

UK Country FAQs - HR PROCEDURES - Reporting Harassment

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- **What are the most common examples of harassment recognized by the company?**

Examples of Harassment: Harassment takes many forms, from relatively mild sexual banter to actual physical violence. Employees may not always realise that their behaviour constitutes harassment; they must recognise that what is acceptable to one employee may not be acceptable to another. Some examples given are clearly examples of gross misconduct punishable by summary dismissal, but other items may constitute gross misconduct depending on the circumstances of the case in question. Examples include - a) Insensitive jokes and pranks b) Lewd comments about appearance c) Unnecessary body contact d) Displays of sexually or racially offensive material e.g.: pin-upse) Requests for sexual favours f) Speculation about an individual's anatomy, private life and sexual activities g) Threatened or actual sexual or racial violence h) Threat of dismissal, loss of promotion, for refusal of sexual favours i) E-mail or network suggestive or sleazy message j) Deliberate exclusion from conversations / team / work area k) Racial abuse l) Bullying related to work, personal behaviours and abilities m) Threatening comments towards an individual who has referred to the existence of malpractice etc...

- **What happens if the complaint of harassment is untrue?**

An employee who brings a complaint of harassment will not suffer victimisation for having brought the complaint. However, if the complaint is untrue and has been brought in spite and bad faith the matter will be investigated in accordance with Syensqo Interox Ltd disciplinary procedure. If brought in good faith and it is considered to be inappropriate to take any further action, efforts will be made to counsel both individuals.

- **What happens if the complainant is not happy about the way the complaint has been handled?**

If the complainant is not satisfied about the way the complaint has been handled they may ask for it to be reconsidered through the grievance procedure at level 3. Requests for reconsideration of the complaint must be made within 5 working days of the first hearing. The decision of this second hearing will be sent in writing to both parties and will be final.

- **What's the penalty imposed upon an employee guilty of harassment?**

The severity of the penalty imposed upon an employee guilty of harassment will be consistent with those detailed in the disciplinary procedure i.e.: gross sexual harassment will normally result in summary dismissal. Where a lesser penalty is appropriate (written warning) this may be coupled with action to ensure that the victim is able to continue working without embarrassment or anxiety. After discussion with the victim, the line manager may order the transfer of the harasser to a different work area or arrange for the amendment of working practices to minimise contact between the two employees. If the victim so wishes her/his own transfer may be arranged subject to practical limitations and an ability to move department. The result of the hearing will be confirmed in writing to both employees. An employee who receives a warning or is dismissed for harassment may appeal against the penalty on accordance with Syensqo Interox Ltd appeals procedure.

- **What are the rights of the employees accused of harassment?**

The employee accused of alleged harassment will also have the right to be accompanied at the investigation interview. Where the line manager concludes that harassment has taken place, they will ensure that the harasser has every opportunity to defend or explain his/her actions in accordance with Syensqo Interox Ltd disciplinary procedure.

- **What's the procedure after a serious complaint of harassment?**

As soon as a serious complaint of harassment has been received action will be taken to separate the harasser from the complainant - this may involve temporary transfer of the alleged harasser to another Department or suspension of the alleged harasser with pay until the complaint has been resolved. The line manager handling the complaint will carry out a thorough investigation as quickly as possible, maintaining confidentiality at all times. All employees involved in the investigation are expected to respect the need for confidentiality. Failure to do so will be considered a disciplinary offence. At all stages of this investigation a member of the HR Department will be present. Copies of statements made by witnesses will be made available to the alleged harasser and the complainant. It is acknowledged that some witnesses may be reluctant to appear at the complaint hearing and the line manager will, if necessary ask question of witnesses in private. The complainant may, if they wish be supported throughout the investigation by a colleague or recognised trade union representative.

- **What's the procedure following harassment?**

Where serious harassment occurs employees are advised to bring a formal complaint using the grievance procedure and should seek assistance from the HR Department in doing so. The complaint should be made in writing and contain: The name of the alleged harasser The nature of the harassment Dates and time when harassment occurred Names of witnesses to any incidents of harassment Any action already taken by the complainant to stop the harassment.

- **What's the procedure in case of harassment?**

All examples of harassment are viewed as potentially serious and employees are advised to make it clear to their harasser that the behaviour is unacceptable and must stop. If an employee is unable to do this verbally then a written request (explaining the distress which the behaviour is causing) handed to the alleged harasser may be effective. The HR Department can assist employees in taking such informal action and help to reach an agreement between the two in the first instance. Any formal interview should take place as specified within the Syensqo Interox Ltd Disciplinary procedure.

- **Does the company view harassment seriously?**

All new employees will be informed of the policy towards harassment at induction training when it will be stressed that all complaints of harassment will be treated very seriously.

- **What are the responsibilities of all employees on the Dignity at Work Policy?**

It is also the responsibility of all employees to; Personally meet the requirements of this Policy Ensure that all other individuals perform to the same standard.

- **What are the responsibilities of the HR Department in the Dignity at Work Policy?**

It is the responsibility of the HR Department to: Ensure the procedure is updated in accordance with changing legislation Provide consistent advice to line managers and employees in order to maintain fairness.

- **What are the responsibilities of the managers in the Dignity at Work Policy?**

It is the responsibility of all managers to ensure that this policy is: Available and communicated to all employees Understood by all employees Effectively implemented and complied with by all employees Any breach of this policy is fully investigated Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone found to be in breach of this policy.

- **What are the objectives of the Dignity at Work Policy?**

Syensqo Interox Ltd will endeavour to secure the support of all employees in seeking to eradicate harassment from the workplace. This policy will ensure that victims of harassment are provided with a means of redress.