



**AJ'S TRAINING
HARASSMENT & BULLYING POLICY &
PROCEDURE
JANUARY 2024**

You have the right to be safe from harm. No one deserves to be bullied and there are things that can be done to help you.

If you feel like you are being bullied at AJ's Training, out with friends or at home.

Please seek help from us by:

- Inform Sydonie Cartlidge - the Designated Safeguarding Officer on 07950 951633 or sydonie@ajstraining.co.uk
- Inform any member of staff at AJ's Training
 - Tell an adult you can trust

Alternatively, there are organisations you can call for help

- Call Childline 0808 800 2222
- Call Bullying UK 0800 1111
- Call Act on it 0300 123 5101



1. Introduction

AJ's Training is committed to ensuring that all learners can study and be part of the training environment free from any form of harassment or bullying. AJ's Training will not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment and will take firm and decisive action to protect learners from harm.

Harassment or bullying can be due to a lack of understanding or intolerance of difference" whether that is based on appearance or manner or wider issues such as sexuality, race or gender. In this respect this policy is part of AJ's Training commitment to Equality and Diversity to ensure students are free from discrimination.

We expect that all students will treat each other and AJ's Training staff with courtesy and respect and this is laid out in Apprentice code of conduct. Our centre recognises its responsibility to ensure that all learners are clear about expectations of behaviour and the consequences for not meeting these standards.

AJ's Training also has the responsibility to take positive steps to create and maintain an atmosphere and environment where students can feel safe, welcome and where they have a voice.

Harassment, Bullying and Sexual Misconduct will not be tolerated. All members of AJ's Training must treat each other with respect and there must be a clear understanding of the types of behaviour which are inappropriate and unacceptable. AJ's Training will support and assist the victim of any harassment or assault.

2. Aims of the Policy

This policy outlines behaviour that would be considered inappropriate or unacceptable and details the procedures that should be followed when an allegation or suspicion of bullying or harassment is made.

It is the policy of AJ's Training that:

- It is the responsibility of all students and staff to create and support a learning environment free from harassment, threat or intimidation
- Bullying or harassment will not be tolerated at any workplace or Centre, and any reports or allegations will be treated seriously and dealt with according to the procedures
- Students will be actively encouraged to report incidents and so must be supported and protected through the process of making any complaint
- All students, employers and staff will be made aware of this policy and procedures and are that they should be pro-active and vigilant for signs that may indicate bullying or harassment is going on.



- Harassment and bullying are part of the Expectations of Behaviour; breach of these expectations can result in disciplinary action as potentially gross misconduct
- Bullies will be supported to change their attitude and behaviour and to understand why change is necessary and why bullying occurs.
- Staff will be supported with the appropriate training and skills to deal with incidents of bullying.
- There will be in place strategies and preventative measures to minimise or prevent incidents of bullying arising
- Incidents and perceptions of bullying or harassment will be monitored and recorded and the information used in future reviews of policy.

3. What learners can expect from AJ's Training

Support them in reporting incidents of harassment or sexual misconduct

AJ's Training will ensure appropriate information and assistance is available to support a student in deciding what steps to take following an incident of harassment or sexual misconduct.

Treat harassment or sexual misconduct seriously should the complaint not be a criminal matter, or the student does not wish to involve the police

AJ's Training procedures on harassment and sexual misconduct allow for complaints concerning harassment and the behaviour any learner or staff at AJ's to be addressed in a robust and fair manner and AJ's Training will ensure anyone raising a concern is not victimised or disadvantaged as a result.

Provide personal support

Everyone is likely to react differently to an assault. AJ's Training will endeavour to ensure a student has access to welfare provision and support, which is appropriate to their needs. Support may be required in the short-term or for a longer period. Steps may need to be taken relating to academic or employment arrangements to ensure the student feels safe and can continue to study and participate in their course.

Respect confidentiality

Whenever possible, AJ's Training will respect the confidentiality of someone reporting harassment or sexual misconduct. However, AJ's Training has a wider duty of care and if it considers that anyone may be at risk of further harm, it may need to report a crime to the police.

