

Equal Opportunities Policy

INTRODUCTION

Gloverspiece is an equal opportunity employer and is fully committed to a policy of treating all of its employees and job applicants equally.

All employees have a duty to ensure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities for all and to help prevent all forms of discrimination, harassment or bullying. Action will be taken under Gloverspiece's disciplinary procedure against any employee who is found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation. Serious breaches of the Equal Opportunities policy will be treated as gross misconduct and could render the employee liable to summary dismissal. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the organisation, for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

POLICY STATEMENT

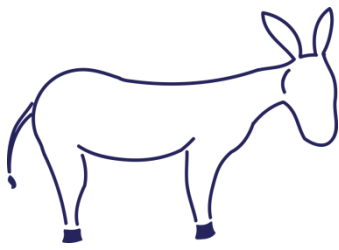
Our organisation will take all reasonable steps to employ, promote and treat all applicants and employees in the same way, regardless of the following 'Protected Characteristics': age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

Gloverspiece will avoid unlawful discrimination of any kind in all aspects of recruitment and employment. We will recruit, train, develop and promote on the basis of merit, skills, qualifications and abilities alone. Where a decision needs to be made, whether it is on pay increases, bonuses or disciplinary action, this will only ever be based on an individual's performance and contribution to the organisation. This policy is in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and any other associated legislation.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Gloverspiece is committed to encouraging and achieving a working environment which is strengthened by fairness to all individuals, where equality and diversity are recognised, encouraged and valued. All employees are treated with respect and dignity that is free of harassment based upon an employee's race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, marital or civil partnership status or disability.

All employees have a duty to help prevent all forms of discrimination and/or harassment and victimisation. If anyone suspects discriminatory acts or practices or cases of harassment, a member of the Senior Leadership Team should be notified immediately. If a report of any kind is made, the person report must not be victimised in any way. Such behaviour will be treated as potential gross misconduct in accordance with Gloverspiece's disciplinary procedure.



TYPES OF UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION

There are various forms of discrimination and to varying degrees. Discrimination is not always a physical or conscious activity. It can instead be part of a working practice which is of detriment to one person or group of people.

- *Direct Discrimination*

Direct discrimination applies to the protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. An employer will directly discriminate if they treat a person less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic. *An example of direct sex discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she was pregnant.*

- *Associative Discrimination*

Associative discrimination is a form of direct discrimination against an individual because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. Associative discrimination applies to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. *An example of associative discrimination might be where an employer refuses to promote an employee who they know has a disabled parent living at home. The employer believes the employee will be unable to carry out their new role effectively due to caring responsibilities for the parent. This would be discrimination against the employee because of their association with a disabled person.*

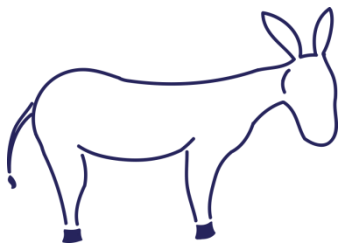
- *Perceptive Discrimination*

Perceptive discrimination is a form of direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. Perceptive discrimination applies to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic. *An example of perceptive discrimination might be where an employer does not allow an employee to represent the organisation at an awards ceremony as they are too young. This is discrimination against the individual on the perception of a protected characteristic – e.g., their age.*

- *Indirect Discrimination*

Indirect discrimination can occur when a condition, rule, policy or practice applies to everyone in an organisation but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination can be justified if an employer can show they acted reasonably in managing the organisation. Indirect discrimination applies to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership. *An example of indirect discrimination might be failing to provide religiously appropriate food when catering. If this action cannot be objectively justified and is to the individual's detriment, then the practice, policy or specific criteria would be unlawful.*



- *Harassment*

Harassment occurs when another person engages in unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which may violate the person's dignity or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. Employees can complain of behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them and they do not need to possess the relevant protected characteristic themselves.

Where educational setting such as ours are concerned, harassment applies only to disability, race, sex or pregnancy and maternity and not to religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender assignment. However, Gloverspiece does not accept harassment of any type.

