



## Anti-Harassment & Anti-Bullying Policy

<b>Date established:</b>	March 2009
<b>Updated:</b>	Feb 2021
<b>Reviewed:</b>	Annually 090221
<b>Purpose:</b>	This policy aims to set out MITSkills position regarding how to deal with harassment/bullying in the workplace/centre.

We want all learners and staff to feel that they can learn and work happily without having to put up with any behaviour which makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.

We consider that harassment (including bullying) is any form of behaviour which is unwanted, unwelcome and which puts people in unpleasant or threatening situations.

Individual learners and staff have different levels of sensitivity, and we recognise this. We also recognise that harassment may take a variety of forms, from verbal comments to physical action – such as isolating people or staring at them or refusing to co-operate or bullying.

### What to do if you are worried about harassment

There are two options for staff and learners who feel they are being harassed. The first is to deal with the issue informally, which may simply mean telling someone that his or her behaviour is causing offence and asking that it should not happen again. (It may be that the individual is unaware that his or her behaviour is causing offence).

The other option for learners is to use a formal approach to ensure that the issue is dealt with by talking to your Assessor, Work based Trainer, Delivery Staff, or the Company Directors at MITSkills. For staff using a formal approach is to talk to your line manager or one of the Company Directors.

You should always give exact details about the behaviour of the individuals you think are harassing you and use examples which support what you are saying. You should indicate how you felt about the situation – for example whether it embarrassed or humiliated you or made you feel unsafe or made you angry.

***You must not ignore the problem you face and should always contact your Assessor, Work Based Trainer, delivery staff (line manager in the case of staff) or a Company Director if you feel it is appropriate to do so or if you feel that you cannot handle the situation. Making a complaint is a serious issue and it will be regarded as such within MITSkills and all individuals making a complaint will be given appropriate support.***



All who use or work in MITSkills are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding, and to participate in any activity free from intimidation.

All staff at MITSkills are expected to listen actively to young people and other learners and act appropriately on information received to ensure that a safe, secure, positive environment exists.

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

#### **Aims**

- To prevent bullying of any form, physical, verbal, cyber or mental, peer to peer abuse.
- To ensure that everyone is aware that bullying will not be tolerated.
- To comply with all relevant Human Rights legislation.
- To ensure that everyone understands that they have a responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of others.

#### **Objectives**

- To provide and encourage a safe, listening environment in which people feel free to discuss their concerns regarding bullying behaviour
- To raise everyone's awareness of bullying
- To identify and provide appropriate training (staff development) in relation to identifying and preventing bullying
- To regularly review the policy and procedures relating to bullying
- To monitor procedures and their effectiveness in preventing bullying
- To investigate fully any incidents of bullying
- To take positive actions to deal with bullying behaviour
- To provide appropriate training and support for victims of bullying and those involved in bullying behaviour.

▪ All members of the MITSkills Community have a responsibility to ensure that learners and staff are free from bullying.

- All staff should monitor their conduct and language to eliminate bullying behaviour and practices and should actively counter such behaviour amongst learners
- All staff and learners should be aware of the procedures for complaints, details can be found in MITSkills handbooks and by asking at Learner Support Services
- Parents and careers should contact their son/daughters Tutor or follow the MITSkills complaints procedure if bullying occurs or is suspected.
- Learners should report bullying to any member of MITSkills staff if bullying occurs
- Staff should follow Safeguarding Policy where bullying may be a child protection issue learners are below 19 years old and follow the process first and foremost noting that Safeguarding issues and their reporting is allowed for in GDPR regulations and that children's safety comes first, in general the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) to ensure that any data collected is protected and is private, but for issues related to safeguarding no staff member can promise secrecy of issues reported by learners nor should they agree to it.
- Staff should take immediate action if bullying or harassment is reported or suspected – all cases should be logged, and details should be passed to our Safeguarding lead or Senior Manager where the safeguarding lead is not available – where the incident involves only learners and staff over 19 the Safeguarding lead and tutor can agree to update the appropriate line manager so any issues can be addressed immediately so that corrective or disciplinary action can be taken.
- An allegation of bullying will be fully investigated and dealt with appropriately to ensure there is no recurrence



- When a person is suspected of bullying every effort will be made to establish the facts and appropriate action will be taken to ensure there is no recurrence
- All parties will be offered support, including counselling, if required.

