

ANTI BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

The Society is firmly committed to ensuring an inclusive environment in all areas of its work and will not tolerate harassment, bullying or victimisation in any form. This policy is designed to promote the development of an environment where both individuals and groups feel confident and are treated fairly with dignity and respect, regardless of protected characteristics included in the Equality Act 2010 or aspects of diversity not currently covered by the Act (e.g. socio-economic status).

The aim of this policy is to support and protect all Biochemical Society Staff, Trustees, Members and non-members in their interaction with the Society.

The Society is committed to creating an environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. All harassment is unlawful discrimination and may be a criminal offence.

Although there is no legal definition of **Bullying**, it can be described **as** unwanted behaviour from a person or group that is either offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and/or an abuse or misuse of power that is meant to undermine, humiliates or causes physical or emotional harm the person on the receiving end.

The bullying might:

- be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident
- happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or calls
- happen at work or in other work-related situations
- not always be obvious or noticed by others
- as well as actions perceived as microaggressions

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to relevant protected characteristics, which are sex, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age, that:

- a) has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person; or
- b) is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating his/her dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him/her, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

By law, being 'discriminated against' is when you're treated unfairly because of any of the following, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

These are known as 'protected characteristics. It's against the law for anyone to treat you unfairly because of any of them.

It is important to note that conduct may be considered harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend. Something intended as a "joke" may offend another person.

It may not be so clear in advance that some other forms of behaviour would be unwelcome to, or could offend, a particular person, e.g., certain "banter", flirting or asking someone for a

private drink. In these cases, first-time conduct that unintentionally causes offence will not be harassment, but it will become harassment if the conduct continues irrespective of whether the recipient has made it clear, by words or conduct, that such behaviour is unacceptable to them. A single incident can be harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

To whom does this policy apply?

The expectations around bullying and harassment apply to all individuals and organisations associated with the Biochemical Society and Portland Press Limited. This includes:

- Trustees who sit on our panels and committees
- Members of the Society
- Non-executive Directors
- Speakers, delegates and Sponsors of events
- Those in receipt of grants, support or mentoring programmes
- Staff based within the Society

Your Responsibilities

Every member is required to assist the Society in meeting its commitment to provide equal opportunities in interactions and avoid unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation. All members, delegates and speakers can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the Society for any act of unlawful discrimination. Individuals who commit serious acts of harassment should be reported to EDI@Biochemistry.org for investigation.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against others may result in action being taken by the Society and possible referral to the individuals' institution for further investigation to determine the potential outcome. Action by the Society will take into account the position the accused person holds within the Society, in some cases this will be considered by the President and Chair of the Society.

Dealing with discrimination, victimisation and harassment

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you are encouraged to make a complaint through EDI@Biochemistry.org. The Society will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any concerns raised.

You have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint in good faith, even if the complaint is not upheld. However, making a complaint that you know to be untrue may lead to action being taken against you. If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, please contact a member of staff immediately.