



Fundamental British Values

Fundamental British Values underpin what it's like to be a citizen in a modern and diverse Great Britain, the four values are agreed as:

- ◆ Democracy - influence decision making;
- ◆ The rule of law - police, army & courts;
- ◆ Individual liberty - choose right from wrong;
- ◆ Mutual respect for, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith.

Q: With regards to individual liberty, how does the Equality Act of 2010 define protected characteristics?

E&D -Should and Must

When considering employer obligations regarding equality, it is really important to understand what the laws says regarding 'should' and 'must'. There is a difference.

- A.** Keep an open mind – discrimination situations are very individual and what may, or may not, be felt to be discriminatory can change over time, and from person to person;
- B.** Be respectful and empathetic to the employee who raised the complaint – it can be particularly upsetting and/or stressful to experience or witness discrimination;
- C.** Investigate the matter thoroughly, and be tactful when looking for evidence that supports or undermines the grievance. The individual could appeal the decision or take the matter to an employment tribunal if they do not believe their grievance has been resolved adequately.

- 1: *What should your employer be doing towards improving equality?*
- 2: *What must your employer do regarding equality legislation?*

Workplace Harassment

This issue focuses on bullying and harassment, this is behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated or offended. Harassment is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. As a supervisor it is very important potential issues are identified and swiftly dealt with.

Harassment is unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. The effects can be devastating with serious physical or psychological damage being far too common occurrences.

- ▶ Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.
- ▶ Bullying and harassment make someone feel anxious and humiliated. Some people may try to retaliate in some way. Others may become frightened, demotivated, stressed with loss of confidence and self-esteem, they may even resign.

It might be hard to spot abuse as it happens, but it can be easier to identify the tell-tale signs that somebody is being abused. A colleague whose attitudes towards work, or work performance, increased sickness absence. Any change might signal they have something personal affecting them, and it might be work related.

Safeguarding is the practice of ensuring that vulnerable people have their health, well-being and rights protected in society and includes:

1. Health
2. Safety
3. Discrimination
4. Abuse

Examples of harassment in private life that are also unacceptable include: unwanted phone calls, texting or sexting, letters, emails, visits to a person's home or work, abuse and bullying online, stalking, verbal abuse and threats, smashing windows or using dogs to frighten.

Q: Look up the ACAS website to find their definitions on the impact of bullying and harassment at work?

Q: When thinking about harassment and safeguarding at work, the terms 'protected characteristics' and 'vulnerable adults' can frequently crop up. But do you know what this mean, research to define the difference?

If someone at work has a protected characteristic, prepare a short risk assessment to ensure they will not be the subject of harassment at work.