

Anti-Harassment & Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Statement

MetaGedu Apprenticeships is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all apprentices, staff, employers, and stakeholders. We operate a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment, cyberbullying, and victimisation, and will take all reasonable steps to prevent and address such behaviour.

This policy supports our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and aligns with the DfE Funding Rules, Keeping Children Safe in Education and Ofsted expectations regarding learner welfare and behaviour.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All apprentices
- Employees, trainers, and assessors
- Employers and workplace mentors
- Contractors and visitors

It covers behaviour occurring:

- In training centres
- In the workplace
- During off-the-job training
- Online and via digital platforms (including social media, email, instant messaging, and other apps)
- During trips, events, or work placements

Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Equality Act 2010
- Department for Education (DfE) Funding Rules
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Prevent Duty (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015)

Definitions

Bullying

Bullying is unwanted behaviour that is offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting and which undermines, humiliates, or causes distress. It may be a single serious incident or repeated behaviour. It can be:

- Verbal (e.g., name-calling, threats)
- Physical (e.g., pushing, intimidation)
- Emotional or psychological (e.g., exclusion, rumours)
- Cyberbullying (e.g., sending abusive messages, public shaming, posting harmful content online, impersonation)

Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation) which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment includes unwanted sexual advances, comments, gestures, or contact.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a concern.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using digital technology, including social media, messaging apps, email, or online platforms. Examples include:

- Sending threatening or abusive messages
- Sharing humiliating or private information without consent
- Impersonating someone online to damage their reputation
- Excluding or targeting someone online repeatedly

Unacceptable Behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- Offensive, discriminatory, or threatening language

- Unwanted physical contact
- Humiliation or exclusion
- Spreading rumours
- Abuse of power
- Online abuse, harassment, or cyberbullying
- Retaliation against someone who reports concerns

Responsibilities

MetaGedu Apprenticeships Will:

- Promote equality, diversity, and mutual respect
- Provide clear reporting routes
- Respond promptly to concerns
- Investigate complaints fairly and impartially
- Protect individuals from victimisation
- Work with employers to resolve workplace issues
- Provide appropriate support to those affected

Apprentices, Staff, and Employers Must:

- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Not engage in bullying, harassment, or cyberbullying
- Report concerns promptly
- Cooperate with investigations

Reporting Procedure

Any apprentice or staff member experiencing or witnessing bullying, harassment, or cyberbullying should report the matter as soon as possible to one of the following:

- Apprenticeship Development Coach
- Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Line Manager
- Designated Complaints Officer (Head of Quality)

Reports may be made verbally or in writing. Anonymous reports will be considered where appropriate.

Where an incident occurs in the workplace or online, MetaGedu Apprenticeships will liaise with the employer and IT or safeguarding staff as appropriate to ensure appropriate action is taken.

Investigation Procedure

All complaints will be:

- Taken seriously
- Handled confidentially
- Investigated promptly and impartially
- Documented in line with data protection requirements

Both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator will have the opportunity to present their account. Informal resolution may be considered for minor issues; serious or repeated incidents, including cyberbullying, will result in formal action.

Outcomes and Sanctions

Where bullying, harassment, or cyberbullying is substantiated, outcomes may include:

- Mediation
- Behaviour improvement plans
- Training or awareness sessions
- Formal warnings
- Removal from programme
- Disciplinary action
- Referral to employer HR procedures
- Referral to external agencies where required

Support and Protection

MetaGedu Apprenticeships will:

- Offer welfare and safeguarding support
- Make reasonable adjustments where required
- Protect individuals from retaliation
- Refer to external support services where appropriate

Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Data Protection Policy

- Online Safety / Acceptable Use Policy

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to legislative or ESFA funding rule changes. All apprentices and staff will be informed of any updates.

Policy Owner: Head of Quality, Compliance & Curriculum

Approved by: Senior Leadership Team

Review Frequency: Annual

Last Review Date: February 2026

Next Review Date: February 2027