Promote a culture of zero tolerance of harassment and sexual misconduct



4. Definition of bullying

Bullying often includes the following:

- Power – misuse or abuse of power
- Persistence – repetitive behaviour, not just an “outburst”
- Peers – group behaviour is often different from individual behaviour
- Purpose – to maintain the dominance, bullies bully as it’s a successful behaviour Behaviour
- Perception – some people will find it harder/easier to cope with certain types of behaviour and there are varying degrees of what people consider to be bullying

The following are examples of bullying, but this is not an exhaustive list.

- Physical abuse such as hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, and pinching.
- Verbal abuse such as name calling, teasing, making nasty remarks, laughing at someone or mocking them.
- Making someone feel uncomfortable or unhappy.
- Overpowering someone or making them feel weak.
- Being attacked in any form due to religion, race, gender, sexuality, disability or appearance (see harassment)
- Excluding someone from social groups.
- Cyber abuse such as sending inappropriate or abusive text messages or emails.
- Being forced to do something they don’t want to do.

Staff and students must remember that bullying is a type of behaviour, and it is therefore important to separate the behaviour from the individual.

5. Definition of Harassment

AJ’s Training defines harassment as single or repeated incidents involving unwanted or unwarranted conduct towards another person which it is reasonable to think would have the effect of (i) violating that other’s dignity or (ii) creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that other.



Harassment may be repetitive or an isolated incident against a group or individual. Harassment may occur against an individual because of their disability, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or any personal characteristic of the individual.

This can include:

- Threats, physical or verbal abuse against a person
- Jokes, mockery, unwarranted remarks, graffiti or innuendo which offends people
- Provocative behaviour such as the wearing of badges, clothing or insignia which may offend
- Display or circulation (including by email or text) of offensive materials
- The use of stereotypes to demean or discriminatory statements

6. Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is the intentional, persistent behaviour by an individual or group, causing harm to others using information and communication technologies. Aspects of cyber bullying are different from other forms of bullying. These include:

- Cyber bullying can take place at any time of the day or night
- Cyber bullying is not restricted by locality and intrudes into personal and safe spaces (like home)
- The audience can be extremely large
- The process of cyber bullying can be rapid with audiences being reached almost instantly
- In some instances of cyber bullying, the bully can remain anonymous
- The instances of bullying can be used as evidence as there is lasting documentation

7. Procedures

Students must be encouraged to feel they can confide in members of staff if an incident occurs. They must feel the incident will be taken seriously and that appropriate action will be carried out. Staff and employers should be alert for signs and symptoms of bullying and be prepared to act upon them.

It may not always be appropriate for the procedures to be followed in sequential order, for example a serious incident may go directly to a formal report or disciplinary. The points below provide a guideline on the procedure for students to follow if they are being bullied or harassed.



First Action

1. If possible ask the person bullying or harassing to stop. Say that the actions or comments are making you feel uncomfortable or unhappy
2. Try to keep a log of incidents with details of who was present, what was said or happened and where.

Reporting

1. Report the bullying and harassment to a member of staff. This can be a tutor, safeguarding lead or any member of staff. Give as much detail as you can of specific incidents.

Investigation

1. A member of staff will conduct an enquiry. This will likely be the Safeguarding Lead. This will involve talking to all concerned including staff and other students who may be witnesses. We will also inform the apprentices employers.

There will be a written record of these interviews.

2. Parents of students under 18 will be informed if the incident was explicit and with the consent of the student.

Outcome

Action taken will depend on the nature of the incident, the reactions of those accused and the wishes of the victims. This will range through:

- a) Talking through the incident and obtaining assurance that repetition will not occur.
- b) Monitoring the student who has been bullying.
- c) Formal disciplinary hearing leading to a formal warning
- d) Suspension
- e) Permanent exclusion from the course.

