

Aims, Scope and Principles

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that learners learn in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour, affects everyone and is unacceptable.

PQMS Training are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our learners so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. If bullying does occur, all learners should be able to report and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

All incidents of bullying and harassment will be taken seriously, investigated, and appropriate action taken. Incidents will be dealt with speedily, fairly, and positively. A written record will be kept of all incidents where further investigation is considered necessary – this record will include detail of the incident(s), the investigation and outcome. If applicable parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity where an incident is considered serious enough to warrant further investigation or where there are repeated incidents of a minor nature. Learners & Employers will be made aware of the complaint's procedure. Any complaints made through that procedure will be taken seriously and dealt with accordingly. Advice and support will be offered to the bullied individual. All staff, teaching and non-teaching will be vigilant and deal with all observed incidents of bullying, even where the bullied individual has not reported the incident.

Why do we need an Anti-Bullying Policy?

Persistent bullying can severely inhibit a young person's ability to learn effectively. The negative effects of bullying can have an impact on a person for their entire life. PQMS Training wishes to promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment, and any type of bullying behaviour. Therefore, this policy promotes practices within the center to reinforce our vision, and to remove or discourage practices that negate them.

What is Bullying?

Bullying occurs when an individual or a group uses strength or power to hurt, either physically or emotionally, by intimidating or demeaning others. Bullying can be emotional, physical, racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, verbal, or cyber. It is usually persistent and is often covert, and is a conscious attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone.

Learners who are being bullied, may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, or are consistently absent from learning.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- **Physical bullying** which can include kicking, hitting, pushing, and taking away belongings.
- **Verbal bullying** which includes name calling, mocking, and making offensive comments.
- **Emotional bullying** which includes isolating an individual or spreading rumours about them.
- **Cyber-bullying** where technology is used to hurt an individual – for instance text messaging or posting messages/images on the internet or any form of social media.
- **Racist bullying** occurs when bullying is motivated by racial, ethnic, or cultural prejudice.
- **Sexual bullying** is where someone makes unwanted physical contact or makes sexually abusive comments (including sexting)

- **Homophobic and biphobic bullying** occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people.
- **Transphobic bullying** occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against people who identify as trans
- **Disablist bullying** occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against people with any form of disability.
- **Sexist bullying** occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against someone because of their gender

With the advance in new technologies, PQMS Training is aware there is an increased risk of **Cyber bullying** using e-mails, instant messenger, social networking sites, and public websites inappropriately. Therefore, PQMS has an IT acceptable policy which all learners sign, along with a separate On-line safety policy.

Some warning signs that a learner is being bullied.

- Changes in performance.
- Appears anxious.
- Regularly feeling sick or unwell.
- Reluctance to come into the centre or periods of absence from work.
- Clothes/bags torn or damaged.
- Money/possessions going missing.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Unexplained behaviour changes, e.g., moody, bad-tempered, tearful.
- Unhappiness.
- Loss of appetite. Not sleeping. Loss of weight
- Seen alone a lot both in the classroom and during break.
- Not very talkative. Some reasons why people bully.
- Desire to appear powerful.
- Feelings of inadequacy
- Difficulties at home.

Who learners can talk to if they have any concerns about bullying.

- Trainers/Assessors
- A member of the Management Team
- Safeguarding Officers
- Learning Support Co-Ordinator

Learners can feel confident that any of the above will listen to their problem. Learners who have been bullied will be supported by:

1. Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
2. Reassuring the learner that action will be taken.
3. Offering continuous support
4. Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Learners who have bullied will be helped by:

1. Discussing what happened
2. Discovering why the learner became involved.
3. Establishing the wrong-doing and the need to change.

Staff responses will vary depending on the nature of the incident, but may include:

1. Counselling
2. Involvement of external agencies
3. Monitoring by Learner Support Co-Ordinator/Apprenticeship Trainer Assessor /Managers
4. Peer support/peer mentoring
5. **Formal recording of incident** (racism, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic)
6. Reference to signed Learning Agreement and Zero Tolerance Policy
7. Liaison with parents/carer/social worker
9. Exclusion from programme

Anti-Bullying Procedures (Zero Tolerance Policy)

It is made clear during induction that bullying in any form is unacceptable. It will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Learners will sign a learning agreement confirming they will adhere to all relevant policies and procedures.

Staff Responsibilities

- To be aware of the signs of bullying
- To listen to all parties involved in incidents
- To investigate incidents promptly and as fully as possible
- To take appropriate action or to refer to management or named staff as appropriate
- To record on "My Concern if appropriate *
- To share with parents/carers of the victim and bully, incidents of persistent and/or serious bullying

Further company actions

- Sending out questionnaires to research Learners views on how safe they feel at PQMS Training.
- Anti-bullying training for delivery staff
- Posters on the Safeguarding notice board about how to report bullying including advice on dealing with cyber bullying.
- Information leaflet for Learners about On-Line Safety
- Information on the website