

# Dignity at Work and Study Policy

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**Meridian Initial Teacher Training (MERIDIAN ITT) is the umbrella organisation for both The Cambridge Partnership and The Pilgrim Partnership.  
(MERIDIAN ITT UKPRN 10053421)**

## **1.0 Introduction**

The term 'Dignity at Work and Study' emphasises that everyone has the right to be treated with respect. It is vital that we strive for an environment in which discrimination, harassment, bullying, and victimisation are not tolerated. Such behaviour must be identified early and managed effectively. We must also support any member of staff or trainee who is subjected to such behaviour and encourage them to report this as early as possible. There are three ways in which we ensure that this happens. The first is by charging leaders and staff with the responsibility for ensuring that staff and trainees are not subject to unacceptable behaviour. The second is to foster an environment in which there is no tolerance of unacceptable behaviour from any member of staff or any trainee. The third is by having in place a supportive, confidential, and transparent process that proactively tackles unacceptable behaviour and encourages respect and trust.

This policy provides for individual employees or trainees to raise a complaint of harassment related to their employment or training programme. MERIDIAN ITT recognizes the problems associated with harassment and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals can operate effectively, confidently, and competently.

## **2.0 Scope**

This policy is relevant for all staff or trainees either enrolled on one of our ITT programmes or working for the partnership through SLA.

## **3.0 Purpose**

It is the right of every member of staff to work or train without fear of harassment. The aim of this procedure is the prevention of all harassing behaviours and the eradication of fear in the workplace. MERIDIAN ITT is committed to the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, religion, colour, nationality, creed, ethnic or national origins, age, disability, pregnancy, part time work and trade union membership.

## **4.0 Definitions**

**Harassment** is any conduct which is both unreasonable and unwanted by the recipient, or which affects the dignity of any individual or group of individuals at work. Harassment may be repetitive or an isolated occurrence against one or more individuals. It can take several forms from aggression and bullying to unwelcome intrusive comments.

Harassment may include the following behaviours:

- I. Physical: contact (touching, patting, assault), gestures, intimidation, aggressive behaviour.
- II. Verbal: unwelcome remarks, suggestions and propositions, malicious gossip, insults and insulting jokes.
- III. Nonverbal: production or dissemination of offensive literature, pictures or electronic images, graffiti, and exclusion from routine social interaction.

**Bullying** is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined threatened or socially excluded. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.

Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. Non-verbal conduct includes postings on social media outlets. Work-related bullying may include, but is not limited to:

- I. setting up someone to fail by giving them unachievable tasks, an unmanageable workload, or impossible deadlines, or making unreasonable demands.
- II. inappropriate monitoring of work or overbearing supervision.
- III. giving someone too little work or work that is below their competence.
- IV. removing or reassigning a person's responsibilities without justification.
- V. deliberately withholding training or resources from someone that are necessary for them to perform the role, or opportunities for advancement or promotion.
- VI. making inappropriate threats or hints about job security.
- VII. withdrawing or refusing reasonable support

**Discrimination** takes place when an individual or a group of people are treated less favourably than others based on a protected characteristic such as age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity (including treating a woman less favourably because she is breastfeeding), race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation and in relation to direct discrimination only, marriage and civil partnership.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one of the protected characteristics set out above; this can include association with or a perception of a particular characteristic.

Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criteria or practice that puts people with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage compared with others who do not share that characteristic

## 5.0 Informal Resolution

Every effort should be made to resolve harassment informally without any unnecessary delay. As soon

after the incident as possible, the complainant should make clear to the respondent either verbally or in writing that the behaviour(s) was not welcomed and should not be repeated.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may contact any member of MERIDIAN ITT's leadership team for advice or the MERIDIAN ITT HR manager.

Any discussion will be confidential, and no further action will be taken without the consent of the complainant except where a criminal offence or gross misconduct are alleged in which case the senior leader may take action irrespective of the complainant's wishes.

The courses of action open to a complainant who remains dissatisfied following the informal resolution stage include:

- i to lodge a formal grievance using the Trust Grievance Procedure
- ii to take no formal action but to record any future incidents, and to keep the situation under review pending any decision in future to lodge a formal grievance.

## 6.0 Record Keeping

It is important that accurate records are kept throughout the informal resolution stage.

Records should be held in a secure and confidential manner.

Where the complaint has been resolved informally no record will be kept on personnel files, but the incident and its successful resolution will be recorded centrally for monitoring purposes by MERIDIAN ITT leadership.

Where a complaint is not substantiated, then no record will be kept on the file of the respondent. However, any documents made during the course of the investigation should be retained separately by the member of staff responsible in each school for personnel management.

Where the complaint has not been resolved and Stage 1 of the MERIDIAN ITT Grievance Procedure is invoked, the records from the Informal Resolution stage should be passed to the Executive Principal responsible for the MERIDIAN ITT IOE, except where the Principal or Executive Principal is the respondent or one of the respondents, in which case the records should be passed to the Trust HR manager who will either advise the CEO or the Chair of the Personnel Committee.

## 7.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

MERIDIAN ITT will review this procedure every 3 years or sooner if employment legislation is amended and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The Trust HR manager will monitor data arising from any harassment complaints or grievances and advise the Personnel Trust on an annual basis of any concerns.

## 8.0 Data Protection

Unless stated elsewhere in this policy the data gathered during this management process is processed in line with our data protection policy which can be found on our website – [www.Meridiantrust.co.uk/gdpr](http://www.Meridiantrust.co.uk/gdpr).

Any data gathered during this process will be held in line with our records retention policy which can be found on our website – [www.Meridiantrust.co.uk/gdpr](http://www.Meridiantrust.co.uk/gdpr).

If you have any questions about the way your data has been gathered or will be retained, please contact the MERIDIAN ITT Trust Data Protection officer at [dpo@Meridiantrust.co.uk](mailto:dpo@Meridiantrust.co.uk).