

A Guide for Managers on Handling Harassment Complaints

Handling the initial conversation

- Find a quiet and confidential place to hold any discussion
- Keep an open mind
- You should not let your own views influence a situation or dismiss a concern
- Take their complaint seriously
- Provide reassurance
- Listen empathetically
- Keep a record of what was said. Make sure that the record is kept confidentially
- Ask what you can do to support the employee. This should be a collaborative discussion. Do not expect the employee to have all the answers.
- Refer to the business's [grievance][bullying & harassment] policy and explain the formal mechanisms available to the employee to lodge the complaint
- Set-out any option for informal reporting, including (if appropriate), an offer to speak to the alleged harasser yourself.
- If serious issues have been raised which may require urgent action by HR, explain that you will need to contact HR. For example, there may be a need to suspend the alleged perpetrator if the allegation is a serious one. There may be a need to start a prompt investigation.
- Do not leave the complaint hanging - explain what you will be doing next and when you will be in a position to report back to them
- You must not ignore or cover up a harassment complaint.

Useful supporting documents

You may find it helpful to refer to your Grievance policy & Bullying & Harassment Policy

HR support

Support is available from the Breathing Space HR team whenever issues such as this arise.

For advice from an HR professional at Breathing Space HR, call 0113 426 7735 or email us at howtohr@breathingspacehr.co.uk

DISCLAIMER: Breathing Space HR offers advice and these documents to UK organisations as a free service and cannot be responsible or liable to any person or entity in respect of any cost, loss or damage caused, consequential or otherwise, directly or indirectly by the information contained in any advice, policies or procedures or their component parts, this includes any mistakes therein on this website.

For advice from an HR professional at Breathing Space HR, call 0113 426 7735 or email us at howtohr@breathingspacehr.co.uk

DISCLAIMER: Breathing Space HR offers advice and these documents to UK organisations as a free service and cannot be responsible or liable to any person or entity in respect of any cost, loss or damage caused, consequential or otherwise, directly or indirectly by the information contained in any advice, policies or procedures or their component parts, this includes any mistakes therein on this website.