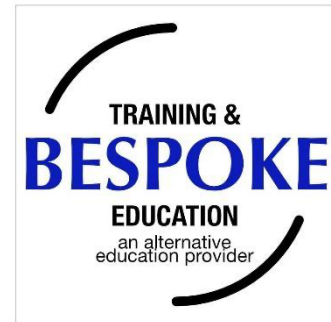




STUDENT HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY - *Review Sept 2026*

Policy Statement

Bespoke Training and Education Ltd (BT&E) is committed to providing a learning environment which is free from discrimination, harassment or bullying of any kind, whether by students, staff or other parties. BT&E expects everyone to be treated with respect, regardless of age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation or other criteria.

Definition of terms

Harassment is any conduct which involves unwanted, unreasonable and offensive conduct. It is a form of discrimination that can include sexist or racist behaviour or negative attitudes to disability or sexuality. Examples of such behaviour may include:

- insensitive jokes, teasing or ridicule
- unnecessary body contact
- expression of prejudiced remarks
- abuse of a position of authority by a staff member over a student

Such behaviour may not be intended to be harmful, but if it diminishes a person's quality of life or affects their work, that person can claim that they are being harassed.

Bullying is a form of harassment that displays the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to that person.

Bullying can take many forms. Some examples are:

- | | | |
|---|------------------|--|
| • | Emotional | Being unfriendly, excluding someone, tormenting (e.g. threatening gestures, interfering with personal possessions). |
| • | Physical | Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of physical violence. |
| • | Racist | Racist bullying can be defined as 'A range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures. |
| • | Sexual | Sexist and Transphobic Sexual bullying includes any behaviour, whether physical or non-physical, where sexuality is used as a weapon. It includes unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments. Transphobic bullying refers to bullying because someone is, or is thought to be, transgender. |

- **Homophobic** Homophobic bullying targets someone because of their sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation). It can be particularly difficult for a young person to report, it is often directed at them at a very sensitive phase of their lives when identity is being developed. Homophobic bullying has been shown to have an extremely damaging impact, with depression, suicidal thoughts and self harm reported.
- **Verbal** Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, graffiti.
- **Cyber** All areas of internet, such as e-mail and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities.
- **Disablist** Bullying, involving young people with disabilities employs many of the same forms as other types of bullying, with name calling and pushing and shoving being common. Also includes, seemingly 'low level' bullying from which there is no let up.

Objective of this Policy

All staff/students should feel able to report incidents of harassment and bullying and know that these will be dealt with promptly, fairly and effectively.

Responsibilities

To help ensure this:

- All staff, and students should understand what harassment and bullying are.
- All staff should know what the policy is on harassment and bullying, and follow it when incidents are reported.
- All students should know what the policy is on harassment and bullying, and what they should do if they have problems.

Procedures

1 Providing information & training to students

A student should be made aware of the Equal Opportunities Policy and related policies and procedures (Race Equality Policy, Harassment and Bullying Policy, Student/Staff Disciplinary Code and Complaints Procedure) during BT&E induction.

Equality and diversity issues should be included in tutorial programmes and positive attitudes encouraged within the teaching environment.

2 Reporting incidents to staff

Student who is being harassed or bullied by other students, staff or someone from outside should report this to a member of staff.

This could be:

- Personal tutor
- Another member of the teaching staff if preferred.

3 Examining the options following a referral to the faculty team

The student and appropriate staff should then look at the options available and discuss what the student wants to do.

Options could include:

Taking no action

If the student is afraid that any action may cause the situation to worsen, they may refuse any intervention. The member of staff may then point out that little can be done to help the student, but must respect the student's decision and may record the decision (where the student gives consent) on Tracker using the appropriate E&D 'tag'.

In addition, the staff member may consult an appropriate person, if the information the student discloses suggests that there is a life-threatening situation or that the student or others are at very real risk of harm.

In situations where it is suspected or reported that children or vulnerable adults are being abused, BT&E is obliged by the Children Act 1989 to take action (see Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for details). For this reason, it would not be appropriate to promise blanket confidentiality to the student.

Taking informal action

This could take various forms:

- **Dealing with the issue within the area**

The member of staff could talk to all those involved, with the student's permission, and agree a resolution.

Alternatively, they could ask appropriate staff to do a general session on appropriate and reasonable behaviour.

- **Helping the student to deal with the situation**

The member of staff could refer the student for counselling, to help build assertiveness and self-confidence.

- **Using mediation**

A mediator, usually a member of staff, acts as an independent third party, bringing together those in conflict and seeks to help them resolve the problem themselves.

Taking formal action

The student will be informed and consulted and his or her wishes respected as far as possible when formal action is taken. But in cases where harassment or bullying puts either the student or others at risk, BT&E has to intervene because it has a duty of care to all its members.

- **Investigating the complaint**

Appropriate management will investigate the incident and take appropriate action, with the student's consent.

In complex situations or where those involved come from different curriculum areas, the management team will meet for a case conference and agree the best way to investigate and handle the incidents with those involved and agree a consistent approach in taking action.

They will seek information, produce a report and make recommendations for further action. Recommendations could include mediation, training for the person(s) harassing or bullying, or disciplinary action. If the recommendations relate to a member of staff, this would be passed to BT&E director Graham Coffey.

