



LEARNERS BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

August 2021

INTRODUCTION

MGTS will not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form. The rationale underlying this policy is a commitment to protecting all learners in MGTS community from bullying and harassment in order to ensure a safe environment for learning. MGTS is committed to taking a proactive approach in preventing bullying and harassment and an active approach in responding to bullying and harassment when it occurs.

DEFINITION

Bullying is behaviour which is intended to cause hurt, pain, suffering, humiliation, fear or degradation. Bullying tends to be mainly psychological, eg threats and criticism. Harassment tends to be mainly physical, eg intrusion into personal space and damage to possessions.

CORE PRINCIPLES

MGTS operates under an ethos in which every learner is safe from bullying and harassment.

All learners and their parents/carers should be made aware of the Bullying and Harassment Policy.

All learners should be made aware that when alleging bullying or harassment they will be given help and support and protected from victimisation.

Every member of MGTS staff has a responsibility to ensure that suspected bullying or harassment is dealt with promptly and fairly.

Every member of staff should be aware of what constitutes bullying and harassment and of the Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Every member of staff should be aware of how to react to suspected cases of bullying or harassment.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Policy will be implemented as follows:

MGTS will promote an ethos where every learner and member of staff is respected by:

- Giving learners a voice
- Having clear statements of expectations and behaviour

MGTS will promote an ethos in which every learner is safe and free from intimidating behaviour by:

- Raising awareness of all members of MGTS on the issue of bullying and MGTS' attitude to it through learner induction, letters to parents, staff induction.
- Providing staff development to support the development of an environment in which bullying is seen as inappropriate and unacceptable.
- All staff, particularly senior staff, demonstrating appropriate behaviour at all times.

MGTS will take measures to prevent bullying and harassment by:

- Discussing bullying and MGTS' policy and procedures during induction sessions with learners.
- Arranging supervision at high risk times and in high risk places to ensure that learners are protected from bullying.
- Ensuring regular dialogue with the delivery team to promote proactive strategies to keep learners aware of issues.
- Offering learners at risk of being bullied extra support and guidance.
- Making learners aware that members of staff want to be informed about any incidents and that action will be taken when bullying is reported.

MGTS will respond to incidents of bullying and has policies and procedures in place to steer its response and respond to incidents of bullying by:

- Accurately recording all incidents of bullying and monitoring the effectiveness of strategies to situations.
- Offering learners who are victims of bullying additional support and guidance.
- Taking action in respect of the perpetrators of bullying to ensure that they are clear that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Working with those who bully others to enable them to address their behaviour, but always within the context of MGTS' disciplinary procedures; clarifying the extent of the problem and ensuring that appropriate resources are committed to address it.
- Raising the profile of bullying as an issue within MGTS to encourage learners and staff to report incidences of bullying.

MGTS will involve parents, carers or guardians [and other professionals if necessary], in ensuring learners are properly protected by keeping parents, carers or guardians informed about specific incidents involving their son/daughter and ensure they are included in dialogue about ways to address the problem.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

MGTS will review the policy at agreed intervals. All incidents of bullying will be recorded and reported, with a particular note made of any racist, sexist, disability or homophobic element.

Supporting Policies and Documents

- 1 Equal Opportunities Policy
- 2 Disability Policy
- 6 Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy for Work Based Learning Programmes
- 20 Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy



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Chief Executive

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APPENDIX 1

WHAT ARE BULLYING AND HARASSMENT?

Behaviour can be:

- Emotional – excluding, taunting, teasing and jokes, spreading rumours
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, comments or suggestions
- Racist – racist taunts, graffiti and gestures
- Homophobic – homophobic taunts or comments about the victim’s sexuality
- Verbal – name calling, graffiti, text messages and e-mail
- Physical – stalking, damage to possessions, stealing, punching, kicking, hitting or other types of violence
- Cyber – all areas of internet such as e-mail and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls and misuse of associated technology, eg camera and video facilities
- Threatening behaviour and intimidation – threats

Signs and symptoms of bullying and harassment can include:

