appeals panels' decision is final.

## **8. Review**

This procedure will be reviewed annually by the Centre Compliance Manager and the Chief Operating Officer.