

POLICY TITLE: Preventing Bullying

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to state the commitment of Photography Studies College (Melbourne) to an educational and employment environment that is free from bullying, and to outline the methods for resolving complaints of that nature. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the *Access, Equity and Anti-Discrimination Policy* and *Responding to Workplace Sexual Assault and Harassment Policy*.

Policy

Photography Studies College (Melbourne) aims to:

1. Create an environment which is free from bullying where all staff members, contractors, service providers, customers, visitors and students are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect;
2. Provide an effective procedure for resolving complaints based on the principles of natural justice;
3. Promote appropriate and high standards of conduct at all times.

What is bullying?

Bullying is repeated unreasonable behaviour directed towards an employee, student or contractor or group of employees, students or contractors that creates a risk to health and safety. Although one off incidents of unreasonable behaviour are unacceptable, and may be subject to investigation and remedial action, such conduct is not considered bullying. The behaviour must be evident on multiple occasions revealing persistent behaviour directed at another person or group of persons.

A broad range of behaviour can be bullying. Examples of bullying include:

- verbal abuse, shouting, mocking or putting someone down
- online abuse, threats and intimidation
- victimisation, spreading rumour or innuendo or malicious pranks
- Engaging in uncooperative and demanding behaviour between co-workers or fellow students

Bullying behaviour is not limited to persons in a position of authority. It includes employee to employee and student to student behaviour that fits the definition above.

Bullying may also occur indirectly or in more subtle forms including:

- unjustified criticism or complaints
- deliberately excluding someone from activities
- deliberately denying access to information or other resources
- withholding information that is vital for effective work or academic performance

What isn't Bullying?

Reasonable management action carried out in a reasonable and fair manner is not bullying. For example:

- rostering and allocating working hours
- deciding not to select an employee for promotion
- informing an employee about inappropriate behaviour
- performance management processes
- downsizing
- transferring an employee
- informing an employee about unsatisfactory work performance
- implementing organisational changes
- constructive feedback
- setting performance goals, standards and deadlines

A person may genuinely believe they are bullied however, the belief must be reasonable in the sense that it is able to be supported or justified on an objective basis.

Procedure

Complaints

Complaints of bullying will be addressed and resolved in accordance with the Photography Studies College (Melbourne) complaint resolution procedures outlined in the *Access, Equity and Discrimination Policy*.

Responsibilities

Manager/Supervisors are to ensure that staff members (including teaching and general staff), contractors and suppliers do not bully:

- Students
- Employees or prospective employees
- Contract workers
- Clients, customers or any other person in the course of providing services or participating in Photography Studies College (Melbourne) activities.

Manager/Supervisors are to ensure that staff, students and contractors do not engage in any act of victimisation of complainants and must not cause, instruct, induce or permit another person to commit an act of bullying.

It is the responsibility of each staff member, contractor, and student not to engage in any form of bullying.

In addition, staff members, contractors, and students must:

- Comply fully with this Policy;
- Respect the confidentiality all parties if they provide information during the investigation of a complaint.
- Cooperate with measures to implement this and related Policies
- Do not bully other staff, students and persons who participate in Photography Studies College (Melbourne) activities
- Not spread gossip, rumours or innuendo. Such behaviour in itself can lead to defamation action and is unfair.

Preventing and resolving bullying

As bullying is a health and safety issue Photography Studies College (Melbourne) applies a risk management approach to preventing and resolving bullying. Risk management of bullying will involve a staged prevention approach:

- a. Identifying bullying risks.
- b. Assessing the likelihood of those risks causing injury or illness.
- c. Implementing risk control measures to eliminate the risk/s (or where that's not reasonably practicable, reducing the risk so far as is reasonably practicable).
- d. Reviewing and improving the effectiveness of risk control measures over time.

Responsibility

Manager/Supervisors

Reports to Board

Yearly reporting on performance indicators, except for instances of litigation, which must be reported to Board immediately. Regular data report on complaints received and action taken to resolve if identified as an area of high risk.

Definitions

See section entitled "What is bullying?" and "What isn't bullying?"

Related Documentation

Policies

- Responding to Workplace Sexual Assault and Harassment
- Access Equity and Anti-Discrimination
- Recruitment
- Disability Access
- Workplace health and safety

Procedures Forms & Documents

Nil

Publishing Details

Policy number: HED/VET_HR005_v5.1

Status: Final

Approved: 25/11/2021

Review Date: June 2022

Julie Moss - Managing Director

Published: July 2019

Amended: 25 November 2021

