

BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYMENT

COSRT considers itself an equal opportunity employer. This means:

- It will not discriminate in any aspect of recruitment or employment on the basis of sexual orientation, gender (including gender reassignment), marital status, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, religious or philosophic belief, age, pregnancy, maternity or disability.
- COSRT recognises the positive benefits of a diverse society, and will make positive efforts to ensure that differing cultural, ethnic and religious perspectives inform its work and its relationship with its employees.
- All employees have an important role to play in implementing this Policy and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes equal opportunity.
- COSRT will review on an annual basis its equal opportunity Policy to ensure it is working in practice.
- The Equality Act 2010 outlines the rules which apply to equal opportunities in the workplace.

The College takes very seriously any act of discrimination and will consider this to be a disciplinary offence under the disciplinary procedure.

VICTIMISATION

Victimisation occurs where an individual is treated badly because he or she has made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint. We are committed to ensuring that all our employees and applicants for employment are free from any form of victimisation.

PROCEDURES

The College will not tolerate harassment or bullying. We aim to provide a working environment in which such practices are known to be unacceptable and where individuals have the confidence to complain when it arises, in the knowledge that their concerns will be dealt with appropriately and fairly.

It is the responsibility of all employees to be aware of, and understand, the College's policy on bullying and harassment.

Harassment and bullying are disciplinary offences. We will ensure that no employee will be victimised as a result of raising a concern under this Policy.

DEFINITIONS OF HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

Harassment or bullying is defined as unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating the individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It may consist of a single incident or a series of incidents. Behaviour which may appear trivial as a single incident, can constitute harassment or bullying when repeated. It may not always be intended, but it is always unacceptable.

Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. It also applies to those employees who find behaviour offensive even when it is not directed at them and the complainant does not need to possess the relevant characteristic themselves. Employees are also protected against harassment because of perception and association.

The College will not tolerate harassment of any kind and takes complaints of this nature very seriously.

The most prevalent forms of harassment or bullying are as follows:

- Sexual harassment.
- Racial harassment.
- Harassment of individuals with a disability.
- Harassment on the grounds of a person's sexuality.

The above list is not exhaustive and harassment can also take place on the basis of a person's age, religion or any other discriminatory grounds. Examples would include:

- sexual or racial banter;
- the display of material with sexual or racial overtones (even if not directed at the complainant);
- mistaken assumptions about the capabilities of people with disabilities;
- offensive comments relating to an individual's sexuality;
- sarcastic or derogatory remarks about colleagues, or constant criticism especially of those reporting to you.

REDRESS

Anyone who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment, bullying and/or discrimination should raise the matter through appropriate management channels.



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