- *Victimisation*

Victimisation makes it unlawful for one person to treat another badly because that person has made or supported a complaint, or raised a grievance, under the Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so. *An example would be where an employee raises a grievance because they feel they have been discriminated against by their manager because they are gay and a colleague supports them by corroborating what they said. The complaint is resolved however, both employees are then given poorer quality work by their manager and as a result earn less commission. Both employees could claim victimisation based on less favourable treatment for raising and supporting a complaint of discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation.*

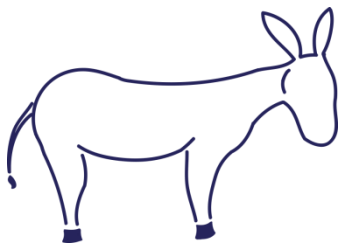
- *Failure to Make Reasonable Adjustments*

Where arrangements disadvantage an individual because of a disability, employers are expected to make reasonable adjustments to arrangements or practices to alleviate disadvantage and are also under the duty to consider alterations to physical features of the site where that is reasonable to avoid disadvantage caused by disability. *An example would be where a building only has steps for access. If it is reasonable to do so, the employer should install a ramp.*

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Senior Leadership Team will ensure:

- The existence of statements of equal opportunity values, policies and objectives of the organisation
- The inclusion of all varieties of discriminatory based harassment, bullying and victimisation in disciplinary offences; and the existence of a procedure for employees to pursue grievances about such harassment
- That the policy is reviewed and updated in line with future changes in legislation, case law and relevant codes of practice
- Set a good example by their own behaviour and make sure that employees are aware of the standards expected of them
- Provide a working environment that discourages harassment and takes positive action against any employee who infringes the rules. This should include formal disciplinary action
- Check that job adverts and requirements are really necessary to the job and not a reflection of any traditional biased practices or stereotypes when recruiting



- Provide an environment whereby an individual will be comfortable in raising a grievance should they have suffered harassment or discrimination
- Take complaints about employees, customers, suppliers or visitors seriously and take prompt action to resolve and investigate as appropriate

All Employees

All employees have responsibility are required to adopt the following equal opportunity practices:

- Co-operate with any measures introduced to develop or monitor equal opportunity
- Refrain from taking discriminatory actions or decisions that are contrary to the spirit of this policy
- Not harass, abuse or intimidate other employees for any reason, including discriminatory reasons
- Not place pressure on other employees to act in a discriminatory manner
- Discourage behaviour which may be discriminatory
- Resist pressure to discriminate when other employees are trying to influence them to do so
- Co-operate with investigations into acts or conduct that may amount to unfair or unlawful discrimination, including providing evidence from which discrimination may be inferred and disciplinary action taken
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team, if they are aware of any action being taken by an employee which is contrary to this policy.

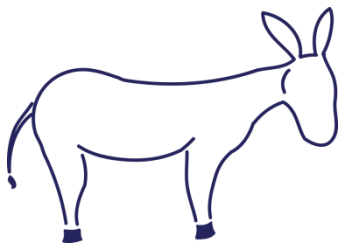
RECRUITMENT, ADVERTISING AND SELECTION

The recruitment process will be conducted in such a way as to result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job in terms of relevant knowledge and skills, experience, abilities, character and qualifications. Gloverspiece is committed to applying this policy statement at all stages of recruitment and selection.

Advertisements will encourage applications from all suitably qualified and experienced people.

When advertising job vacancies, in order to attract applications from all sections of the community, Gloverspiece will, as far as reasonably practicable:

- Ensure advertisements are not confined to those publications which would exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants of a particular gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or racial group.
- Avoid prescribing any unnecessary requirements which would exclude a higher proportion of a particular gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or racial group or which would exclude disabled job applicants.
- Avoid prescribing any requirements as to marital or civil partnership status.
- Where vacancies may be filled by promotion or transfer, they will be published to all eligible employees in such a way that they do not restrict applications from employees of any particular gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or racial group or from employees with a disability.



The selection process will be carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels. All applications will be processed in the same way. The staff responsible for short-listing, interviewing and selecting candidates will be clearly informed of the selection criteria and of the need for their consistent application. Person specifications and job descriptions will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Wherever possible, all applicants will be interviewed by at least two interviewers and all questions asked of the applicants will be related to the requirements of the job. The selection of new staff will be based on the job requirements and the individual's suitability to do, or to train for, the job in question.

For disabled applicants, Gloverspiece will have regard to its duty to make reasonable adjustments to work provisions, criteria and practices or to work premises in order to ensure that the disabled person is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

All applicants will be dealt with courteously and as expeditiously as possible. Appointments will be confirmed on receipt of satisfactory references, DBS checks, confirmation of medical fitness, and satisfactory completion of a probationary period.

Applicants will not be asked health-related questions until an offer has been made, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the job role.

TRAINING AND PROMOTION

Line Managers will be trained in Gloverspiece's policy on equal opportunities and in helping to identify discriminatory acts or practices or acts of harassment or bullying. Line managers will be responsible for ensuring they actively promote equal opportunity within the departments for which they are responsible.