MITSkills regards bullying as a serious offence and will apply Disciplinary Procedure where appropriate.

### **The Nature of Bullying**

Bullying may be defined as the repeated or intentional abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent and motivation to cause distress to another individual or group.

It may be physical, sexual, verbal, or psychological in nature. It may occur frequently or infrequently, regularly, or irregularly, but it should be taken seriously even if it has only occurred on one occasion.

Bullying is not a phenomenon which occurs solely between young people. The above definition can also be seen to characterise some adult/adult, adult/child, and child/adult relationships. In more serious instances where adults abuse their power over a young person, or a young person does over another young person bullying may be viewed as child abuse and should be seen within this context.

Not all aggressive behaviour is bullying. Some individuals may feel they are being bullied, even when there is no intention from others to cause them distress. Such perceptions of bullying should be taken seriously, and action taken to address them.

### **Why it is important to do something about bullying?**

Bullying is always damaging to those involved. The victim, the bully and those who witness or even know about the bullying are affected.

### **Victims**

Victims may spend their lives in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and may believe that it is something about themselves which has led the bully to pick on them.

The victim's life may be characterised by unhappiness, a sense of desolation and desperation and exclusion from normal social experiences. Those feelings can permeate all aspects of the victim's life and may lead to a strong desire to escape the situation by running away from home, truanting from school, college, absences from work, and in some cases, self-harming or taking their own life.

The victims of bullying may have reduced self-esteem and self-worth and their performance in school, college, work, and other areas often deteriorates. Research evidence has shown that victims of bullying may be more likely to experience mental health problems and that they are more likely to become bullies themselves.

Bullying Behaviour is not a natural behaviour pattern and should not be seen as such. People who bully are likely to experience difficult and unhappy relationships with their peers and frequently need help to overcome these difficulties. People who bully are unlikely to stop while they can continue unchallenged.



Cyber Bullying

Bullying also occurs by misuse of technologies e.g., virtual learning platforms, emails, text messages, social media, and the internet.

All occurrences must be tackled with equal importance. Learners must be aware that by forwarding inappropriate messages or images, they are equally as culpable as the originator. Learning coaches will monitor sessions in the learning programme which deal with bullying and how to protect yourself on-line.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Learners aged under 19 can abuse other learners also under 19, this is a safeguarding issue. This is generally referred to as peer-on-peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

MITSkills staff will report where they believe they have reason to suspect peer on peer abuse, via the Safeguarding lead and follow our safeguarding policy. MITSkills learners should report where they believe they are a victim of peer-on-peer abuse, cyberbullying, bullying or harassment, to any member of staff, We are a supportive organisation and will ensure that your concerns are dealt with, our Senior Managers, Safeguarding lead and support team are here to help.

Bullying behaviour does not just affect the victim and the perpetrator. Those who witness or know of bullying may live in fear that it will be their turn next. Bullying promotes poor models of behaviour and may encourage others to imitate these models. People who have been bullied in one setting may well become bullies in another. For children transferring from primary to secondary schools the fear of bullying is widespread. This may also apply when transferring from school to college, or college to work. Evidence has shown that bullying is a major concern for parents and young people of all ages.

Organisations which encourage or even tolerate bullying are less effective. MITSkills has a zero tolerance of bullying.

Related Policies and Procedures

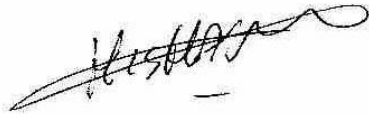
- Safeguarding Policy
- Learner Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

Performance Indicators

- Incidents of bullying will be recorded and analysed
- Awareness raising for learners will be conducted during induction and throughout the tutorial programmes and pastoral support
- The Anti Bullying Policy will be reviewed annually.

<b>Date Reviewed</b>	270721
<b>Reviewed</b>	Annually



<b>Version Status</b>	Approved
<b>Approved By:</b>	  Company Director: <span style="float: right;">Date 270721</span>