It must be recognised that the investigation of bullying or harassment is not a simple process as much will depend on very different interpretations of intent, consequence and the nature of relationships. Also there will often not be a clean outcome which stops



any further bullying or harassment. Incidents can continue resurfacing for months. However it is important that any incidents are acknowledged and investigated and that there is seen to be firm and decisive action in order to maintain the confidence and trust of students.

8. Strategies to reduce bullying or harassment

In order to ensure that students can study in an environment free from bullying or harassment, it is the responsibility of AJ's Training to ensure that clear strategies are in place both to prevent occurrences of bullying and harassment and also to encourage students to report incidents. These strategies include:

- All students will be made aware at Induction of the student code of conduct, their rights and responsibilities and the appropriate college policies (equal opportunities, disciplinary, complaints etc)
- Information on bullying and harassment and how to respond will be included in student handbooks
- All lecturers will keep control of potential harassment or bullying of other students through enforcement of clear standards of classroom behaviour

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

It is important that AJ's Training understands the extent to which bullying and harassment are taking place and the impact on students. To achieve this

All incidents of bullying, whether reported or suspected must be recorded

Questions on how students feel about their own level of safety and exposure to incidents of bullying and harassment will be included in Surveys

10. STUDENT GUIDANCE & PROCEDURE:

Seeking advice, guidance, and support

Definitions of harassment and sexual misconduct are included above.

If you believe you have been harassed or been the subject of sexual misconduct, you may need emotional support and advice to talk through your experiences, you may want advice on how to address and prevent the behaviour or you may want to know how to take up a formal complaint. You can also report any incident of harassment, bullying or sexual misconduct to your assessor or Safeguarding Lead.



If you decide to seek an alternative resolution or would like to raise a complaint with AJ's, you should speak to your assessor or the Safeguarding Lead. They will advise you on the procedures available to you.

Seeking alternative resolutions

Direct approach

In some cases, relating to some forms of harassment or unacceptable behaviour, students who are unhappy with the behaviour of another student may want to try to resolve the matter themselves directly with the other student. If seeking resolution in this way, a student is advised to seek support (on a confidential basis) from their Tutor, the Senior Tutor, or another staff member, either to help them work out what to say or to accompany them when they meet the person about whom they are complaining.

Because of the possibility of counteraccusation or recrimination, all students are advised to alert a supporting person, such as a Tutor, to the problem before approaching the person concerned, even if they feel able to act on their own.

Students making a direct approach are advised to:

- describe the behaviour very precisely, including where and when it happened.
- make it clear how they feel about what has happened.
- describe the effect it is having on them.
- say precisely what they want to happen going forward.

Mediated approach

If a direct approach has been tried and has not worked, or if a student does not wish to make such an approach, the Tutor or Safeguarding lead may be able to seek to resolve the problem on their behalf.

AJ's Training might also propose that both parties agree to cooperate with an independent mediator.

If an attempt at an alternative resolution has not resolved the issue to the satisfaction of the student making a complaint, they can raise a formal complaint to AJ's Training there is no requirement to attempt an alternative resolution before a formal complaint is raised; students may move to a formal complaint immediately if they wish.

Student on student: raising a formal complaint



This is a summary of the procedure relating to student harassment and sexual misconduct. It is intended to help students understand the process of making a formal complaint about another student at AJ's Training. If you decide to make a formal complaint, you should read the procedure in full.

Procedures concerning other students or staff are noted below.

Purpose of the procedure

An important feature of the procedure on student harassment and sexual misconduct is that it seeks, where possible, to achieve a fair and mutually acceptable resolution between a student complaining of harassment and a student who is accused of harassment.

Acceptance of a resolution will not require the student who is the subject of the complaint to admit liability nor imply the AJ's Training has made a finding of wrongdoing. In this sense, the procedure is distinct from the AJ's Training's student disciplinary procedure, although referral to the disciplinary procedure may be an outcome of an investigation from the student harassment and sexual misconduct procedure.

Pastoral support

AJ's Training will provide pastoral support, as desired, to any AJ's Training student involved in the procedure, whether as a student making a complaint or as a student who is the subject of a complaint.

