

A guide for preventing and responding to workplace bullying

For Managers and Supervisors



Workplace Bullying

Workplace bullying is a risk to health and safety. It can occur whenever people work together.

*Like all health and safety risks it is best dealt with by taking steps to **prevent** it from occurring and **responding** quickly if it does occur.*

This guide provides information on what you as a Manager or Supervisor can do to prevent bullying from occurring and how to respond to reports of bullying.

Definitions:

Bullying is defined as repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety.

Repeated behaviour refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour and can involve a range of behaviours over time.

Unreasonable behaviour means behaviour that a reasonable person, having regard for the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including behaviour that is victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.

Preventing Workplace Bullying

Workplace bullying is best dealt with by taking steps to prevent it before it creates a risk to health and safety.

Culture	Values	Respectful Workplace
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a supportive workplace culture that is associated with high levels of commitment from staff, higher levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of workplace stress. • Build quality working relationships based on trust to encourage your team to produce quality work and high performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively encourage commitment in others by modelling the values of collegiality and integrity in your day-to-day activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop respectful workplace relationships by communicating effectively and engaging staff in decision making. • Encourage regular and honest feedback, provided in a respectful way. • Enrol yourself in SCU's Respectful Workplaces training.
Roles and Responsibilities	Reporting Processes and Systems	Training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure your staff understand their roles and have the appropriate skills and resources to do their job, this helps to reduce issues and conflict that could lead to bullying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure staff know how to confidential report when bullying occurs. • Communicate the policies and procedures to staff so they know where to go and what to do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and information to all staff on appropriate and inappropriate workplace behaviour and on what they can do to prevent and respond to workplace bullying, ensuring everyone feels confident to call out bullying when they see it.

Responding to Workplace Bullying

If bullying behaviour is identified, or a report of bullying is received, you must be pro-active in eliminating or minimising the risk to health and safety to your team.

Identify Unacceptable Behaviour		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be proactive in identifying unacceptable behaviours. • Address all unacceptable behaviours immediately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be mindful of changes in behaviour of staff and seek out reasons i.e., withdrawn from team, increased personal leave. 	
Act and Investigate	Confidentiality	Procedural Fairness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat all reports and complaints seriously. • Investigate promptly in a sensitive, thorough and confidential manner. • Work with HR to ensure SCU policy is applied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved at all times. • Consider what information, how and to whom information is communicated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the principles of natural justice apply: information, process and action. • Work with HR to ensure SCU policy is applied. • Remain impartial towards all involved.
Support	Communicate	Document
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer support to staff involved i.e., Employee Assistance Program. • Ensure staff are advised they can have a support person present to meetings. • Seek support for yourself i.e., HR, Assure Managers Program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep all parties informed about the process, approximate timeframes and any delays. • Ensure the parties are advised of the outcome and any resulting actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the report of bullying is recorded – who, when, what, actions, etc. • Ensure records are maintained of all conversations, meetings and agreed outcomes.

Training for Managers and Supervisors: [Respectful Workplace](#)

SCU Policies:

[Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Prevention Policy](#)

[Complaint Policy](#)

[Complaint Procedure](#)

Additional Resources:

SafeWork Australia [Guide to Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying](#)

Support:

Human Resources:

Email: hr@scu.edu.au

Phone: 02 6620 3667

Assure Programs:

[Employee Assistance Program](#)

[Manager Support Program](#)

Phone: 1800 808 374