

Barrow Community Library policy on harassment (including sexual harassment)

Barrow Community Library does not tolerate acts of harassment, whether perpetrated against or by its employees or volunteers (including members of the management committee). This applies both in the library and any library-related setting outside of the library.

Harassment consists of any unwanted conduct that violates an individual's dignity or constitutes victimisation, or which creates an intimidating, bullying, abusive, hostile, degrading, humiliating, offensive or otherwise uncomfortable environment. This includes harassment related to the protected characteristics of sex, race, national origin, ethnic origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief. It can involve a single incident or may be persistent and may be directed towards one or more individuals.

A non-exhaustive list of examples of harassment can be found at Appendix 1 for information.

All allegations of harassment will be managed via the Library's Complaints policy.

Approved LMC 13 January 2025

Review September 2025

Appendix 1 – examples of harassment

The following list is not exhaustive but is intended to provide a number of examples of unacceptable behaviour:

1. Unwanted physical contact such as unnecessary touching or brushing against another employee's body, patting, pinching, insulting or abusive behaviour or gestures, physical threats, assault, coerced sexual intercourse or rape;
2. Unwanted verbal conduct such as unwelcome advances, patronising nicknames, propositions or remarks, innuendo, lewd comments, jokes, banter or abusive language, which refer to an individual or a group's race, nationality, ethnic origin, age, language, religion or similar belief, political or other opinion, affiliation, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership, connections with a national minority, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, family connections, or disability, etc.
3. Repeated suggestions for unwanted social activities;
4. Unwanted non-verbal conduct such as graffiti referring to an individual's characteristics or private life, abusive or offensive gestures, leering, whistling, display of pornographic or sexually suggestive literature, pictures, films, objects, or inappropriate use of network systems for this purpose;
5. Bullying, including persistent inappropriate criticism and personal abuse and/or ridicule, either in public or private, which humiliates or demeans those involved;
6. Unlawful victimisation such as treating an individual less favourably than others are, or would be treated in the same or similar circumstances, because they have made a complaint or allegation of discrimination or have acted as a witness in connection with proceedings under any anti-discrimination legislation
7. Any other conduct that denigrates an individual or group.