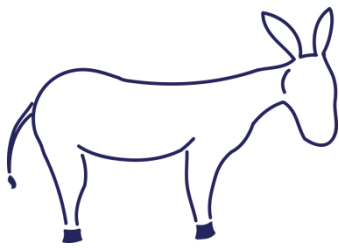
Gloverspiece will also provide training to all employees to help them understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to dignity at work and what they can do to create a work environment that is free of bullying and harassment.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT, BENEFITS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

All terms of employment, benefits, facilities and service will be reviewed from time to time in order to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, marital or civil partnership status or disability.

EQUAL PAY

Gloverspiece is committed to equal pay in employment. It believes its male and female employees should receive equal pay for like work, work rated as equivalent or work of equal value. In order to achieve this, we will endeavour to maintain a pay system that is transparent, free from bias and based on objective criteria.



BULLYING AND HARRASMENT

General Principles

Gloverspiece is committed to providing a work environment which is free from embarrassment, intimidation, threats, discrimination, bullying or harassment. It is the duty of all employees to ensure that the organisation's procedure on bullying and harassment is carried out as quickly and thoroughly as possible. Gloverspiece will do all that is reasonably possible to prevent bullying and harassment occurring and will take all necessary steps to ensure that this policy is implemented effectively.

Bullying

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour or misuse of power which is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure an individual. 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. It includes physical, mental, verbal or non-verbal behaviours which may be passive, obvious and public or subtle and hidden, face to face or via telephone, email, text or social networking and includes cyberbullying/trolling).

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to: -

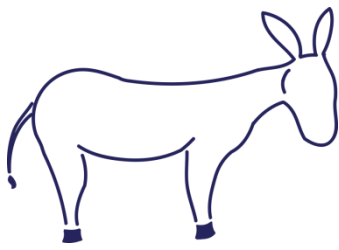
- Unfair treatment
- Coarse or insensitive jokes and pranks
- Coarse or insensitive comments about appearance or character
- Deliberate exclusion from social activities or conversation and/or exclusion from normal workplace conversation
- Offensive, malicious, insulting or intimidatory behaviour
- Abusive, insulting or threatening language
- Unwelcome familiarity or body contact
- Physical or psychological threats
- Persistent teasing or constant unfounded criticism of the performance of work tasks
- Overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision
- Inappropriate derogatory remarks about someone's performance
- Unfair allocation of work and responsibilities

Bullying is often difficult to detect and therefore it is the responsibility of every employee to ensure that this type of harassment does not occur and to report any incidents immediately as and when they arise.

Harassment

Harassment occurs where, on the ground of an employee's race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, marital or civil partnership status or disability, a person engages in unwanted conduct that:

- Has the purpose of violating the employee's dignity at work, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive work environment for the employee; or



- Is reasonably considered by the employee to have the effect of violating their dignity at work, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive work environment for the employee, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Harassment also occurs where, related to either the employee's sex or that of another individual, a person engages in unwanted conduct that:

- Has the purpose of violating the employee's dignity at work, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive work environment for the employee; or
- Is reasonably considered by the employee to have the effect of violating their dignity at work, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive work environment for the employee, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Gloverspiece recognises that harassment can humiliate, frighten, offend and demean an individual it is aimed against. Gloverspiece considers harassment to amount to misconduct, which will be dealt with under the disciplinary policy and may lead to dismissal for a first offence if deemed to be gross misconduct. An alternative course of action will be considered for less serious infringements if appropriate.

Racial, Religion or Belief Based Discrimination

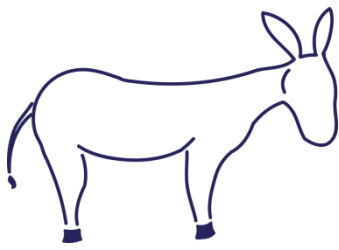
This can take many forms. It is generally considered to be behaviour that is offensive, embarrassing, insulting or intimidating. It may include any unwanted non-verbal, verbal or physical abuse that is racially derogatory and potentially offensive. *Examples of racial harassment include offensive and insensitive quips and jokes which are related to a person's race or religion; the deliberate exclusion and isolation of an individual; threatening or insulting words or behaviour; the display of abusive writing or pictures.*

Discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief can occur even where both the discriminator and recipient are of the same religion or belief. Protection also applies where individuals do not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. 'Belief' refers to any religious or philosophical belief, or the lack of such a belief. To be protected, a belief must play a substantial part in the individual's everyday life and behaviour.

Sexual or Sex Based Harassment

This consists of unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. It will include any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Such conduct may include (although this is by no means an exhaustive list), unwanted physical conduct of a sexual nature; inappropriate, suggestive or uninvited comments; displays of sexual or sexually aggressive literature and pictures; unwelcome sexual propositions or repeated unwelcome invitations; lewd comments or insensitive jokes.

