

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

At Aspire Scientific, we are committed to ensuring that all our employees are treated with dignity and respect, and that they treat others in the same way. We believe that everyone has the right to work in an environment that is free from any form of harassment and/or bullying, including sexual harassment.

Every employee is expected to help us to maintain an environment free of sexual harassment. Therefore, every employee, whether a victim or not of sexual harassment, is encouraged to report such harassment to their line manager, the HR & Operations Manager, or a member of the Management Team immediately.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy. Other related policies are:

- Whistleblowing policy
- IT policy
- Disciplinary procedure

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we may amend it any time.

What Aspire is doing to prevent sexual harassment at work?

All companies have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment taking place in the workplace and, if this is not possible, to respond effectively when a complaint is raised. We have developed a Sexual Harassment Policy stipulating that sexual harassment is not acceptable behaviour.

All employees also complete mandatory sexual harassment training.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is either:

- Violating another person's dignity, whether it was intended or not
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for another person, whether it was intended or not.

Sexual harassment in the workplace covers, but is not limited to, behaviours such as:

- Flirting, gesturing, or making sexual remarks
- Asking questions about someone's sex life
- Jokes of a sexual nature
- Displaying/sharing/sending photos, memes, or videos of a sexual nature
- Sexual comments at a works gathering either at or away from the office
- Unwanted touching either at or away from the office

- Sexual touching, assault, or rape

The 'workplace' includes events outside of work, such as, but not limited to, conferences, training courses, and social events. Sexual harassment in the workplace covers the behaviour of Aspire Scientific team members, clients, contractors, freelancers, and suppliers.

Sexual harassment can occur to anyone, regardless of their gender, age, or level of seniority.

Reporting sexual harassment

All employees are encouraged to bring any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature to the attention of their line manager, a member of the Management Team, or the HR & Operations Manager immediately so appropriate and reasonable steps to protect all employees from such behaviour can be taken.

The procedure for reporting sexual harassment

The procedure for reporting sexual harassment is as follows:

- Keep a record of the incidents, including what has happened, the date and the time of any incidents, and the name of anyone who was around at the time and might have seen what happened.
- Complaints regarding sexual harassment should usually be made to your line manager.
 - If you prefer not to report your complaint to your line manager (for example, if the harassment has come from your line manager, or if you are not comfortable discussing it with your line manager), you can report it to the HR & Operations Manager, or any member of the Management Team. You may be asked to put your complaint in writing.
- All complaints will be treated seriously and sympathetically.
- All complaints will be treated in confidence. It may be necessary to inform certain other people in order to investigate, but this will be limited to people who need to know.
- If preferred and if possible, a member of the Management Team of the same sex will be made available to hear the complaint.
- The Company will ensure that any complaint is dealt with promptly and with due care. The investigation of any complaint will be carried out fairly and independently and by someone of sufficient authority to be able to handle the matter objectively. You may bring a work colleague with you to any meetings relating to the complaint if you would like to. Full records will be kept. If a complaint is upheld, the harasser will be dealt with under the normal disciplinary procedure if they are an employee of the Company. If dismissal is a possible outcome, we will ensure that the usual procedure is followed, i.e., an investigation and a proper hearing at which the alleged harasser can comment on the case against them.
- We will ensure that a timeframe is set out for the investigation. The complainant and the alleged harasser (if an employee of the Company) will be told at the outset how long the investigation is likely to take and who will be communicating with them. Complainants will be kept informed at every stage.

- The Company will ensure that the harassed person is not victimised for making a complaint. If you feel that you are being victimised due to an ongoing or past sexual harassment complaint, you should report this to your line manager, a member of the Management Team, or the HR & Operations Manager.
- During the course of any sexual harassment investigation, the company will ensure that both parties are supported.
- The person that the complaint has been made about has the right to a fair hearing.

The procedure for reporting sexual harassment from a third party

If the person that the complaint has been made about is a third party, you should:

- Make them aware that you object to their behaviour, if you feel comfortable to do so. You should also report it to your line manager.
- Report it to your line manager, a member of the Management Team, or the HR & Operations Manager if you do not feel comfortable letting the person that is harassing you know that you object to their behaviour.
- Report it to your line manager, a member of the Management Team, or the HR & Operations Manager without delay if the harassment continues to occur.

The Company will take all appropriate and reasonable steps to ensure that there is not a repeat of such harassment.

Further information and support:

[The Survivors Trust](#)

[SurvivorsUK](#)

[LGBT Foundation](#)

[Rights of Women](#)

[Scottish Women's Rights Centre](#)

[Safeline](#)

[Galop](#)

[Rape Crisis England & Wales](#)

[Rape Crisis Scotland](#)

[Victim Support](#)

[Samaritans](#)

Aspire Scientific HR
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