



TRUST ACADEMY

Training...for Excellence!!!

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Purpose and Scope

- Protect vulnerable individuals from harm, abuse, or exploitation
- Ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations

2. Definitions

- Vulnerable individuals: children, young adults, and adults at risk
- Harm: physical, emotional, sexual, or neglect
- Abuse: physical, emotional, sexual, or financial
- Exploitation: financial, sexual, or other forms

3. Principles

- Protect vulnerable individuals from harm
- Promote well-being and empowerment
- Prevent abuse and exploitation
- Ensure accountability and transparency

4. Responsibilities

- Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): oversees policy implementation
- Staff and volunteers: report concerns, adhere to policy
- Management: ensure policy compliance, allocate resources

5. Procedures

- Reporting concerns: internal and external reporting processes
- Risk assessments: identifying potential harm or abuse
- Investigations: responding to allegations or concerns
- Support and protection: providing help to vulnerable individuals

6. Training and Awareness

- Regular safeguarding training for staff and volunteers

- Awareness campaigns for vulnerable individuals and communities

7. Recruitment and Selection

- Safe recruitment practices: background checks, vetting
- Ensuring candidates share safeguarding values

8. Monitoring and Review

- Regular policy reviews and updates
- Monitoring safeguarding incidents and concerns
- Continuous improvement of safeguarding practices

9. Partnerships and Collaboration

- Working with external agencies (e.g., police, social services)
- Sharing information and best practices

10. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Balancing confidentiality with safeguarding concerns
- Information sharing protocols with external agencies

Safeguarding Policy Statements

1. "We prioritize the safety and well-being of vulnerable individuals, ensuring a secure and supportive environment."
2. "All staff and volunteers are required to report safeguarding concerns immediately."
3. "We conduct thorough risk assessments to identify potential harm or abuse."

Key Legislation and Guidance

The Children's Act (Chapter 5:06) Zimbabwe

First and foremost, we want all our staff, consultants, trustees, partners and community members to feel safe and respected.

If as a staff member you feel that you have experienced bullying, harassment, sexual exploitation or sexual abuse please report this incident as soon as possible.

OR if you have reasons to believe someone else has then you also have a duty to report this in the same way.

Any staff member can either, Raise the issue in confidence with

- Your line manager or other senior member of staff

Any community member or staff member of another organisation that works with TRUST ACADEMY has a complaint about **TRUST ACADEMY** or its staff, this should be sent to:

- [0772134153 and trust@trustacademy.co.zw] or raised with any staff member who will take this to a senior member of staff

Please Note: Complaints of bullying, harassment, sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, or information from staff relating to such complaints, will be dealt with fairly, confidentially and sensitively using the general format set out in TRUST ACADEMY's grievance procedures. However sexual exploitation and abuse, bullying or harassment will not be treated as a standard grievance; it is a serious issue and will be treated as such. Where complaints involve your line manager, approaches should be made to another appropriate manager.

This policy includes:

- **Sexual Harassment, Abuse and Exploitation – definitions & expectations**
- **Bullying and Harassment – definitions & expectations**

Sexual Harassment, Abuse and Exploitation

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. It has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of an individual, making an individual feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, or creating a hostile or offensive environment for them.

Behaviour that has these effects can still be considered sexual harassment even if the alleged harasser didn't mean for it to be. It also doesn't have to be intentionally directed at a specific person.

Behaviour that constitutes sexual harassment includes:

- Unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature, this may be either physical or verbal,
- Inappropriate or suggestive remarks or verbal sexual advances,
- Indecent comments, jokes or innuendos relating to a person's looks or private life,
- Unwanted physical contact such as hugging, kissing or inappropriate touching,
- Requests for sexual favours,
- Emails with content of a sexual nature,
- The display or circulation of pornography or indecent images.

Often, this kind of behaviour may be brushed off by the harasser as 'banter' or harmless flirting. It is important to remember that the impact the behaviour has on the recipient is the most important factor. It is therefore not so relevant whether the individual intended to cause offence, but rather whether offence was actually caused by the conduct.

What is sexual abuse?

The term sexual abuse is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions (where genuine consent is not or cannot be obtained). An example of this is rape or attempted rape.

What is sexual exploitation?

The term sexual exploitation is any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes including, but not limited to, using financial, social or political power to obtain sexual favours, or profiting monetarily, socially or politically, from the sexual exploitation of another. An example of this is asking for sexual favours from members of any community with whom we are working.