Sexual Orientation or Gender Re-assignment Harassment



Harassment based on sexual orientation or gender re-assignment can take many forms and includes harassment based on both real and perceived ideas about someone's sexual orientation, or gender reassignment. It may include any intentional or unintentional behaviour displaying non-verbal, verbal or physical abuse that is derogatory and potentially offensive. *Examples of such harassment include offensive and insensitive quips and jokes which are related to a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender history, or that of any of their associates; the deliberate exclusion and isolation of an individual; threatening or insulting words or behaviour; the display of abusive writing or pictures.*

Discrimination on the grounds of Age

Protection from age discrimination applies to all workers and protects them from being directly and indirectly discriminated against, harassed or victimised on the basis of their age. Age harassment can affect people in any age group, and can consist of unwanted verbal, non-verbal and physical abuse regarding a person's age that is potentially offensive, which the harasser knew or should have known would cause offence. Typical examples of ageist harassment can include offensive and insensitive jokes, insulting words, inappropriate pictures and threatening behaviour.

Harassment on the grounds of Disability or Associative Discrimination

It is unlawful to discriminate against disabled people or carers, or anyone associated with a disabled person, in the field of employment and in the provision of goods, facilities and services; this could constitute less favourable treatment on the grounds of disability. The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as "a person who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

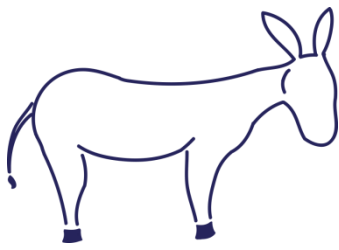
Employees can raise a harassment complaint regarding any of the above, if they find the behaviour offensive, even where the behaviour it is not directed at them personally. The complainant need not possess any of the relevant protected characteristics.

Harassment on the basis of Marital or Civil Partnership Status

Same-sex couples in the UK are able to apply for legal recognition of their relationship by registering as civil partners.

Same-sex couples who register as civil partners have similar rights and responsibilities as a married couple, including access to employment and pension benefits. A civil partner has comparable status to a spouse and therefore the same protection from discrimination and harassment on the grounds of marital status extends to civil partners.

Any complaints of bullying and/or harassment, including behaviour that you find offensive which has not been directed at you personally, should be reported. The matter will be dealt with in a discreet and confidential manner and appropriate action taken. It is not the intention of the perpetrator that is key to deciding whether harassment has occurred but whether the behaviour is unacceptable by normal standards and is detrimental to the recipient.



REPORTING COMPLAINTS

All allegations of bullying, discrimination or harassment will be handled sensitively, in a timely and confidential manner with a view to ensuring, so far as practicable, minimal stress to those involved.

Gloverspiece will not ignore or treat lightly grievances or complaints of discrimination or harassment from members of a particular race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, sex sexual orientation or age or from employees who have undergone gender reassignment, are married, have entered into a civil partnership or have a disability.

Gloverspiece recognises the right of employees to determine for themselves whether the words or behaviour of others is acceptable to them and to bring a complaint in respect of harassment. Harassment can include behaviour which has not been direct at the employee personally, but which the employee finds offensive.

If you believe you are being harassed or bullied, consider whether you feel able to raise the problem informally with the person responsible. You should explain clearly to them that their behaviour is not welcome or makes you uncomfortable. If this is not appropriate or has not been successful, you should speak to SLT who can provide confidential advice and assistance in resolving the issue formally or informally.

Informal Complaints Procedure

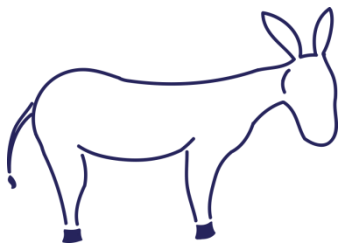
If an employee feels that they have been a victim of harassment in the workplace they may, in some cases, be able to resolve the matter satisfactorily by explaining clearly to the perpetrator (verbally or in writing) that their behaviour is unacceptable and must stop. Employees may wish to ask a colleague to do this on their behalf or to be with them when they speak to the perpetrator. Employees are encouraged to notify management in the first instance, who will offer personal assistance. Any such discussion will be strictly confidential. If it is considered by the employee to be appropriate, the management team will seek to resolve the matter informally by explaining to the alleged perpetrator that:

- There has been a complaint that their behaviour is having an adverse effect on a fellow employee
- Any such behaviour is contrary to the Gloverspiece's policy and must stop
- The continuation of such behaviour would amount to a serious disciplinary offence, and
- The discussion is informal and confidential

Employees should keep a written record of incidents so they can accurately report what has happened, noting for example the date, time and nature of incidents, and the names of any witnesses. Where possible, employees should try to avoid being alone with the bully/harasser.