- Crying
- Nightmares
- Becoming anxious and withdrawn
- Physical signs, eg bruising
- Feeling ill
- Changes in usual behaviour
- Not wanted to come to MGTS
- Missing MGTS
- Lack of confidence
- Attempted or threatened suicide
- Deterioration in standard of work
- Bullying other learners
- Showing unusual signs of aggression
- Being frightened of walking to and from MGTS
- Not wanting to go on public transport

Bullying and harassment can lead to:

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| • Shyness | • Poor memory function and forgetfulness |
| • Depression | • Tiredness and fatigue, exhaustion |
| • High levels of stress and anxiety | • Sleeplessness and nightmares |
| • Low self esteem | • Flashbacks |
| • Lack of confidence | • Obsessiveness |
| • Isolation and withdrawal | • Aches and pains |
| • Threatened or attempted suicide | • Headaches and migraines |
| • Panic attacks | • Frequent illness, e.g. viral |
| • Tearfulness and hypersensitivity | • Irritable bowel syndrome |
| • Poor level of achievement | • Actual injury |
| • Poor concentration | |

These lists are not exhaustive but are intended to give examples. If a learner demonstrates or exhibits these signs or symptoms it should be reported to the Centre Lead, Learner Support Tutor or Training and Development Adviser in the first instance.

APPENDIX 2

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED INCIDENTS OF BULLYING OR HARASSMENT – GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

- 1 All complaints about bullying should be taken seriously and treated sensitively. It is important to discuss possible/desirable strategies with the victim in the first instance and proceed as appropriate.
- 2 If you are the person to whom the incident is reported or who first discovered the incident, take time to make the situation safe if necessary, ie control of the bully and support for the victim. Call the Centre Lead if you need help.
- 3 Write a brief report in the incident book or ensure that the Centre Lead does this. The relevant Training and Development Adviser or Learner Support Tutor should be informed.
- 4 As a general guideline, members of staff will respect confidentiality of the individual as long as it is consistent with MGTS Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Policy. However, where confidentiality has been broken, then the complainant should be involved in the process. In some cases the individual may first want to talk about bullying but may not wish to take matters further. In this case a strategy should be developed with the student to address the situation.
- 5 Learners should be encouraged to give the following information:
 - Date[s], time[s] and place[s] of incident[s]
 - Names of any witnesses
 - A description of what actually happened
 - How the incident made them feel
 - Any action taken, eg reported to a member of staff
 - Original copies of any correspondence or written materials connected with the issue
- 6 When a learner requests or needs assistance in providing the above information [eg because they have learning difficulties, or their first language is not English], the member of staff can record the information for them, taking care to ensure the student's words are accurately recorded.
- 7 This information will inform the mediation process if such a course of action is decided upon. The information will also be used as evidence in any subsequent disciplinary proceedings.
- 8 The victim and bully should be interviewed separately. Counselling should be offered to both.
- 9 Where appropriate, the Centre Lead, Training and Development Adviser or Learner Support Tutor should write to parents/carers detailing the incident and stating that MGTS is taking action.
- 10 A meeting should be convened, if this is considered appropriate, whereby conciliation between all parties might be reached. Be sensitive to the needs of the victim and make sure there is someone present who can effectively mediate. The mediator can be a member of the Technical Centre, the Centre Lead, Training and Development Adviser or Learner Support Tutor where appropriate.

The mediator can help participants to resolve their dispute and to co-exist at MGTS through using the following procedure:

- Both parties define the problem as they see it, alone with the mediator
- The impartial mediator identifies the key issues for both parties, these are listed on paper
- At the end of the individual session with the mediator, the mediator ascertains whether or not the parties are willing to meet together along with the mediator. This is the point when real mediation can take place, if both parties are willing to try, to move towards reconciliation
- At the joint meeting, both parties should be able to speak and express their opinion, but this is led by the mediator, only one person is allowed to speak at once, to ensure this meeting does not turn into a battle. The mediator needs to firmly control the meeting
- The mediator sets up a plan of action which will satisfy each party and obtains agreement on these
- A follow up action plan is agreed and monitored at agreed intervals

- 11 Where it is found that the parties involved are unable to agree a way forward, then the formal disciplinary procedure will be involved. When the alleged perpetrator of bullying or harassment is a member of staff, MGTS' Policy on Bullying and Harassment should be followed through HR Procedures.