

acas working for everyone
to resolve and prevent
workplace problems

Employment
Relations Forum
Summer 2018

Behaviours at work,
understanding the
unacceptable





Temperature



Mobile phones



Toilets



Information packs



Fire alarm



Food & drink

Agenda



- 09:30 Acas Senior Adviser – unacceptable behaviours – Who says?
- 11:00 Break
- 11:20 John Morrow, University Of Chester Business School
- *The implications of the law on*
- *Sexual Harassment for employers*
- 12:15 Julie Duane, Napthens Solicitors – Sexual Harassment case law and Employment law update
- 13:00 Lunch/ Networking/Close

Unacceptable behaviours at work

Is it O.K.....? exercise



What is bullying and harassment?

What is
bullying?

What is
harassment?



Bullying examples

Criticism/personal insults

Unpredictable behaviour

Ignoring or excluding people

Setting impossible targets

Removing areas of responsibility

Shouting at people

Making inconsistent demands

Undermining confidence
by threatening job security

Intentionally blocking training/
promotion opportunities

Harassment examples

- Use of provocative language
- Patronising manner
- Innuendo/mockery
- Unwanted comments on dress/appearance
- Unwelcome touching or physical contact
- Assault/sexual assault
- Pin-ups and displays of explicit material
- Denigration of religion or belief
- Social media

Sexual harassment



Sexual harassment can happen to anyone at any time, in any place and can come from:

- **Someone on the same team**
- **A supervisor, manager, or owner**
- **Another member of staff**
- **Someone else that a worker comes into contact with while they are working**

Workers can be sexually harassed by people of the same sex or the opposite sex

Sexual harassment statistics



52% of women and **63%** women aged 18-24 have experienced sexual harassment at work

32% subject to unwelcome jokes of a sexual nature

20% experienced unwanted verbal sexual advances

12% experienced unwanted sexual touching or attempts to kiss them

79% did not tell their employer

Source: TUC and Everyday Sexism Project survey 2016 carried out by YouGov

What about banter?

- What is acceptable?
- Release for those performing mundane tasks?
- An excuse for inappropriate behaviour?



Why take bullying and harassment seriously?

Morally unacceptable & damaging

Poor performance/low productivity

Low morale

Absence & resignations

Loss of respect for management

Damage to company reputation

Potential legal costs

Firm but fair management



- Managers have a right to manage their staff
- Managers have a role to play in motivating their team to perform effectively
- Managers role includes:
 - Setting standards
 - Identifying and dealing with issues
 - Improving individual effectiveness

What can I do about it?

Informal approaches:

- Informal discussion
- Mediation
- Counselling
- Coaching
- Human resources (HR)
- Staff welfare



So what can I do about it?



Formal approaches:

- Grievance procedure
- Bullying and harassment procedure
- Formal investigation
- Disciplinary procedure

The “victim”

- Assure confidentiality
- Deal with complaints promptly
- Use informal approach – if appropriate
- Consider counselling or mediation
- Ensure ongoing support



The “bully”

- Assure confidentiality
- Initially use informal approach if appropriate
- Focus on behaviour – not individual
- Talk about the effects of behaviour
- Explore the reasons
- Consider counselling or mediation
- Consider training
- Consider disciplinary action



What can the organisation do?



- Have a policy on bullying and harassment
- Develop agreed behavioural standards
- Promote, review and update standards
- Include how employees should behave on social media
- Ensure managers have the skills to deal with bullying and harassment

Purpose of policy

- Fair treatment
- Recognition
- Intolerable behaviour
- Responsibilities
- Guidance