Our expectations on Sexual Harassment, Abuse and Exploitation

The following principles of sexual behaviour outline international standards for safeguarding of vulnerable people and are considered an integral part of this guideline and in line with **TRUST ACADEMY's** *[Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy]*:

- Sexual exploitation and abuse by any **TRUST ACADEMY** employee, trustee, associate consultant or contractor constitutes an act of gross misconduct and is, therefore, grounds for termination of employment and/or legal action;
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex (including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading, or exploitative behaviour) or sexual relations where there is expectation of economic benefit in the course of or in connection with your work, or at any time when you are acting as a representative of [NAME OF ORGANISATION] is strictly prohibited and is a reason for termination of employment. This includes any time when you are travelling or living outside of your home country because of your work with **TRUST ACADEMY**;
- Sexual activity between any [TRUST ACADEMY] employee and a child¹ is strictly prohibited, regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. In such cases, mistaken belief by any [TRUST ACADEMY] employee or visitor regarding the age of a child is not a defence against disciplinary action, termination of employment and /or legal action;
- Where an **TRUST ACADEMY** employee, trustee, consultant or contractor develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow employee, trustee, consultant or contractor or partner staff member, s/he must report such concerns via **TRUST ACADEMY's** reporting mechanisms;
- Sexual harassment by any **TRUST ACADEMY** employee, trustee, consultant or contractor may lead to disciplinary action or, for repeated offences or where the conduct amounts to serious misconduct, may be grounds for immediate termination of employment for gross negligence without payment of compensation.

¹ A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Bullying and Harassment

What are Bullying and Harassment?

Harassment, in general terms is unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of any person in the workplace, where actions or comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient. It may be related to age, gender, sexual orientation and identity, race, colour, national, ethnic or class origin, religious or philosophical belief, marital status, parental status or impairment, and may be persistent or an isolated incident. Harassment often involves behaviour that is like bullying but is based on one of the discriminatory characteristics above.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying or harassment may be by an individual against an individual or involve groups of people. It may be obvious or it may be insidious. It may be face to face or in written communications, e-mail, phone or social media. It may involve repeated incidents which, taken alone, might not be considered bullying but, when taken together, constitute a pattern of behaviour that does so. Whatever form it takes, it is unwarranted and unwelcome to the individual. It may take place in private or in public.

Legitimate, constructive and fair criticism of an employee's performance or behaviour at work is not bullying. An occasional raised voice or argument is not bullying.

Our expectations on Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment are unacceptable. We are aware of power in all relations and how it can be misused.

Examples of bullying/harassing behaviour include:

- Spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone by word or behaviour;
- Copying memos that are critical about someone to others who do not need to know;
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone, including by picking on them or setting them up to fail;
- Exclusion or victimisation;
- Unfair treatment;
- Overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position;
- Unwelcome sexual advances - touching, standing too close, the display of offensive materials;
- Physically intimidating behaviour – standing too close, adopting physically threatening postures, regularly yelling or using physical means to dominate discussions etc;
- Making threats or comments about job security without foundation;
- Deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading or constant, excessive and/or inappropriate criticism;
- Preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities.

Bullying and harassment is taken very seriously by [NAME OF ORGANISATION]. Behaviour amounting to bullying and harassment by any [NAME OF ORGANISATION] employee, contractor or consultant will be investigated and may lead to disciplinary action or, for repeat offences or where the behaviour amounts to serious misconduct, may be grounds for immediate termination of employment for gross negligence without payment of compensation.

Annex: How can bullying and harassment be recognised?

Behaviour that is considered bullying by one person may be considered firm management by another. Most people will agree on extreme cases of bullying and harassment, but it is sometimes the “grey” areas that cause most problems.

Bullying and harassment can often be hard to recognize – they may not be obvious to others and may be insidious. The recipient may think “perhaps this is normal behaviour”. They may be anxious that others will consider them weak, or not up to the job, if they find the actions of others intimidating. They may be accused of “overreacting” and worry that they won’t be believed that the behaviour will be trivialised, or that nothing will be done, if they do report incidents.

People being bullied or harassed may sometimes appear to overreact to something that seems relatively trivial, but which may be the “last straw” following a series of incidents. There is often fear of retribution if they make a complaint.

Bullying and harassment makes someone feel anxious and humiliated. Feelings of anger and frustration at being unable to cope may be triggered. Some people may try to retaliate in some way. Others may become frightened and demotivated. Stress, loss of self-confidence and self-esteem caused by harassment or bullying can lead to job insecurity, illness, absence from work, and even resignation. Almost always job performance is affected and relations in the workplace suffer.

Signature *Nigel Chitunhu* DATE 26/07/24

Signature *Hillary Mpondera* DATE 26/07/24