How to make a complaint

- Bring your complaint to the Safeguarding Lead – Sydonie Cartlidge
- Fill in a welfare concern form

Student on student complaints: summary guide AJ's Training procedure.

A detailed procedure is appended. The summary below is intended to guide you.

At all stages of the formal procedure, decisions will be taken by people who are trained to make those decisions. In deciding what, if any, action to take, AJ's Training will need to consider a variety of relevant factors, including for example: the evidence that is available to support an allegation; any admission of responsibility by the person against whom the complaint has been made; the limitations of AJ's Training's internal



procedure in terms of obtaining and assessing evidence; and the need to safeguard the rights of both parties.

Bringing a complaint under AJ's Training's procedure does not prevent the student from reporting the matter to the police at any time. If the matter is being dealt with under the criminal process, AJ's Training will suspend any action under its procedure but may take precautionary action to ensure that a full and proper investigation can be carried out and/or to protect the student who is making the complaint, the student who is the subject of the complaint or others while the matter is being dealt with. Any precautionary measures are not intended to be punitive and do not make any assumptions or judgements about the merits of the complaint.

Raising a complaint

Students making a complaint should write to the Apprenticeship Manager, setting out details of the events that form the basis of the complaint, together with any evidence and, if appropriate, information on any attempts that have been made to resolve the matter informally.

The Apprenticeship manager will consider the complaint and decide:

- to refer it to an investigation.
- to request the student seeks an alternative resolution on the matter (with the support of the AJ's Training).

The student making the complaint will normally be told the outcome of this initial consideration within 10 working days of submitting their complaint.

The investigation

If the case is referred for investigation, an investigator will be appointed by Sydonie Cartlidge.

The investigation will try to establish as many undisputed facts about what happened as possible. The investigation will be conducted fairly and objectively.

If the parties are willing, the investigator will meet with both students separately and may also meet any witnesses to the events that are the subject of the complaint. The investigator will then write a report and recommend a course of action.



Both the student making the complaint, and the student who is the subject of the complaint, may be accompanied during the investigation by a supported, should they wish.

In some cases, after discussions with the investigator, both parties may agree that alternative resolutions should be explored through mediation.

Outcome of the investigation

Following the investigation, the report and any recommendation will be considered by Sydonie Cartlidge who may decide that:

- with the agreement of both the student making the complaint and the student who is the subject of the complaint, the parties should seek to resolve the matter through mediation; or
- resolutions should be proposed; or
- the case should be referred for consideration under AJ's Training's disciplinary procedure or under the disciplinary procedure; or
- the complaint should be dismissed.

Acceptance of a resolution will not require the student who is the subject of the complaint to admit liability nor imply the AJ's Training has made a finding of wrongdoing.

Resolutions

Resolutions might include asking the student who is the subject of the complaint to abide by a conduct agreement. This might stipulate that the student who is the subject of the complaint will refrain from contact with the student making the complaint, either indefinitely or for a specified period in the first instance. It might be necessary for the student who is the subject of the complaint to move rooms. The student who is the subject of the complaint may also be asked to agree to intermit or to attend behaviour awareness training.

Disciplinary proceedings

A complaint under the AJ's Training's formal procedure may lead to disciplinary proceedings under the AJ's Training's disciplinary procedure; this may be by the student themselves or by other in AJ's Training. If the latter, the student making the complaint will be kept informed of the progress of the proceedings and will be formally notified of the outcome of any disciplinary hearing and any sanctions applied to the student who is the subject of the complaint that have any impact on the student making the complaint.



Dismissal and mediation

If the complaint is dismissed, the student making the complaint and the student who is the subject of the complaint will be offered help and guidance to restore reasonable relations between them. This process might include mediation.

Record keeping

A record of conduct agreement will be retained by the AJ's Training and may be considered if a further complaint is made against the student who is the subject of the complaint under this procedure, whether that subsequent complaint is made by the original student making the complaint or another.

Review

If the student making the complaint or the student who is the subject of the complaint feels dissatisfied with a decision made using this procedure, they have the right to ask for a review of the decision.