

Treating everyone with respect

We hugely value all people and our expectation is that everyone will feel valued, loved and accepted. Where this is not the case we hope that you feel you can talk to the Senior Team and share your concerns without prejudice.

AIMS

The Bridge expects all Bridge employees and volunteers to act:

- With dignity and maturity in all their dealings connected with the organisation's work and activities
- With similar respect to persons, attitudes, beliefs and actions of all others involved in every area of the work, i.e. team, schools, office, churches etc.

Our policy and commitment is to ensure that everyone connected with the Bridge (including applying for employment and following termination of employment) is treated fairly and with respect, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or union membership. This includes those applying for employment unless the role has a Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR) attached to it.

It is the responsibility of the Trustees, the Director and Senior Team to treat employees in accordance with the above aims and to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect. This involves:

- Preventing and punishing misconduct. Misconduct such as harassment (sexual, racial, disability or religious), insulting comments or actions (regardless of the method used), bullying, intimidation, swearing, initiation rites or 'ceremonies', etc are not acceptable, cannot be tolerated and will be subject to severe sanction.
- Avoiding prejudice. All actions and decisions should be based only on consideration of an employee's or applicant's ability to perform the job. No judgement may be made subject to any prejudice.
- Encouraging individual and team development. The responsibility of the Trustees, Director and Senior Team is to help employees succeed both individually and as members of the team. All employees must have an equal opportunity to develop themselves and their talents and to be considered for training and promotion.

Comprehensive Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Trustees, Director and Senior Team to ensure that all the staff and volunteers comply with this policy at all times.

It is the responsibility of every employee and volunteer to ensure they comply with this policy.

It is the responsibility of everyone to treat all those with whom they come into contact during their working life with respect.

Liability

Breach of this policy will lead to disciplinary action, in some cases involving dismissal without notice. In addition to internal sanctions some breaches would also be a breach

of legal requirements leading to criminal law sanctions including damages and/or substantial fines / or imprisonment.

Complaint and investigation

Anyone believing themselves to have been dealt with in breach of this policy should report the matter to their immediate superior (or if this is inappropriate since the superior is allegedly involved) to the Director or Chair of the Trustees.

Efforts will be made to preserve the confidentiality of both alleged victim and accused, at least until the matter is resolved.

Investigation will be commenced within one working day of a complaint being lodged. Such investigation will be thorough and completed as quickly as possible with any appropriate sanctions applied fairly and swiftly.

To make a complaint of a breach of this policy it will be necessary to have:

- Details of what, when and where the occurrence(s) took place
- Names(s) of any witness(es)
- Details of any other complaints made about the incident, date etc.
- Details of any others believed to have been treated in a similar way
- Any preference for a solution, if applicable.

Sanctions

Any employee, no matter what level, found to be in breach of this policy will be instructed to desist forthwith. Failure to do so may be regarded as gross misconduct. Serious breaches of this policy, even on the first occasion, may also be regarded as gross misconduct.

In determining an appropriate sanction the views of the victim may be taken into consideration.

Monitoring

The Bridge will continue to monitor potential discrimination and prejudice, ensuring that equal opportunities are communicated and practically delivered across every sphere of the Bridge as a registered charity.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.