SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

1. Policy Overview

Jones Bros Ruthin (Civil Engineering) Co Ltd is committed to providing a workplace that is free from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment and bullying. Every employee has the right to work in an environment that promotes respect, dignity, and equality. This policy outlines our commitment to preventing sexual harassment and bullying, providing clear procedures for addressing complaints, and ensuring that all individuals are treated fairly.

This policy complies with the **Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Bill**, effective from October 2024, which strengthens the protection against sexual harassment and requires action against all forms of workplace bullying.

2. Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as **unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature** that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment. Sexual harassment can be **physical, verbal, non-verbal, or written** and may occur once or repeatedly. It includes but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome physical contact, such as touching, hugging, or inappropriate gestures.
- Inappropriate sexual remarks or jokes, either directly or through digital communication.
- Displaying or circulating sexually explicit images, materials, or emails.
- Making sexual propositions or engaging in flirtatious behaviour that is unwelcome.
- Any threats or promises related to employment conditions based on the acceptance or rejection of sexual advances.

The key factor is that this conduct is **unwanted** and has the effect of making the recipient feel uncomfortable, intimidated, or offended.

3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as **offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting behaviour**, or an abuse or misuse of power, which undermines, humiliates, or causes harm to the individual, either physically or mentally. Bullying can take many forms and can be both **overt and subtle**. It is often persistent, but even a single incident can amount to bullying if it is sufficiently serious.

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to:

- **Verbal abuse**, such as shouting or swearing at an individual in public or private.
- **Threats of physical violence** or actual physical assault.
- **Undermining someone's work** by unfairly criticising or setting impossible deadlines.
- **Excluding or ignoring** an individual to isolate them.
- **Spreading malicious rumours** or gossip.
- **Intentionally blocking promotion or professional opportunities**.

Bullying is not necessarily always a manager-to-employee issue; it can occur between peers or be directed at more senior staff by subordinates.

4. Examples of Sexual Harassment and Bullying

- **Sexual Harassment**:
  - Unwanted physical contact, such as touching or grabbing.
  - Making lewd remarks or jokes.
  - Sending inappropriate emails or text messages with sexual content.
  - Making sexual propositions or requests for sexual favours.
- **Bullying**:
  - Shouting at a colleague in a humiliating way.
  - Persistently criticising someone without justification.
  - Isolating someone by excluding them from meetings or work-related activities.
  - Spreading malicious rumours or making threats about job security.

5. Responsibilities

5.1. Employer Responsibilities

Jones Bros Ruthin (Civil Engineering) Co Ltd has a duty to ensure that all employees work in a safe and respectful environment. The company is committed to:

- **Preventing sexual harassment and bullying** by promoting a culture of respect, inclusion, and equality in the workplace.
- **Providing training and resources** to ensure employees understand what constitutes sexual harassment and bullying and how to prevent them.
- **Responding promptly and effectively** to any complaints of harassment or bullying by conducting thorough and confidential investigations.
- **Taking appropriate disciplinary action** when necessary, up to and including dismissal, against any individual found responsible for sexual harassment or bullying.
- **Monitoring third-party harassment** and taking steps to protect employees from harassment by clients, customers, suppliers, or contractors.

5.2. Employee Responsibilities

Every employee has a role to play in ensuring the workplace remains free from sexual harassment and bullying. Employees are expected to:

- **Treat all colleagues, clients, and third parties** with respect and refrain from any behaviour that could be perceived as inappropriate or offensive.
- **Familiarise themselves** with the company's policies on harassment, bullying, and equality.

- **Report any instances** of sexual harassment or bullying they experience or witness, whether directed at themselves or others.
- **Cooperate fully** with any investigations into complaints of harassment or bullying and maintain confidentiality where necessary.

6. Preventing Sexual Harassment and Bullying

Jones Bros Ruthin (Civil Engineering) Co Ltd will take a proactive approach to prevent both sexual harassment and bullying, including:

- **Regularly reviewing policies** on harassment, bullying, discrimination, and diversity to ensure compliance with current legislation.
- **Providing training** to all employees on recognising and preventing sexual harassment and bullying.
- **Ensuring all staff understand** that harassment or bullying of any kind will not be tolerated and can result in disciplinary action.
- **Encouraging employees** to speak up if they feel uncomfortable or witness inappropriate behaviour, providing clear and confidential channels for reporting.

7. Reporting Sexual Harassment or Bullying

Any employee who feels they have been subjected to sexual harassment or bullying, or has witnessed such behaviour, is encouraged to report the incident. Reporting may be done:

- **Informally**: Discussing the issue with a line manager or HR representative to resolve the matter quickly.
- **Formally**: Submitting a written complaint to management or HR.

The company will:

- Handle all complaints **confidentially**, ensuring that those involved are treated with respect and fairness.
- **Investigate promptly**, gathering relevant information and ensuring that both the complainant and the accused have an opportunity to present their accounts of the incident.
- Take **appropriate action** based on the investigation's findings, which may range from mediation to disciplinary action.

8. Disciplinary Action

Jones Bros Ruthin (Civil Engineering) Co Ltd will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment or bullying. If an individual is found to have engaged in such conduct, they will be subject to the company's disciplinary procedures. Sanctions may include:

- **Formal warnings** (verbal or written).
- **Suspension** or reassignment of duties.
- **Dismissal** in cases of severe or repeated misconduct.

9. Third-Party Harassment or Bullying

Jones Bros Ruthin (Civil Engineering) Co Ltd has a responsibility to protect employees from harassment or bullying by **third parties**, such as customers, suppliers, and contractors. The company will take all **reasonable steps** to prevent and address third-party harassment or bullying by:

- **Providing employees with clear reporting channels** to raise concerns about third-party behaviour.
- **Addressing the behaviour** directly with the third party involved and, where necessary, taking corrective actions, including terminating contracts or service agreements if harassment or bullying persists.

10. Confidentiality and Support

The company will treat all complaints of sexual harassment or bullying with the utmost **confidentiality**. Employees who raise concerns will be supported throughout the process and will not face retaliation for making a complaint in good faith. Where necessary, the company will provide access to **support services** such as counselling.

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed **annually**, or sooner if there are changes in legislation, to ensure it remains effective and relevant. Any updates or changes will be communicated to all employees.



Hefin Lloyd-Davies
Director
November 2025