

Soar Sound Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy

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1 Document Information

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Author: Rob Watson (Organisation Development for Soar Sound)

Soar Sound's Safeguarding Officer:

Policy Validity Statement: Policy users should ensure that they are consulting the currently valid version of the documentation. This document will be reviewed one year from its issue date.

Approval: The policy will remain valid, including during its period of review. However, the policy must be reviewed next year and afterwards at least once in every three-year period.

2 Introduction

This policy sets out how Soar Sound will fulfil its statutory duties and responsibilities effectively, both within its own organisation, and for the affiliated groups and members that help with Soar Sound's not-for-profit vision and public purpose objectives.

2.1 Vision

Soar Sound seeks to provide broadcast radio and other online and legacy media services that are not for private gain, with any surplus or assets used principally for the benefit of the community.

2.2 Objects

The objects of the Company are to carry on activities which benefit the community and in particular (without limitation) to carry out radio broadcast and media production services that will benefit communities resident in Leicester and Leicestershire, and in particular, and without limitation, with a focus on public education, wellbeing, mental health, economic development and employment.

Soar Sound supports all services, projects and activities that meet our not-for-profit objectives, as above, through offering publicity in our Soar Sound radio service and other media services.

3 What is Harassment?

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic (within the Equality Act 2010) which has the effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature, or it may be related to age, race, colour or nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity.

Harassment can arise in some cases even though the person actually complaining does not possess a protected characteristic but is perceived to wrongly perceived to be associated with other people who possess a protected characteristic (e.g. because they have a wife who is Muslim).

A person may also be subjected to harassment even if they were not the intended target. For example, a person may be harassed by a sexist joke if it creates an offensive environment for them to work in.

3.1 Examples of Harassment

These include, but are not limited to:

- a. Use of insults or slurs based on a protected characteristic or of a sexual nature or other verbal abuse or derogatory, offensive, or stereotyping jokes or remarks.
- b. Physical or verbal abuse threatening or intimidating behaviour because of a protected characteristic or behaviour of a sexual nature.
- c. Unwelcome physical contact including touching, hugging, kissing, pinching, or patting, brushing past, invading personal space, pushing, grabbing or other assaults.
- d. Mocking, mimicking, or belittling a person's disability, appearance, accent or other personal characteristics.
- e. Offensive or intimidating gestures or comments (regardless of if they were made in person, over emails, text messages or in social media content):
- f. Unwelcome requests for sexual acts or favours, verbal sexual advances, vulgar, sexual suggestive or explicit comments or behaviour.
- g. Repeated requests, either explicitly or implicitly, for dates.

- h. Repeated requests for social contact, or after it has been made clear that requests are unwelcome.
- i. Comments about body parts or sexual preference.
- j. Displaying or distributing offensive or explicit pictures, items or materials relating to a protected characteristic or of a sexual nature.
- k. Shunning or ostracising someone, for example by deliberately excluding them from conversations or activities.
- l. 'Outing' or threatening to 'out' someone's sexual orientation (i.e. to make it known).
- m. Explicit or implicit suggestions that employment status or progression is related to toleration of or acquiescence to sexual advances or other behaviour amounting to harassment.
- n. Racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist jokes, and stereotypical remarks about a particular ethnic or religious group or gender.
- o. The display of posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags, and emblems.

3.2 Other Important Points to Note About Harassment

- A single incident can amount to harassment.
- Behaviour that has continued for a long period without complaint can amount to harassment.
- It is not necessary for an individual to intend to harass someone for their behaviour to amount to harassment.
- It is not necessary for an individual to communicate that behaviour is unwelcome before it amounts to harassment.
- The burden is on each individual to be certain that their behaviour and conduct is appropriate and is not unwanted, and in the case of doubt, you must refrain from such conduct.

3.3 What is Victimisation?

- Victimisation occurs when a member of staff is subjected to detrimental treatment because they have, in good faith, made an allegation of harassment, or has indicated an intention to make such an allegation, or has assisted or supported another person in bringing forward such an allegation, or participated in an investigation of a complaint, or participated in any disciplinary hearing arising from an investigation.

- We seek to protect all directors and staff, etc. from victimisation arising as a result of bringing a complaint or assisting in an investigation where they act in good faith.

Victimisation is a form of misconduct which may itself result in a disciplinary process.

3.4 What is Bullying?

Bullying is any behaviour, be it physical, verbal or non-verbal, that is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting and that involves a misuse of power (e.g. a position of authority or physical strength), which can result in a person feeling vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

- Unfair treatment.
- Inappropriate and/or derogatory remarks about a person's performance.
- Physical or psychological threats.
- Overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision.
- Abuse of authority or power by those in positions of seniority.
- Constantly changing targets in order to cause someone to fail.
- Making false allegations.
- Deliberately excluding someone from meetings or communications without good reason.

On their own, any reasonable legitimate and constructive criticism or comments of a person's performance or behaviour or reasonable instructions given in the course of employment will not amount to bullying.

3.5 What if You Are Being Bullied or Harassed?

- If you are being bullied or harassed, consider what you feel about raising the problem informally with the person responsible.
- Clearly explain to them that their behaviour is unwanted and makes you feel uncomfortable.
- If you cannot speak to the responsible person (for example because it is too difficult or embarrassing) speak to your line manager or the Employer's HR Department, who can provide confidential advice and assistance in resolving the issue formally or informally.

- If you are uncertain whether an incident or series of incidents amounts to bullying or harassment, contact your line manager or HR Department for confidential advice.
- If your request is ignored and the bullying or harassment continues and/or you would prefer to take formal action, you should raise the matter formally.
- Your complaint will be investigated in a confidential and timely manner, by someone with appropriate experience and no prior involvement in the complaint, where possible.
- Details of the investigation, including the name of the person accused of bullying or harassment and the person making the complaint, will be disclosed on a 'need to know' basis.
- We will also consider if any steps are necessary to manage the ongoing relationship and the person accused of bullying or harassment.
- When the investigation is completed, you will be informed of the Board of Directors' decision.
- If we consider that you have been bullied or harassed by a director, we will deal with the matter.
- If you have been bullied or harassed by a third party, such as a customer or visitor, we will consider what actions will be appropriate to deal with the problem.
- If you are unhappy with the decision, you can raise an appeal.
- Regardless of whether your complaint is upheld, we will consider how best to manage any ongoing working relationship between you and the person concerned.

3.6 Supporting and Protecting Those Involved

Directors or staff who make complaints or who participate in good faith in any investigation under this Policy must not suffer any form of victimisation or retaliation as a result. If you believe to have suffered such treatment, speak to an appropriate person. If the matter is not resolved or remedied, raise it formally where appropriate.

Anyone found to have victimised or retaliated against someone will be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure.

If an investigation under this Policy concludes that a malicious or false claim of bullying or harassment has been made, the complainant may be subject to disciplinary action.

3.7 Keeping Records

Information regarding any complaints made by or about a member of staff may be recorded on their personnel file, along with a record of the outcome and of any notes or other documents compiled during the process. Such data will be processed in accordance with Soar Sound Data Protection Policy.

This Anti-Harassment and Bully Policy was created using a document from Rocket Lawyer
<https://www.rocketlawyer.com/gb/en>

4 Monitoring and Review

Soar Sound will monitor and evaluate the information that is appropriately collected in relation to the prevention of bullying and harassment duties, and will make periodic reports to the Director Board, making recommendations for improvements and changes to the Soar Sound's activities and communications.

Signed: Rob Watson

Position: Organisation Development Director

Date: 9th March 2024

Review Date: 5th March 2025

Soar Sound