

**Deafblind Scotland vision – “A society in which deafblind people have the permanent support and recognition necessary to be equal citizens”**



## **Deafblind Scotland Policy on Harassment and Bullying at Work**

What do we mean by bullying and harassment?

Bullying and Harassment, for practical purposes, will be defined by those making the complaint. Typically the complaint will note that something has happened to them that is unwelcome, unwarranted, and causes a detrimental effect. Bullying and harassment may further be defined as being offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting, an abuse or a misuse of power intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient. It may be related to age, sex, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, sexual orientation or any personal characteristic of the individual. It may be persistent, or an isolated incident.

### **Policy Statement**

Deafblind Scotland is working to create an environment, which promotes equal opportunities, seeks the health, safety and welfare of all its staff and services users and acknowledge dignity and respect for each individual. Within this environment there is no place for harassment or bullying behaviour. Harassment and bullying are unlawful and are incompatible with this aim and will not be tolerated within Deafblind Scotland.

Deafblind Scotland encourages employees to come forward, confident that if a complaint of harassment is brought to the attention of the organisation, this will be treated seriously and in confidence, with prompt corrective action being taken. Harassment and bullying behaviours will not be tolerated and where these have demonstrated, disciplinary procedures against the harasser may be instigated.

### **Investigating Allegations of bullying and harassment**

When a complaint of Bullying and/or Harassment is received, Deafblind Scotland will appoint an appropriate member of the Executive Team to investigate the complaint. This investigation will be conducted in line with Deafblind Scotland's Grievance Procedures. Paramount in this process is the requirement to respect the confidentiality of the claimant.

At each stage, the complainant and the alleged harasser, can be accompanied by a work colleague, or another person.

Deafblind Scotland recognises the need to protect the rights of all its employees. Any employee bringing a complaint of harassment will be given guidance, support and protection from victimisation, in addition to access to counselling, if required.

## **Outcomes of the Investigation**

Outcomes from any Investigation will vary depending on the circumstances of the alleged harassment. They range, in general, from No Action, to Mediation, Counselling, and Disciplinary Procedures through to dismissal where the bullying and harassment amounts to gross misconduct.

## **Rights and responsibilities**

Deafblind Scotland employees have the following rights:

- to be treated with respect and dignity at work by all colleagues and managers.
- to expect that Deafblind Scotland will investigate and pursue complaints of harassment or bullying, where these occur.
- to have their wishes respected regarding the pursuit of informal or formal procedures in dealing with harassment complaints.

In order to make this policy, all Deafblind Scotland employees have the following responsibilities:

- to maintain appropriate standards of their own behaviour and performance
- to have awareness of their own role in preventing situations which cause offence to their colleagues
- to co-operate constructively with any investigation into alleged harassment

# Deafblind Scotland Procedure for Reporting Harassment or Bullying at Work

