

RESPECT AND DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

Prime Expertise Limited

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EFFECTIVE DATE	March 2022	DATE OF LAST REVISION	March 2024	VERSION NO.	1.0.3
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APPLIES TO					
GROUP 1	Associates	GROUP 2	Employees	GROUP 3	Partners
GROUP 4	Interns	GROUP 5	—	GROUP 6	—

VERSION HISTORY				
VERSION	APPROVED BY	REVISION DATE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE	RESPONSIBILITY
1.0.2	Board of Directors	March 2023	Annual review to identify and address gaps or inconsistencies	Director of Finance and Administration
1.0.3	Board of Directors	March 2024	Annual review to identify and address gaps or inconsistencies	Director of Finance and Administration

Purpose

Prime Expertise is committed to creating and maintaining a working environment free from hostility – a place in which individuals can feel valued for their contributions and can develop to their full potential. Our organisational values of **Integrity, Excellence, Collaboration, Innovation, and Inclusivity** must be clearly demonstrated in everything we do, including our behaviour and interactions with others.

This Policy has been designed to inform all associates, employees, partners, and interns about the type of behaviour that is unacceptable and provide all who are the victims of such unacceptable behaviour, i.e., harassment and bullying, with a means of redress. Prime Expertise, therefore, expects all associates, employees, partners, and interns to treat each other professionally and with respect, in a manner that recognises everyone's right to dignity at work.

The purpose of this Policy is therefore to communicate to all of Prime Expertise's associates, employees, partners, and interns that the Company believes in ensuring a positive and professional working environment and will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying behaviour under any circumstances. All associates, employees, partners, and interns have the right to a safe, healthy work environment – one where people are treated with respect and dignity and one that is free from bullying and harassment.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Prime Expertise's [Code of Conduct](#), which outlines the high standards of conduct expected from Prime Expertise's associates, employees, and interns.

Scope

Prime Expertise's Respect and Dignity at Work Policy applies to all those who work for Prime Expertise across Tanzania, East Africa, and beyond, whether full time or part time, temporary or permanent. This includes:

- associates;
- employees; and
- interns.

Prime Expertise will also apply the principles of this Policy in its interactions with other stakeholders, such as clients and consortium partners.

The term “Prime Expertise personnel or personnel” is used throughout this Policy to cover all associates, employees, partners, and interns.

The Policy covers the following:

- Defining workplace harassment;
- Defining workplace bullying;
- The impact of harassment and bullying;
- What to do if you feel you have experienced harassment or bullying;
- Procedures;
- Monitoring;
- Malicious complaints;
- Policy implementation; and
- Partners.

Defining workplace harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to relevant protected characteristics¹, which include but are not limited to sex, race, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and age. It refers to behaviour that is offensive and intrusive.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- **Verbal:** crude language, open hostility, offensive jokes, offensive songs, suggestive remarks, innuendoes, rude or vulgar comments, malicious gossip, public ridicule, derogatory remarks, and spreading malicious rumours or gossip;
- **Non-verbal:** wolf-whistles, obscene gestures, sexually suggestive posters/ calendars, pornographic material (both paper-based and generated on a computer, including offensive screen-savers), graffiti, offensive letters, e-mails, text messages on mobile phones, messages on social media, and vandalising personal belongings;
- **Physical:** unnecessary touching, patting, pinching, or brushing against another personnel’s body; intimidating behaviour; assault; and physical coercion;
- **Coercion:** pressure or promises in return for sexual favours;
- **Isolation:** or non-cooperation and exclusion from social activities;
- **Intrusion:** following, pestering, spying, etc.

Specific to sexual harassment:

- Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct;
- Verbal conduct such as sexually derogatory remarks, comments about an individual’s body or dress, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, e-mails, SMS messages, or invitations, demeaning or inappropriate comments, name-calling, innuendos, slurs, jokes, sexual advances, or propositions;

¹ Please see the [Workplace Equality and Diversity Policy](#) for more information.

- Visual conduct such as leering, sexual gestures, displaying or distributing sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, graffiti, posters, or magazines.

Defining workplace bullying

Bullying is best characterised as:

"Offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting behaviour; an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient."