Formal Complaints Procedure

If an informal resolution to the matter is not successful, or is considered inappropriate in the circumstances, the employee may make a formal complaint of harassment to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.



Any complaint will be investigated promptly, impartially and confidentially and the complainant will be asked to provide the following details:

- The name of the alleged harasser
- The nature of the harassment
- The dates and times the harassment occurred
- The names of any witnesses
- Any action taken by the complainant to resolve the matter informally

Where the evidence gathered in the investigation indicates that a disciplinary offence has been committed, HR will be contacted to discuss next steps.

In harassment cases, the format of the normal disciplinary procedure will be used. However, the alleged harasser will have no right, without the agreement of the individual concerned, to confront personally the complainant or any witness.

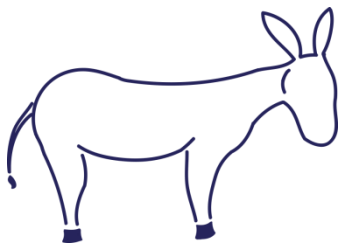
If, after full investigation, there is insufficient evidence to warrant disciplinary action, consideration will be given, where practicable, to transferring or rescheduling the work of one of the parties. This course of action is only likely to be considered where continuing to work together is against the wishes of either party. This may also take place following disciplinary action in which sanctions are imposed.

Gloverspiece expects employees to act responsibly regarding this issue, as false accusations of harassment can have a serious effect on innocent individuals.

Wherever possible, we will try to ensure that the parties are not required to work together whilst the complaint is under investigation. This could involve giving the alleged victim the option of remaining home on special leave. In serious cases the alleged harasser may be suspended during any investigation and/or disciplinary proceedings. Suspension with pay is not in itself disciplinary action, it is a temporary measure to allow for the proper conduct of the disciplinary process.

If you wish to make a complaint of bullying, discrimination or harassment, whether against Gloverspiece, a fellow employee or a third party, you should follow the following steps:

1. In the first instance report the incident of discrimination or harassment to SLT.
2. Such reports should be made promptly so that an investigation may proceed, and any action taken expeditiously.
3. All allegations of discrimination or harassment will be taken seriously. The allegation will be promptly investigated and, as part of the investigatory process, you will be interviewed and asked to provide a written witness statement setting out the details of your complaint. Confidentiality will be maintained during the investigatory process to the extent that this is practical and appropriate in the circumstances. However, in order to effectively investigate an allegation, Gloverspiece must be able to determine the scope of the investigation and the individuals who should be informed of or interviewed about the allegation. *For example, the identity of the complainant and the nature of the allegations must be revealed to the alleged harasser or discriminator so that they are able to fairly respond to the allegations. The*



organisation reserves the right to arrange for another manager to conduct the investigation other than the manager with whom you raised the matter.

4. Gloverspiece will also invite you to attend at least one meeting at a reasonable time and place at which your complaint can be discussed. You must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting and you have the right to be accompanied by either a trade union official or a fellow employee of your choice.
5. Once the investigation has been concluded, and after the meeting with you has taken place, you will be informed of the outcome, conclusion and decision in writing as soon as possible. You will also be notified in writing of your right to appeal against the Gloverspiece's decision if you are not satisfied with it. We are committed to taking appropriate action with respect to all complaints of discrimination or harassment which are upheld.
6. If you wish to appeal against Gloverspiece's decision, you must appeal in writing within five working days of the decision. On receipt of an appeal, arrangements will be made to hear it at an appeal meeting and at that meeting you may again, if you wish, be accompanied by either a trade union representative or a fellow employee of your choice. You must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. Following the meeting, you will be informed in writing of the final decision on your appeal.
7. You will not be penalised for raising a complaint, even if it is not upheld, unless your complaint was both untrue and made in bad faith.
8. If your complaint is upheld and the harasser or discriminator remains in Gloverspiece's employment, reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that you do not have to continue working alongside them if you do not wish to do so.
9. If your complaint is not upheld, arrangements will be made for you and the alleged harasser or discriminator to continue to resume working and to repair working relationships.

Any employee who is found to have discriminated against or harassed another employee in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action under the Gloverspiece's disciplinary procedure. Such behaviour may be treated as gross misconduct and could render the employee liable to summary dismissal.

Policy Reviewed by: Lynne Duffy
Review Date: December 2024
Next Review Due: December 2025