

Slow Theatre Company Harassment Policy

Slow Theatre Company is committed to creating a culture that protects members, employees' and volunteers dignity irrespective of their race, ethnic background, sex, sexual preference, age, disability or disfigurement, political or religious views, trade union membership, or on any other grounds.

Members, volunteers and employees must understand that harassment towards another employee, whether on grounds of sex or race or otherwise, may result not only in dismissal but also in a criminal conviction.

Members, volunteers and employees must treat all colleagues and third parties with dignity and respect within the guidelines of this policy and raise any issues of personal harassment in accordance with the procedure.

Definition

Harassment means 'any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment' (EU Equal Treatment Directive). It refers to behaviour that is unsolicited, is personally offensive and that fails to respect the rights of others or fails to recognize the impact that the behaviour may have. Behaviour acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another.

Inappropriate Behaviour

The following are examples of inappropriate behaviour:

Verbal conduct

Unwelcome advances, propositions or remarks, innuendoes, lewd comments or abusive language that is sex or race based or which refers to a person's age, disability, sexuality, religion or personal appearance.

Non-verbal conduct

The display of pornographic or suggestive pictures, objects or written materials; making abusive or offensive gestures, displaying racially offensive written or visual material including graffiti; other unacceptable non-verbal conduct that belittles a person for whatever reason.

Physical conduct

Includes unnecessary touching, patting or pinching, or brushing against another employee's body; assault; coercing sexual intercourse, physical threats, insulting or abusive behaviour or gestures.

Informal Procedure

Employees who believe that they have been treated in a way that threatens their dignity should in the first instance try to deal with the matter informally. Recipients of harassment

should remember that sometimes distress is caused inadvertently, and the person responsible may be unaware of the effect of his or her behaviour.

Employees who experience behaviour that they find upsetting or which causes offence are encouraged to make this clear to the individual concerned at an early stage. This will give the individual the opportunity to recognize the effect of his or her behaviour and to change it.

Where possible the individual involved should be told that his or her behaviour is upsetting and unwanted and that it must stop. This may be done face to face or in writing or may, if appropriate, involve the employee's line manager as mediator.

The employee should keep a written record of incidents, including time, date, place, a full description of what happened, the names of individuals concerned and any witnesses to the incident(s).

Where the above steps have failed, an employee may wish to refer the matter to his/her line manager on a confidential basis. The line manager may be able to speak to the individual informally. Where the individual concerned is the line manager, the employee should discuss his/her concerns with the department Director, who will then discuss the matter with the line manager. The Director will treat any such concerns in strictest confidence and no action will be taken without consulting the employee.

Formal Procedure

Should the informal procedure outlined above fail, the employee should raise a formal grievance under the Grievance Procedure. Where the complaint relates to the employee's line manager, the complaint should be made to the next level manager.

Following an investigation into a complaint of harassment, if appropriate, the disciplinary procedure may be instigated (see Disciplinary Procedure)