- **Training for the person(s) harassing or bullying**

A training programme could be arranged, on condition that the person(s) involved do not harass or bully the complainant.

- **Using the Disciplinary Code**

Where serious misconduct is involved or where mediation or training fail, then disciplinary procedures should follow. Very serious incidents may result in expulsion.

- **Consulting the police**

If necessary and appropriate, BT&E will consult the police or advise the student to do so. For example if the student is being 'stalked' or is subject to similar anti-social behaviour, or if they has been sexually assaulted, they may choose to report this.

Also, a third party who is offended by a racist or homophobic incident may report this to the police, without the consent of the person being harassed or attacked.

4 Recording the incident and options decided

The information given by the student should be recorded only with his or her consent. It should be shared with others only by consent. If the student is not prepared to give this consent, or wishes to restrict access to that information, the member of staff should ask the student to complete a *Consent to Process Sensitive Information* form (attached at appendix 1). All information relating to the incident should then be kept confidential and not form part of the student's general record.

In addition, management staff should record the incident including actions taken (anonymised where the student does not give consent) using the form attached (at appendix 2) and return a copy of the form to the E&D Coordinator to allow for termly monitoring and impact assessments.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. All BT&E staff should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a young person demonstrates or suggests that they:-

- Are frightened of walking to or from where the course is being held.
- Don't want to go on the usual mode of transport and asks/begs to be driven to venue.
- Change their usual routine.
- Are unwilling to carry on with the programme.
- Begin to have a poor attendance record.
- Become withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Start stammering.
- Attempt or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Have difficulty sleeping, cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feel ill in the morning
- Begin to do poorly in college work.
- Have possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'.
- Ask for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully).
- Have unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Are hungry (money/lunch has been stolen).
- Become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Are bullying other students or siblings.
- Stop eating.
- Are frightened to say what's wrong.
- Give improbable excuses for any of the above.
- Are afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- Are nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

What is this form about?

When you enrolled you signed an Enrolment Form and Learning Agreement in which you gave your consent to the details recorded on that form being processed. The form outlines the ways in which the Data Protection Act (which protects your privacy) allows us to use this information. This includes allowing your tutor and other BT&E staff to look at your details.

You have now given some very sensitive information to a member of staff and you do not want this to be known generally. The form asks you to give your consent to a record of your talk being made.

The person you talked to agrees to keep the information **confidential** by:

- storing the information separately from your normal records, in a secure place so that no-one else can access it
- taking no action (such as giving information to another member of staff) without your permission

There are very rare circumstances where the person you have talked to may need to break this promise of confidentiality. S/he may consult an appropriate person if the information you disclose suggests that there is a life-threatening situation or that you or others are at very real risk of harm.

The form provides two different types of consent:

Option 1

You allow the member of staff to record your discussion and list any actions you have agreed. For example, you may agree to certain staff being informed, to help you cope with your course or your personal circumstances.

Option 2

If you do not want the member of staff to record your discussion, you can record this by signing the **Refusal of consent** at the bottom of the form.

If you choose option 2 or refuse consent, it may limit any help you could receive from other staff.

The form helps the college to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. The style of language and the categories listed on the form reflect the wording of the Act, so it may sound more complicated than it actually is.

5 Consent to Process Sensitive Data

I (name)

give my consent to BT&E recording and processing information about me in the following categories:

- ☐ Race and ethnic origin
- ☐ Religious or other beliefs
- ☐ Sexual life
- ☐ Physical or mental health or medical condition, including a disability of any kind
- ☐ Criminal records or activities
- ☐ Other (specify):

The information will be used only to provide support and to help me achieve my chosen learning goals.

☐ **Option 1**

The particular information to be recorded has been shown to me on (date) and I confirm that it is correct. I consent to information being disclosed to those people named within that record.

☐ **Option 2**

The particular information to be recorded has been shown to me on (date) and I confirm that it is correct. I do not consent to information being disclosed to anyone else.

Signed:

Student number:

Date:

Refusal of Consent

I (name)

do not give my consent to South BT&E recording and processing information given by me to

(name)

Signed:

Student number:

Date:

Appendix 2

HARASSMENT AND BULLYING REPORT

A report should be made on any incident of alleged harassment or bullying that is referred to a faculty management team for investigation and/or action.

The completed report should be forwarded (electronically) to Graham Coffey BT&E Director, who is responsible for collating and reporting on an annual summary of incidents.

1 Details of person alleging harassment or bullying

Name:

Course:

Faculty:

Age:

Sex:

Ethnicity:

Disability: Yes No

2 Details of person accused of harassing or bullying

Name:

Course:

Faculty:

Age:

Sex:

Ethnicity:

Disability: Yes No

3 Details of incident

Describe the incident(s) briefly, including, where relevant: events leading up to it relevant details of participants not given above' what was involved, who else was present.

4 Details of your investigation

State briefly who you talked to and the conclusions you reached.

5 Outcome of your investigation

Outline any action taken (eg disciplinary, mediation, probationary period).

If the incident resulted in police involvement, give details including the police incident number.

6 Prevention

- (a) Had any measures been taken to try to prevent an incident of this kind?
If so, what were they and could they have been improved?

- (b) If no measures had been taken beforehand, could action now be taken to prevent future incidents? If so, what are they?

7 Any other relevant information or comments

Signed:

Position:

Faculty:

Date:

