

# Dignity at Warwick

**Sandy Sparks**

**sandy.sparks@warwick.ac.uk**

**LDC, Research Active Staff & Vitae Hub co-ordinator**

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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WARWICK**

# Outline of session

- Dignity at Warwick Policy
- The 'dignity' meeting
  - Signposting & resources
  - Useful skills
  - Practical case study examples

# Aims of the Policy

- Ensure the dignity of all at the University
- Ensure that differences are respected and valued
- Demonstrate our commitment to equality and diversity
- Set out the responsibilities of individual members of the University community in preventing harassment and bullying
- Outline the procedures to be followed if harassment or bullying occurs

## **My Rights**

- *To be treated with dignity and respect*
- *To be treated fairly and without discrimination*
- *To be consulted on decisions which affect me personally*
- *To be able to hold personal views*
- *To be able to raise concerns*

## **My Responsibilities**

- *To treat others with dignity and respect*
- *To challenge or report inappropriate behaviour*
- *To recognise the needs of others/the University*
- *To be mindful of others when expressing my views*
- *To respect the authority and reasonable decisions of others*

# Equality & Diversity Statement

“The University of Warwick, recognizing the value of sustaining and advancing a safe and welcoming learning environment, strives to treat both employees and students with dignity and respect, to treat them fairly with regards to all assessments, choices and procedures, and to give them encouragement to reach their full potential. The University aims to eliminate unjustifiable discrimination on the grounds of gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, religious beliefs or practices, disability, marital status, family circumstances, age, spent criminal convictions or any other personal protected characteristics.”

# Harassment & Bullying

The University regards all forms of harassment and bullying as unacceptable.

Harassment will amount to discrimination if it relates to a relevant, protected, personal characteristic, specifically gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, religious beliefs or practices, disability, marital status, family circumstances, age, spent criminal convictions or any other personal protected characteristics.”

Discrimination may also occur where a person engages in unwanted conduct towards another because she/he perceives the recipient has, or is associated with someone who has, a relevant, protected characteristic

Report to relevant manager.

Persistent behaviour or single serious occurrence.

# Bullying

Bullying is a form of harassment and can be defined as offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable.

Bullying can undermine an individual's self-confidence, competence and self-esteem. Bullying can be an abuse or misuse of power which undermines or humiliates the recipient. There may be an overlap between harassment and bullying.

# Examples of unacceptable behaviours include

- unnecessary or unwanted physical contact
- demeaning comments about a person's appearance
- compromising and unwanted sexual invitations or demands
- racial harassment – including racist jokes or graffiti
- displaying material which is likely to cause offence to others
- verbal or written abuse including non-communication and deliberate and/or inappropriate exclusion from social events or day to day activities
- derogatory name-calling and insults
- threats of a physical or psychological nature
- victimisation because of someone's gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or other beliefs, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership
- bullying behaviour or language that causes fear or distress to others
- abuse of power by someone in authority



## Examples of unacceptable behaviours continued

- incitement of others to commit harassment
- cyber bullying for example by email or the use of social networking sites to post derogatory messages or distribute confidential information about someone
- inappropriate and derogatory remarks made in connection with performance
- the use of inappropriate literature, pictures, books or tapes to bully or harass others
- unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual or racial nature, or about an individual's age, disability, sexual orientation or religion
- excluding an individual because she/he is associated or connected with someone with a protected characteristic, e.g. her/his child is gay, partner is black or parent is disabled.
- ignoring an individual because she/he is perceived to have a protected characteristic when she/he does not, in fact, have the protected characteristic
- spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- picking on someone or demonstrably setting them up to fail
- fostering isolation or non-cooperation at work

# Cyber Bullying & Use of Social Networking sites

Guidance (relevant for both staff & students in relation to online behaviour)

- avoid using language which would be deemed to be offensive, threatening or humiliating to others in a face-to-face setting as the impact on an individual may be much the same or worse as it may not be possible to delete online information
- avoid forming or joining an online group that isolates or victimises fellow students or colleagues
- ensure that you never use social networking sites to access or share illegal content
- avoid defamatory comments in relation to employees, students, customers or suppliers of the University
- do not share confidential information regarding a University employee, student, customer or supplier

# Sources of advice & support / help

## Staff

University Counselling Service - ext 02476 523761 or

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/tutors/counselling/staffcounselling/appointments/>

Health Centre - ext 02476 524888

Samaritans - 08457 90 90 90 (open 24 hours)

Coventry Citizens Advice Bureau – 02476 223284

College and University Support Network - <http://www.ucu.org.uk/recourse>

Equality and Human Rights Commission – [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com) or 0808 800 0082  
/ Text phone 0808 800 0084 or [www.equalityadvisorysupportservice.com](http://www.equalityadvisorysupportservice.com)

National Bullying Helpline - <http://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/contact.htm>

# Sources of advice & support / help

## Students

Student Support Services - Counselling Service, telephone 02476 523671 or extension 23761

The Student Advice Centre, telephone 02476 572824 or extension 72824

Welfare Officer (Students' Union sabbatical officer), telephone 02476 572778 or extension 72778

Nightline (note though that Nightline is a listening service and will not offer advice), 9pm-9am, telephone 02476 417688 or extension 22199

Chaplaincy, telephone 02476 523519 or extension 23519

University Senior Tutor 02476 522761

# Flow process

# Questions:

- What is the role of a dignity contact?
- If an individual believes they are being bullied or harassed, what should they do?
- What informal options can a member of staff consider to address B&H?
- If an individual decides to make a formal complaint of B&H, what information should they include in the letter of complaint?
- What is cyber bullying and is this covered by the Dignity at Warwick policy?

# Skills

- Confidentiality
- Support role
- Questions
- Listening
- Feedback

- Summarize
- Paraphrase
- Reflect back
- 'Exact' words
- Plain English
- Tone
- Environment



# Practical examples

## Scenario

A member of staff in the office regularly comments that another colleague takes too much time for their lunchbreak. They do so even though they have no line management responsibility for the colleague, and within the hearing of other team members.

# Practical examples

## Scenario

A student's parent phones and wishes to discuss their child's situation. You explain that you cannot do this without express permission from the student. You then begin, over a short period of time, to receive phone calls from various other sections of the University e.g. Student Support, the student's department, Security, the Registrar's Office all in response to calls from the same parent.

# Practical examples

## Scenario

An experienced staff member who has been in post for a substantial period feels uncomfortable with some proposed process changes, even though it has been identified that there would be significant benefits to applicants and team alike. Most other team members are happy to adapt to the change and are scornful of the concern expressed by their colleague. At the annual review of the staff member s/he suggests that s/he feels ostracised in team meetings and colleagues no longer wish to spend time with him/her at lunch, etc.

# Summary

- Dignity at Warwick Policy
- The 'dignity' meeting
  - Useful skills
  - Signposting & resources
  - Practical case study examples

# References / Resources:

Dignity at Warwick for Staff and Students – April 2014