

Dignity at Work Policy

1. Purpose

The British Red Cross (BRC) is committed to an open, positive and honest working environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a safe and healthy working environment in which any form of disrespect, favouritism, harassment, bullying, discrimination, and victimisation is not tolerated.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Dignity at Work Policy, Dignity at Work: Policy and Procedure Guidance, and associated documents including those stated in Section 5.

2. Scope

This policy applies to staff and volunteers (our people) engaged in work-related activities.

This policy does not cover grievances. Refer to the Grievance Resolution Policy, Grievance Resolution Procedure, Volunteer Complaints, Issues and Concerns Policy and Volunteer Complaints, Issues and Concerns Procedure for conduct issues.

Formal reports of concern must be initiated in accordance with the Dignity at Work Procedure.

3. Policy Statement

We strive for the same standards of behaviour and respect with those we work with. We will ensure that unacceptable behaviour is reported and resolved in a fair, respectful and prompt manner, and in alignment with our organisational values of compassionate, courageous, inclusive and dynamic. We will do this according to the following principles and ensuring our people:

- 3.1.** understand their duty and responsibility to promote a positive working environment, which incorporates our organisational values, promotes openness, trust, and respect, thereby developing a culture where inclusion and diversity is valued. This includes acting when we see or hear something inappropriate, even if it is not aimed at us.
- 3.2.** act with respect of others regardless of differences. This includes always behaving in a polite and responsive manner, not causing embarrassment, alarm or distress to others, respecting differences of opinion, remaining professional and recognising the value everyone contributes, regardless of their position in the organisation.
- 3.3.** take appropriate action if they become aware of acts of unacceptable behaviours.

- 3.4. are encouraged to be proactive in raising potential concerns as they arise and using early resolution and mediation to address issues, where appropriate.
- 3.5. implement a formal route to resolution in instances where this is deemed appropriate.
- 3.6. have confidence that reports of concern will be dealt with in a confidential, sensitive and objective manner, and all parties involved will be treated with due respect and protected from victimisation.
- 3.7. are reassured that concerns will be considered in a trusting environment, using a trauma informed approach as appropriate, and support will be provided in resolving matters quickly, thereby preventing problems from escalating.
- 3.8. have confidence in a fair process and proportionate outcome based on available and relevant information, and evidence received and examined.
- 3.9. are provided with reasonable adjustments if and when identified and/ or requested at any stages of a reported concern.
- 3.10. can bring companions for support during any stages of an investigation.
- 3.11. have a pathway to appeal the outcome of a formal investigation.

3.12. Lessons Learned from Policy Evaluation

Lessons learned and improvement made to the procedure in response to feedback/ evaluation from internal and external stakeholders utilising the procedure on an operational level.

4. Responsibilities

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) are accountable for ensuring compliance with this policy.

The Chief Operating Officer together with the Senior Director of People and Head of People Advisory are responsible for oversight of this Policy.

The Head of People Advisory ensures implementation and compliance with this Policy.

Line Managers are responsible for operational implementation of, and compliance with, this policy.

The Owner (Chief Operating Officer) oversees the development or review of the policy document.

The Lead undertakes the policy review under the guidance, and with the support, of the Owner.

Our people are responsible for adherence to, and complying with, this policy.

5. Governance

Associated policy document/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR Policy Framework Grievance Resolution Policy Safeguarding Policy Data Protection Policy Information Governance Policy Confidentiality Policy Code of Conduct Raising a Concern Policy Disciplinary Policy Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Volunteer Complaints, Issues and Concerns Policy Incident Reporting Policy Records Management Policy 	
Policy(ies) superseded	N/A	
Legislation/ regulatory requirements and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality Act 2010 Worker Protection Act 2023 	
Equality impact assessment	No negative equality impact identified; positive impact intended.	
Data Protection impact assessment	No data protection impact identified. Documentation will be retained in accordance with the Records Retention Schedule.	
Environmental impact assessment	No environmental impacts have been identified in the policy, procedure or guidance document and no further action is required currently.	
Endorsing Authority; Endorsement date	Chief Operating Officer; 10 2025	
Approval Authority; Approval date	ELT; 10 2025	
Policy Owner	Chief Operating Officer	
Policy Lead	Head of People Advisory	
Date effective	02 2026	
Interim update date	N/A	
Review date	02 2029	
Version	1.0	
Keywords	bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation, safeguarding, resolution, mediation, reasonable adjustment, concern, incident, triage, trauma-informed, panel, confidential, appeal, Safecall	
Revision history	Version	Summary of change (s)
	1.0	Original policy document.
	2.0	Compliance with the Policy and Procedure

		Framework; following lessons learned and feedback from stakeholders' improvements made in terms of introduction of triage process and early resolution methods.
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Appendix: Definitions

Appeal: a formal request to review and potentially change a decision which has been made.

Bullying: the abuse or misuse of power to criticise, intimidate, insult, undermine or exclude an individual in a way which leaves them feeling hurt, humiliated, or vulnerable.

Companion: someone an individual chooses to accompany them to a workplace meeting.

Discrimination: can be direct or indirect. Direct discrimination occurs when an individual is treated less favourably than others and is generally unlawful. Indirect discrimination occurs when the effect of certain requirements, conditions or practices imposed by an employer has a disproportionate adverse effect on a particular group unless it can be justified.

Early Resolution: proactive and informal handling of workplace issues before they escalate into formal procedures, to resolve quickly, fairly and constructively, preserving relationships and promoting a positive working environment.

Grievance: a complaint raised by an employee about a workplace issue that they feel is unfair or has negatively affected them. Examples are health and safety or pay related issues.

Harassment: unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of: violating an individual's dignity; creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. It may be: an isolated incident or persistent behaviour; deliberate or unintentional; explicit or implicit. But as it is considered offensive/ unwelcome/ uninvited by the recipient, it acts in such a way as to humiliate, ridicule, or cause embarrassment.

Mediation: a structured, voluntary and confidential process in which an impartial party – a mediator – helps individuals to communicate effectively, understand each other's perspective and work towards a mutually acceptable resolution.

Reasonable adjustments: changes or modifications made to remove or reduce disadvantages experienced by individuals with disabilities or health conditions ensuring that they can fully participate in work and other settings.

Sexual Harassment: any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, written or physical, that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation. Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, unsolicited requests for sexual favours, or any other conduct of a sexual nature that offends, intimidates, or humiliates another individual

Trauma-informed approach: an approach which seeks to understand and respond to the impact of trauma on people's lives.

Victimisation: where an individual perceives they receive less favourable treatment than other individuals. An employee does not need to possess a protected characteristic to be protected against victimisation. However, to be unlawful, victimisation must be linked to a protected act.