

Dignity At Work Policy

Purpose and Scope

This policy provides clear guidelines to ensure that all volunteers and employees are treated with respect and dignity while undertaking activities assigned by Challenge Wales. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, seasonal/freelance/contract staff, students, interns, job applicants and board members regardless of their role or position within Challenge Wales. It aims to create a positive working environment where everyone feels valued and can work without fear of harassment, bullying or discrimination.

This policy is crucial for promoting a culture of respect, equality and inclusion within Challenge Wales.

Our Commitment:

Challenge Wales is committed to creating and fostering a culture that promotes respect for each other and values individual differences. There is no place for any form of harassment, victimisation or bullying within our organisation. Such behaviour is contrary to our values and mission and diminishes the dignity and integrity of all affected parties.

Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect in their working or volunteering environment, including any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as business trips, sail training events, charity-related social events or through the use of social media.

We are committed to a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of discrimination or unacceptable behaviour.

Values:

Our values underpin what we do and what is important to us as an organisation. We believe in:

- **Respect:** Treating everyone with dignity and valuing individual differences
- **Integrity:** Acting with honesty and transparency in all we do
- **Excellence:** Striving to achieve the highest of standards in our work
- **Collaboration:** Working together to achieve our goals in a mutually supportive environment

Legal Framework:

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we are responsible for preventing bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation within the workplace. The Act extends protection to individuals in 'protected characteristic' groups, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or beliefs, sex and sexual orientation.

Under the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2024, we have a proactive duty to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. This means we are committed to taking all reasonable steps to prevent harassment, including:



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- Raising awareness and providing clear guidance on unacceptable behaviours.
- Encouraging a culture where people feel safe to report concerns.
- Responding promptly and appropriately to all reports of harassment.
- Ensuring that individuals responsible for harassment are held accountable.

Reducing Contact:

Regardless of whether a complaint is upheld, those involved may wish to minimise further contact. Where appropriate, we will explore options to support individuals in reducing unnecessary interaction in the workplace or during volunteer activities.

Our Role in Maintaining a Respectful Environment:

Each of us plays a crucial role in fostering a workplace where dignity and respect are upheld. If you witness inappropriate behaviour, you are encouraged to:

- **Clearly express** that the behaviour is unacceptable.
- **Offer support** to colleagues or volunteers experiencing harassment or bullying.
- **Report incidents** through the appropriate channels.
- **Keep a personal record** of what occurred for reference if needed.

Criminal Proceedings:

If you witness a crime in progress or if someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

For non-emergency situations, contact 101. If a complaint is reported to the police, Challenge Wales will continue to investigate the matter internally in line with our policies.

Your Responsibilities;

Everyone associated with Challenge Wales has a responsibility to:

- Ensure the rights of others are respected and upheld
- Be polite and take a positive, responsive and considerate approach when dealing with the public, colleagues, volunteers and other individuals, groups or organisations
- Support and encourage an environment that values all people and does not cause embarrassment, conflict of interest, harassment, alarm or distress to another volunteer or employee nor discriminate unfairly or unlawfully on any grounds
- Avoid actions which may adversely affect the reputation of Challenge Wales
- To maintain a professional approach to your work, fellow employees and volunteers
- To conduct yourself in accordance with Challenge Wales' Code of Conduct (CWP14)
- Ask for clarification if unsure of the standards of behaviours expected
- Never behave in a manner that could be classed as bullying, harassing or victimising towards somebody else



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- Report incidents to your line manager, volunteer manager, senior manager if you feel uncomfortable with behaviours you are subject to / or witness whilst carrying out your role.

Definitions:

Harassment – unwanted behaviour, including for example emails, remarks, gestures which can create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. It includes but is not limited to sexual harassment

Bullying – and harassment may be by an individual, against an individual and may include individuals or groups. It is destructive rather than constructive and can publically humiliate. Bullying can be carried out by people at all levels, including peers.

For the purposes of this policy, both bullying and harassment are used interchangeably and are not necessarily the same thing. They may occur in written, face to face communications, electronic (cyber bullying) or by phone.

