

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Principles

Everyone will be treated with dignity and respect at the SLSA. Bullying and harassment of any kind are in no-one's interest and will not be tolerated; this includes bullying or harassment of volunteers by those taking part in SLSA events. This policy applies to all Trustees, members, volunteers and staff. Bullying and harassment will be treated as disciplinary offences.

This policy also covers complaints of victimisation. Victimisation is defined as subjecting an individual to unfavourable or harmful behaviour in response to that individual raising a complaint of bullying, discrimination, or harassment, or because that individual has supported another person in raising a complaint. Victimisation may involve groups of people, and includes the continuation of the behaviour initially complained about.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying is described as repeated or persistent behaviour and is defined as exercising power over another person through negative acts or behaviours that undermine them personally and/or professionally. Bullying can be threatening, insulting, abusive, disparaging, or intimidating behaviour which places inappropriate pressure on the recipient or has the effect of isolating or excluding them. Bullying can take the form of shouting, sarcasm, inappropriately making remarks concerning job performance or contribution, or constant criticism. Bullying does not necessarily have to take place on a face-to-face basis as it may also include cyber bullying, i.e., using the internet and related technologies to harm another person in a deliberate, repeated, and hostile manner.

Bullying is distinct from academic debate. It is also distinct from techniques used to support and engage colleagues. It should, however, be noted that where assertiveness gives way to aggression it is likely to become destructive rather than constructive. If an SLSA member or participant in SLSA activities believes they are a victim of bullying by an SLSA Trustee or Board member, or anyone involved in an SLSA activity then they are encouraged to contact the Chair or one of the Trustees at the earliest possible opportunity.

Complaints of bullying will be handled sensitively and discussions regarding complaints under this policy will be treated confidentially unless the safety of the member is at risk. Complaints will be investigated in line with the process set out in the SLSA Complaints Policy. In short, while investigating a complaint of bullying, discrimination, or harassment, the member(s) complained about may be contacted to

seek their account. Any subsequent instances of victimisation of a person or persons *because* they have made a complaint (or have supported others in making a complaint) will be taken seriously by the SLSA.

Anti-Harassment Policy

The SLSA believes that every person should be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment of colleagues or staff is unacceptable conduct. The highest standards of conduct are required of everyone regardless of seniority.

The SLSA recognises that harassment may take many forms. It may be related to any of the grounds in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation,

- but can extend beyond conduct relating to protected characteristics, too. A key characteristic of harassment is that it is unwanted by the recipient and that the recipient finds the conduct offensive or unacceptable.

Harassment may involve action or inaction, behaviour, exclusion, comment or physical contact that the recipient finds objectionable or offensive. It may result in the recipient feeling threatened, humiliated, intimidated, patronised, demoralised or less confident in their ability. Condoning such conduct may be harassment in itself. The test of harassment is, at least in part, subjective.

Examples of potentially unacceptable conduct include:

- verbal abuse, or insulting behaviour, comments, jokes or gestures of an offensive, insensitive or intimidating nature, for example of a sexist or racist nature, about an individual's sexual orientation or about an individual's physical or mental attributes;
- the display or circulation of sexually suggestive or racially abusive material (including e-mails, text messages, video clips and images sent by mobile phone or posted on the internet);
- shouting at, being sarcastic towards, ridiculing or demeaning others;
- physical or psychological threats;
- the ridicule or exclusion of an individual, for example, for cultural or religious differences, on the grounds of sex or sexual orientation or on the grounds of disability;
- unwanted physical conduct or "horseplay" and unsolicited or unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive

as harmless), including touching, staring or commenting, pushing, grabbing, invading their personal space and more serious forms of physical or sexual assault;

- comments of a sexual nature about a person's appearance or dress.

The SLSA will take allegations of harassment seriously. Harassment by a member or delegate could result in termination of membership. Our complaints policy and termination of membership policy set out our procedures for dealing with such issues. As above, any victimisation of a person or persons *because* they have made a complaint (or have supported others in making a complaint) will be taken seriously by the SLSA.

Change Record

Date of change	Changed by	Comments
13/03/2026	-	Approved by the Board