



Valuing People - Dignity at Work

Introduction

Heriot-Watt University is committed to ensuring that all employees are valued and treated with dignity and respect while at work, irrespective of their race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, age, religion or similar philosophical belief¹, trade union membership, marital status, sex, sexual orientation or gender assignment.

It is committed to creating an environment of positive working relationships. To create and protect such an environment, the University has a policy and procedures to enable staff to raise concerns and which will allow for these concerns to be addressed.

This policy covers the prevention of sexual harassment, racial harassment, disability harassment and bullying in the workplace. It aims to provide a remedy for unreasonable or unjustifiable behaviour, but is not intended to inhibit reasonable and effective management of staff.

Any form of harassment or bullying is unacceptable, and the University will not tolerate or condone such behaviour. Furthermore, it guarantees that all complaints will be thoroughly and fairly investigated.

Offensive behaviour by way of harassment or bullying constitutes misconduct, and will be subject to the University's disciplinary procedures and could lead to dismissal. Not only is such behaviour an internal disciplinary offence, harassment can also be unlawful behaviour contrary to statute law – for example, Sections 8-11 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 apply to Scotland and breach of a non-harassment order could lead to a term of imprisonment.

Policy on harassment and bullying

- (a) Heriot-Watt University is committed to a working and learning environment that is free of discrimination. Sexual, religious or racial harassment is contrary to the University's Charter and statute law, and disability discrimination is contrary to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Neither harassment or bullying will be tolerated.
- (b) The University Management will take prompt action upon becoming aware that incidents involving alleged harassment or bullying have taken place.

¹ As defined by the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

- (c) All employees concerned with the management or supervision of staff have a positive duty to maintain their workplace free from any type of harassment, bullying and intimidation.
- (d) Any type of harassment or bullying will be grounds for disciplinary action which may include formal warnings, suspension, transfer or dismissal.
- (e) Employees subject to harassment or bullying should raise the matter through the Harassment and Bullying Grievance Procedure, which form a separate document.
- (f) Grievances will be handled with all possible speed and confidentiality. In settling the grievance, if relocation is under consideration, every effort will be made to apply this to the harasser or bully rather than the victim.

HWC 22/11/00
Updated 2003