

Bullying and Harassment Policy

The basic principle of this policy is that all those who choose to be part of the Poultry Club of Great Britain (PCGB), as a member, volunteer, staff or guest, should be treated with dignity and respect at all times. Bullying and harassment of any kind are not in the Club's interest and will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

This policy applies to all PCGB Trustees, members, volunteers and staff, including those carrying out activities at affiliated events and those held under the PCGB rules.

What are Bullying and Harassment?

Harassment, in general terms is unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of an individual, where actions or comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient. It can be related to age, gender, race, disability, religion, belief, sexuality, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual, and can be persistent or an isolated incident.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour; an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Legitimate, constructive and fair criticism of an individual's performance or behaviour is not bullying; likewise an occasional raised voice or argument is not considered bullying.

Bullying or harassment may be by an individual against an individual or involve groups of people; it may be obvious and can also be insidious. It may be face to face or in written communications, electronic e-mail, or by phone.

Whatever form it takes, it is unwarranted and unwelcome to the individual. It may take place in private or in public.

Examples of bullying/harassing behaviour include:

- spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone by word or behaviour (particularly on the grounds of race, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief)
- copying information to others (that is confidential) that do not need to know
- ridiculing or demeaning someone - picking on them or setting them up to fail
- exclusion or victimisation
- unfair treatment
- overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position
- unwelcome sexual advances, touching, standing too close, sharing offensive materials
- making threats or comments without foundation

- deliberately undermining a competent individual; overloading them and/or through constant criticism
- preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking election, promotion, volunteering or training opportunities.

Procedures

Complaints of bullying and/or harassment, or information from members relating to such issues, will be dealt with fairly, confidentially and sensitively using the general format set out in the PCGB's Grievance and/or Disciplinary Procedures.

Investigation

Complaints are taken seriously and will be investigated promptly, objectively and independently. Decisions can then be made as to what action should be taken.

Informal action

If appropriate, the matter will be dealt with informally; occasionally people can be not unaware that their behaviour is unwelcome and an informal discussion can lead to greater understanding and an agreement that the behaviour will cease to continue.

Formal action

In more serious cases of bullying or harassment, a more formal approach may be required, which will be conducted through the PCGB's Disciplinary Procedure. Where bullying or harassment amounts to gross misconduct, the PCGB may require membership to be temporally suspended while an investigation is undertaken; under no circumstances should this be seen to be as a disciplinary measure.

Counselling and Mediation

Counselling or mediation may be considered, particularly where investigation shows no cause for disciplinary action, or where it may be useful to help resolve the issue or help support the person accused as well as the complainant.

Unfounded allegations

Staff, Trustees, members and volunteers lodging a complaint will not be disciplined for doing so. However, if an unfounded allegation of bullying and/or harassment is made for malicious reasons, the case may then be investigated and dealt with fairly and objectively under the PCGB's Disciplinary Procedure.

How can bullying and harassment be recognised?

Bullying and harassment can often be hard to recognise; they may not be obvious to others, and could be insidious. The recipient may think this is normal behaviour, or part of the culture; they may be anxious that others will consider them weak, or not up to fulfilling their responsibilities if they find the actions of others intimidating. People being bullied or harassed may sometimes appear to overreact to something that seems relatively trivial but which may be the "last straw" following a series of incidents. There can be a fear of retribution if a complaint is made and colleagues and fellow members may be reluctant to come forward as witnesses, as they too may fear the consequences to themselves. Bullying and harassment can make the recipient feel

anxious and humiliated; lose self-confidence and self-esteem and often become unwell. Some people may try to retaliate in some way, whilst others may become frightened and demotivated.

Why do we need to take action?

Bullying and harassment are not only unacceptable on moral grounds and may, if unchecked or badly handled, create further problems. The PCGB promotes a culture of wellbeing where dignity and respect are embraced and promoted to staff, volunteers, members and guests.

Action by Staff and Trustees

The PCGB Board of Trustees should be clear about the standards of behaviour expected, set a good example in their own behaviours and ensure that individuals are fully aware of their responsibilities towards others.

Review

These policies and procedures will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with changes in law and equality and diversity legislation.

Adopted on: 21st May 2019

To be reviewed: May 2021