



# HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY

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Wymondham u3a Disciplinary Policy

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Vice Chair

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## **1. Purpose**

Our aim is to create a healthy environment where you feel valued and respected, where you can make full use of your abilities, skills and experiences and participate with others. As part of this, we want to do everything we can to prevent and eradicate harassment and bullying, and all forms of inappropriate behaviour in our groups.

We have therefore adopted this policy to enable the Committee to act appropriately where instances, or allegations of, harassment or bullying come to their attention.

## **2. Scope**

Harassment is any behaviour which someone finds unwanted, offensive, demeaning, humiliating or unreasonable, whether it is intentional or unintentional. This could be related to (but not limited to) individual differences, such as race, religious beliefs, creed, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, sex, age, or disability.

Bullying is a form of harassment. It is unwanted, offensive, humiliating, malicious behaviour, which undermines someone's self-esteem and confidence. It can include persistent or malicious attacks on an individual or group of people.

Harassment and/or bullying may be caused by an individual against an individual or may involve groups of people. It may be obvious or insidious. It may be conducted in public or in private. It may be face to face or in written communications. Whichever form it takes, it is unwarranted and unwanted to the individual.

## **3. Definitions**

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- derogatory remarks which are offensive, such as jokes or banter relating to race, creed, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, gender, age, or disability expression of racist, sexist or similarly offensive views.
- suggestive remarks, gestures, innuendo, leering, unwanted advances, compromising invitations or requests for sexual favours.
- physical threats and abuse or unwanted physical contact
- physical assault
- offensive language or gestures
- offensive, threatening or demeaning electronic communication.
- offensive or objectionable literature, graffiti, or pictures

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to:

- abuse of power that results in any form of unfair discrimination.
- unjustifiable criticism
- humiliating or overly hostile behaviour
- physical assault
- non-co-operation
- isolation or exclusion by other group members.
- any other conduct which creates an intimidating, hostile or humiliating social environment

## **4. Responsibilities**

4.1. Wymondham u3a Committee has a duty of care to its members, is committed to upholding this Harassment and Bullying Policy to protect its members.

4.2. The u3a will endeavour to appoint a Welfare Officer who will be an independent point of contact for members with concerns, and to engage with the complainant/informant to resolve the situation informally if possible. The role enables them to work independently of the Committee and to hold any confidential information, unless it is suspected that a crime has been committed.

## 5. Process

### 5.1. If a member has concerns about Harassment or Bullying

- It is important that they raise them as soon as they can, to ensure we can take appropriate and effective action, as soon as possible.
- If they feel able, they should approach the individual they believe is acting inappropriately and ask for their behaviour to stop. In some instances, an individual may not be aware their behaviour is upsetting the and will willingly change once they know it is causing offence.
- If they feel unable to approach the individual concerned, or If the harassment or bullying continues, they can discuss the situation confidentially with an appropriate friend, group member, Welfare Officer, or you may wish to go straight to a Committee Member for help.
- After their discussion that person may speak confidentially with the individual they have complained about, on the member's behalf, to ask them to stop the inappropriate behaviour.

### 5.2. Levels of Disciplinary Action

- A verbal warning about future conduct by two Wymondham Officers and confirmed in writing.
- A written warning which clearly states what will happen if the situation is repeated.
- A final written warning.
- Exclusion from an interest group.
- Termination of membership of Wymondham U3A.
- If any act of Gross Misconduct occurs, then the individual concerned will immediately have their membership terminated and the stated disciplinary process will be negated. (For examples of Gross Misconduct see Disciplinary Policy 3.4.)

### 5.3. Right of Appeal

If exclusion or termination of membership happens, there is a right of appeal, and this must be lodged within 7 days in writing, and it will then be considered by the Committee. The individual has the right to make a personal representation with a friend to the Committee when it is discussed. A final decision will be communicated to the individual by letter.