

What to do if you are being bullied or harassed (adapted from national UCU document).

Do not ignore it

If you feel that you are being subjected to bullying or harassment – whether or not it is on the grounds of your gender, race, sexuality, disability, religion or belief, or any other reason, **or for no obvious reason at all - do not** feel that it is your fault or that you have to tolerate it.

Collect evidence of the bullying or harassment

Cases of bullying or harassment are notoriously difficult to establish. This is why it is important to keep a note of all relevant incidents including dates, times, and places, names of people who were present. You can start a journal, in which you record incidents factually and precisely (who, where, when, and what was said or done). Make sure you keep copies of any relevant documents including emails and other electronic information. Wherever possible, get witnesses to provide factual evidence. If there are no witnesses to an incident, tell a colleague or representative and make a note. This will be invaluable in proving your case if you make a complaint.

Get support and let us know!

Talk about the problem with a friend, a colleague, and/or UCU representative. Do not hesitate to contact someone even if an incident occurs only once. They may be able to suggest ways of resolving the problem. Report the problem to us, especially the **Secretary for Local Issues**, as soon as possible. Even if you decide not to pursue the case, it is important that the union is aware of any incidents of bullying or harassment. This for instance enables us to identify recurrent issues in specific Schools or units, and raise them with management.

Any discussions will be confidential and further action involving you will not normally be taken without your express permission. Nor will the person you are complaining about be given your name as the complainant without your permission.

Insist that the person responsible for bullying or harassment stops it

In some circumstances you might be able to ask the perpetrator to stop. If you wish, take a UCU representative or friend with you. It is important that you accompany your union representative even if you do not say anything. This will prevent the person responsible for

the offensive behaviour claiming that you did not complain personally, leading them to believe that you did not object. You can do this in writing – outline as clearly as possible what behaviour you find offensive and the effect it has on you. If you feel unable to directly confront the person concerned, this does not imply that you consent to the behaviour nor will it prejudice any complaint you may wish to bring.

Check Queen's policy on bullying and harassment and read it

The policy explains how to make a complaint for bullying or harassment and the investigation process. Note that there is a time limit: complaints will normally be investigated if they are brought **within 3 months** of when the complainant had knowledge of (or can reasonably be expected to have knowledge of) the act(s) complained of, or the last of a series of such acts.

Make a formal complaint

There are informal and formal stages for dealing with the situation. The decision on how to progress the complaint rests with the complainant.

If you or your UCU representative cannot resolve the problem by asking the person to stop, you or your representative should make a formal complaint, which should then be investigated by management.

If formal disciplinary proceedings are to be taken against the person responsible for the bullying or harassment, you will be required to give evidence. It may be difficult for you to undertake this but it would not be in your best interests for the case to be considered in your absence. Once the complaint becomes formal, UCU should insist that management conducts a risk assessment.

Want to know more?

You can also find information from the **National UCU website**, the **Labour Relations Agency**, and **ACAS** (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service).