Victimisation – refers to derogatory treatment directed towards someone who has made or is believed to have made, or supported a colleague's complaint under the Equality Act. It can also include situations where a complaint hasn't yet been made but someone is still treated unfairly. Legislation offers protection to people in relation to: Direct or Indirect Discrimination, Discrimination by Association, Discrimination by Perception.

Examples of bullying and harassment;

This list is not exhaustive but provides an overview to assist understanding of what may be found offensive, whether intentional or not:

- Verbal abuse or verbal comments that belittle people
- Unwelcome or hurtful jokes
- Direct or subtle threats
- Offensive gestures
- Ignoring, or Isolating a person
- Staring or leering in a sexual way
- Unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature
- Aggressive physical behaviour
- Sexting
- Repeated behaviour which a person has previously objected to
- Offensive material that is displayed publicly

Impact of behaviour contrary to this policy:



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Behaviour that does not align with the Dignity at Work policy can;

- Cause individuals to feel anxious, frustrated, humiliated, angry or overwhelmed
- Negatively affect mental health & wellbeing leading to anxiety, stress and depression
- Result in some individuals exhibiting unacceptable behaviour themselves
- Lead to distress, demotivation, loss of self-confidence consequently harming relationships in the workplace or volunteering environment.

Reporting and Handling Complaints and What to Do if you feel you have been subject to unacceptable behaviour:

The emphasis of this policy is on resolving issues promptly and informally, or via mediation, avoiding confrontation. There is also a clear route of escalation of concerns.

Informal resolution: In some circumstances matters may be able to be dealt with informally without the need for a formal complaint. You may want to raise any matters informally with the person directly or with your manager or someone else you can trust. Informal action can bring about quicker solutions and reduce disruptions and breakdowns in working / volunteering relationships. If this doesn't work, you may wish to find a formal resolution.

Formal resolution: If the informal approach does not resolve the issue or you don't want to proceed with trying for an informal resolution then the formal resolution is your next step. Challenge Wales has a Complaints Process Policy (CWP 09). If you experience or witness harassment, bullying or any form of discrimination, you should report it your line manager, Skipper (if you are a volunteer crew person), or another senior member of the charity (e.g. Business Development Manager). This should be done in writing but can be received verbally. All complaints will be taken seriously, will be acknowledged and handled promptly and sensitively. A preliminary investigation to determine the validity of the complaint and decide next steps will be undertaken. This may/will involve interviewing the complainant, accused and witnesses. If proven, we will take prompt and effective action which may include training, mediation or disciplinary measures and inform of outcome and actions.

Anonymous Complaints: As a general rule, you may not raise a Dignity at Work complaint anonymously as this hampers consideration and investigation into the case. Where you have a genuine fear of consequences of being identified as the complainant, you should contact the Skipper or senior staff member (e.g. Business Development Manager) for advice.

We also recognise that being accused of harassment and bullying is difficult and will extend support to both parties. No assumption of guilt will be made but all complaints will be investigated thoroughly.



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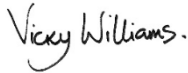
Related Challenge Wales Policies (which can be viewed on the Volunteer Information Portal or Staff Safety Management System or www.challengewales.org)

- CWP 05 Equal Opportunities Policy
- CWP 06 Volunteer Policy
- CWP 09 Complaints Policy
- CWP 12 Behaviour Policy
- CWP 14 Code of Conduct Policy

Changes to Dignity at Work Policy:

This policy will be reviewed annually and may be amended as necessary to ensure compliance with legal requirements and best practice. The Charity reserves the right to change this policy at any time.

Signed:



Vicky Williams
Business Development Manager
Date: 26.2. 25



Helen Phillips
Chair of Board of Trustees
Date: 26.2.25

Revision Log

Revision #	Date	Explanation of amendment	Who by
0	20.12.24	Document Completion	Vicky Williams – BDM Signed off: Helen Phillips



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Reg Charity No 1111859

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Registered address;
Crown House, Windsor Road, Penarth.
Vale of Glamorgan.
CF64 1JG

VAT No GB 930532352

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