Bullying includes, but is not limited to:

- **Unwarranted** humiliating or offensive behaviour towards an individual or groups of personnel;
- **Persistently** negative, malicious attacks on personal or professional performance, typically characterised as unpredictable, unfair, irrational, and often unseen;
- **Abuse** of power or position that can cause such anxiety that people gradually lose faith in themselves, resulting in physical illness and mental distress;
- **Use** of position or power to coerce others by fear, persecution or to oppress them by force or threat. This has been identified as a more crippling and devastating problem for both employees and employers than all the other work-related stresses combined;
- **Persistent** unjustified criticism, or criticism without offering a constructive solution in the case of criticism that may be justified.

The above is not exhaustive and can only be used as a guide for examples of bullying and harassment.

Harassment and bullying exclude:

- Any **reasonable** action taken by a line manager or supervisor relating to the management and direction of personnel or the place of contract or employment; and
- Disagreements, misunderstandings, miscommunications, or conflict situations, provided the behaviour of the individuals involved remains professional and respectful.

The impact of harassment and bullying

Harassment and bullying can lead to illness, absenteeism, an apparent lack of commitment, poor performance, and resignation.

The damage, tension, and conflict that harassment and bullying create should not be underestimated. The result is not just poor morale but also higher personnel turnover, reduced productivity, divided teams, and a poor external reputation.

What to do if you feel you have experienced harassment or bullying

Examples of harassment and bullying are often highly context-specific and sensitive in nature. Personnel who believe they are being harassed or bullied may wish to discuss their situation before deciding what action to take.

Prime Expertise operates an open-door policy to discuss workplace problems, and personnel can discuss the matter with whoever of the following they feel most comfortable with: their line manager, supervisor, or the Director of Finance and Administration.

They will:

- **help** individuals consider objectively what has happened;
- **ensure** the conversation remains confidential as far as possible;
- **listen** sympathetically and without bias;
- **put** forward alternative courses of action, but without pressure to adopt;
- **discuss** what outcome the individual would like to see;
- **discuss** the available procedures and options; and
- **assist** individuals in dealing with the situation if they ask for help.

Confidentiality will be maintained to the maximum extent possible. However, Prime Expertise has an overall duty of care to ensure the safety of all personnel who may be adversely affected by the alleged harasser's/ bully's behaviour.

Procedures

Prime Expertise recognises that it is in the interests of everyone to resolve issues of concern that personnel may have about their contract or employment as quickly and fairly as possible in order to maintain good working relations.

It is for the individual to decide which route to take in solving any problem that has occurred.

The following is the internal mechanism for dealing with concerns raised by personnel about their contract or employment or the way they have been treated, with the aim of seeking a satisfactory solution. Where this is not possible, every effort will be made to explain the reasons for the decision. It is not to be used where personnel have concerns about misconduct or malpractice in Prime Expertise that affects other people. In this instance, personnel should refer to the [Whistleblowing Policy](#).

There are two types of solution available, informal and formal:

Informal

Where possible, personnel should, in the first instance, talk directly and informally to the person whom they believe is harassing or bullying them and explain clearly what aspect of their behaviour is unacceptable or is causing offense.

They should state that their behaviour is unwelcome and request that it stop.

It may be that the person whose conduct is causing offense is genuinely unaware that their behaviour is unwelcome or objectionable.

If the affected party finds it difficult or embarrassing to raise the issue directly with the person who caused it, assistance can be sought from a co-worker who can accompany the personnel when speaking with the person involved.

Alternatively, if the personnel feel unable to approach the person whose actions or conduct is causing offense, the complaint can:

- Be raised informally with their line manager or supervisor, who will try to assist the personnel in finding an informal solution to the problem;
- Be passed to a third party (e.g., a colleague or a line manager) to approach the person on their behalf in the first instance.

If personnel feel unable to follow these steps or have already done so without success, or if the complaint is one of serious harassment, they may choose to raise a formal complaint.

Formal

Where informal solutions fail or serious harassment or bullying occurs, personnel can bring a formal complaint in the form of a grievance by raising a complaint, in writing, directly with a line manager, supervisor, or the Director of Finance and Administration and outlining the nature of the grievance and the outcome they are looking for.

