

WP&CS of Australia Inc.

ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY

The Welsh Pony and Cob Society of Australia Inc. (WPCSA) endeavours to uphold the rights of all employees and members including Committee of Management (COM) and sub-committee members and volunteers, who deserve to be treated with respect at all times.

All members and should consider the impact of their conduct on others and always be courteous to all members and employees of the Society.

At all times, comments and conversation should be used with care and sensitivity, and members should consider the possible impact of their behaviour on others around them.

Any behaviour which is deemed to be bullying, harassment or victimisation will not be tolerated.

Dependant on the severity of the behaviour, disciplinary action may be taken against any member who violates this policy, in accordance with the procedures laid out in the Disciplinary Procedures of the WPCSA Rules. This may include warnings, and possible suspension of membership for serious offences.

Proven cases of bullying harassment or victimisation could involve personal liability for members involved.

BULLYING is an abuse of power and may be using both personal strength and / or the power to coerce through fear or intimidation. It usually, although not always, involves persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour.

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship,
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

There are four main types of bullying behaviour:

- Physical – examples include hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- Verbal/written – examples include name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.
- Social (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

- Cyberbullying – any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviour is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic, such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours and may have serious consequences for members engaging in this behaviour:

- Persistent and unnecessary criticism.
- Physical or psychological threats.
- Shouting in public or private.
- Deliberate isolation by ignoring or excluding someone.
- Withholding information or removing responsibility without justification.
- Spreading malicious rumours.
- Making inappropriate personal comments.
- Setting impossible objectives with the deliberate intention of undermining someone.
- 'Cyber bullying' - using electronic information to deliberately threaten or intimidate an individual or group of individuals via postings on the internet including social media.

HARASSMENT is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to harassment.

It also includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to such behaviour in the past.

Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), or it may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Any harassment is unacceptable, even if it does not fall within any of these categories.

Harassment may include, for example:

- Unwanted physical conduct or "horseplay", including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing.
- Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive as harmless).
- Offensive e-mails, text messages or social media content mocking, mimicking or belittling a person's disability.

A person may feel harassed even if they were not the intended target.

For example, a person may be harassed by racist jokes about a different ethnic group if the jokes create an offensive environment.

VICTIMISATION is where an individual is singled out for exercising their legal and other rights.

Bullying, harassment and victimisation do not necessarily take place face to face but may be by any type of communication including telephone, email or internet and other social media postings.

Any member subject to or aware of bullying, harassment or victimisation should report the matter to the Committee of Management of the WPCSA.

The Committee of Management of the WPCSA will:

- Treat any complaint promptly, sensitively and thoroughly having regard to the rights of both the complainant and the alleged transgressor.
- Keep discussions as confidential as possible.
- Refer to the WPCSA 'Standard Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures for Breaches of Codes of Conduct' when addressing alleged cases of bullying, harassment and victimisation and false and malicious complaint.

All members should be aware of their own conduct, avoid colluding in inappropriate behaviour, and co-operate fully in any complaint procedures.

Members should be mindful that by 'liking' or commenting on social media posts, they may be legally liable regarding possible action taken.

The Committee of Management has a responsibility to raise awareness of the issues, respond positively to any complaints, and challenge and stop unacceptable behaviour in the workplace or amongst the membership.

False or malicious complaints of bullying, harassment or victimisation may lead to disciplinary action against the complainant.

Complainants are reminded when submitting a complaint, the WPCS Australia Inc. 'Standard Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures for Breaches of Codes of Conduct' policy procedures should be referred to and must be followed and to that they must also refer to the Social Media Policy re Bullying etc.