Complaints will be investigated swiftly while ensuring that the rights of both the alleged victim and the alleged offender are protected. Information shared or obtained during the handling of a complaint will be treated with sensitivity.

The question of maintaining information in confidence will be discussed with all those involved. Everyone involved in the investigation, including witnesses, will be required to maintain confidentiality within the context of the investigation and process; a failure to do so will be a disciplinary matter. However, it is important to recognise that certain types of information will have to be shared with individuals within Prime Expertise to progress the investigation or to aid decision-making.

Personnel and witnesses can be assured that they will not be ridiculed or victimised for making, or assisting a colleague in making, a complaint, even if it is not upheld, as long as it is made in good faith.

If the affected party finds it difficult to set out their complaint in writing, he or she should contact the Director of Finance and Administration, who will provide assistance. If, at the conclusion of the grievance procedure, the complaint is upheld, disciplinary proceedings will be initiated against the person who perpetrated the harassment or bullying.

Monitoring

Where harassment or bullying has been found to have occurred and the perpetrator remains in contract or employment, regular checks will be made to ensure that the harassment or bullying has stopped and that there has been no victimisation or retaliation against the victim.

Malicious complaints

Where a complaint is blatantly untrue and has been brought out of malice or for some other unacceptable motive, the complainant will be subject to Prime Expertise's disciplinary procedures, as will any witnesses who have deliberately misled Prime Expertise during its investigations.

Policy implementation

Management roles and responsibilities

Management at Prime Expertise is committed to ensuring workplace stressors, which could lead to harassment or bullying, are reduced. Training is a critical component of the successful implementation of any policy, and Prime Expertise is working hard to ensure all line managers and supervisors are equipped with the following skills and knowledge to:

- Ensure that personnel have full access to information regarding Prime Expertise policies and procedures;
- Develop respectful workplace relations by promoting a positive leadership and management style, ensuring this is supportive and respectful of personnel, and that bullying or coercive behaviour is not used towards anyone;

- Communicate effectively with personnel, encouraging honest performance feedback provided in a respectful way, and to use good judgment in correcting conduct or behaviour that could be perceived as offensive and reminding individuals of Prime Expertise’s policy when appropriate;
- Recognise the signs of harassment and bullying, how they can confidently enforce this Policy and understand that ignoring this behaviour will not be tolerated;
- Encourage employees to talk to their line managers or supervisors if they feel they have experienced harassment or bullying.

Employee roles and responsibilities

We can’t do this alone though, and so we require each and every member of Prime Expertise to support the implementation of this Policy by:

- Conducting themselves in a professional manner with mutual respect for others that honours diversity in the workplace;
- Carefully considering any feedback and modifying their behaviour if they have been alerted that it is causing concern;
- Reporting any harassment or bullying conduct they experience as soon as possible to allow Prime Expertise to take appropriate action;
- Reporting any harassment or bullying conduct they witness as soon as possible to allow Prime Expertise to take appropriate action.

Director of Finance and Administration responsibilities

The Director of Finance and Administration and her delegates will:

- Raise awareness of this Policy and the principles that underpin it through induction processes, training, and awareness-raising programmes and ensure the Policy is an integral part of the employee handbook; and
- Provide guidance and support when allegations are raised.

Partners

Although this Policy refers primarily to internal relationships within Prime Expertise, a concern raised by personnel of a partner organisation about Prime Expertise personnel will also be taken seriously and investigated in line with the principles outlined above.

Similarly, if personnel have a concern that relates to or involves personnel of a partner organisation, this will be investigated and, where relevant, taken up with the organisation concerned.

Amendments

Please note that this Policy is subject to change from time to time. Any changes to this Policy made in the future will be reflected on the Prime Expertise website.

Related policies

Code of Conduct, available at: <https://primeexpertise.co.tz/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Code-of-Conduct.pdf>.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, available at: <https://primeexpertise.co.tz/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Safeguarding-Child-Protection-Policy.pdf>.

Whistleblowing Policy, available at: <https://primeexpertise.co.tz/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Whistleblowing-Policy.pdf>.

Workplace Equality and Diversity Policy, available at: <https://primeexpertise.co.tz/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Workplace-Equality-Diversity-Policy.pdf>.