

ESSU Bullying & Harassment Policy

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Policy Statement

ESSU is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Bullying, harassment and discrimination have no place within our sport. Any behaviour that intimidates, humiliates, excludes, degrades or harms another person will not be tolerated. This policy applies to all ESSU activities, events, camps, competitions, training sessions, social functions and overseas activities.

Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to everyone involved in ESSU activities, including:

- Staff
 - Board members
 - Volunteers
 - Coaches
 - Officials and judges
 - Athletes and participants
 - Contractors
 - Parents and carers
 - Spectators and supporters
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ESSU Commitment

ESSU is committed to:

- Safeguarding everyone involved in our sport from harm.
- Promoting a culture of respect, inclusion and equality.
- Preventing bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Investigating all concerns fairly and promptly.
- Taking appropriate, proportionate action where misconduct is identified.
- Providing access to guidance, support and relevant training.
- Making this policy accessible and available to all participants.

Everyone involved in ESSU activities has the right to participate in sport in an environment that is safe, respectful, inclusive and free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

What is Harassment?

Harassment is any unwanted behaviour that:

- Violates a person's dignity.
- Creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- Causes distress, embarrassment or discomfort.

A single incident may constitute harassment. Someone can experience harassment even if they were not the intended target of the behaviour.

Harassment also includes treating someone unfairly because they have previously:

- Complained about harassment.
- Refused to participate in unwanted behaviour.
- Supported someone making a complaint.

Protected Characteristics

Harassment relating to any of the following characteristics is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Colour
- Nationality
- Ethnic or national origin
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, including:

- Sexual comments
- Sexual jokes
- Unwanted advances

- Unwanted touching
- Inappropriate messages or images

Harassment is unacceptable whether or not it relates to a protected characteristic.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour that is:

- Offensive
- Intimidating
- Malicious
- Insulting
- Humiliating
- Abusive

Bullying often involves the misuse of power or influence and may occur face-to-face or through digital communication.

Bullying May Occur Through:

- Physical actions
 - Verbal comments
 - Non-verbal behaviour
 - Text messages
 - Emails
 - Social media platforms
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Examples of Bullying and Harassment

The following examples are not exhaustive.

Physical Behaviour

- Pushing

- Kicking
- Hitting
- Pinching
- Unwanted physical contact

Verbal Behaviour

- Offensive comments
- Insults or name-calling
- Sexual comments or suggestions
- Racist remarks
- Homophobic or transphobic comments
- Sexist language
- Persistent teasing
- Mocking or mimicking

Social and Emotional Behaviour

- Spreading rumours
- Deliberately excluding individuals
- Ignoring someone repeatedly
- Humiliating a person publicly or privately
- Making someone the constant target of jokes

Online Behaviour

- Offensive emails or text messages
- Inappropriate social media posts
- Sharing abusive, derogatory or humiliating content
- Posting offensive images or videos online

Abuse of Position or Authority

- Excessive or intimidating supervision
- Persistently criticising an individual unfairly
- Setting unreasonable expectations designed to cause failure
- Deliberately undermining a person's confidence

Some behaviours listed above may also amount to discrimination.

What Is Not Bullying?

The following do not normally constitute bullying when delivered reasonably and respectfully:

- Constructive feedback
 - Legitimate coaching instruction
 - Performance reviews
 - Appropriate management direction
 - Reasonable behavioural expectations
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Reporting Concerns

Everyone has a responsibility to help maintain a safe and respectful environment.

If you believe you are experiencing bullying, harassment or discrimination:

Option 1: Informal Resolution

Where appropriate and safe, you may choose to tell the individual:

- Their behaviour is unwelcome.
- Their actions are causing distress or discomfort.
- You would like the behaviour to stop.

Option 2: Seek Support

If you do not feel comfortable addressing the issue directly, speak to:

- An ESSU representative
- An event organiser
- A coach
- The relevant manager or responsible official

Confidential advice and support will be provided wherever possible.

Option 3: Formal Complaint

Where informal action is not appropriate, or has not resolved the issue, a formal complaint should be submitted through the relevant ESSU procedure.

How Complaints Will Be Handled

ESSU will:

1. Take all reports seriously.
2. Listen carefully to everyone involved.
3. Conduct a fair and impartial investigation.
4. Assess the available evidence.
5. Determine appropriate action where necessary.

Actions may include:

- Informal intervention
- Education or training
- Formal warnings
- Disciplinary action
- Removal from activities or programmes
- Any other proportionate sanction available under ESSU policies

Protection from Retaliation

No person will be treated unfairly for:

- Raising a genuine concern.
- Making a complaint in good faith.
- Supporting an investigation.
- Providing evidence during a review.

Retaliation or victimisation against anyone involved in a complaint process will not be tolerated.

False Allegations

Knowingly making a false allegation in bad faith may itself be treated as misconduct and managed through the appropriate disciplinary or complaints procedures.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- ESSU Safeguarding Policies and Procedures
 - ESSU Code of Conduct
 - ESSU Complaints Policy
 - ESSU Equality Policy
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Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- As required following legislative or organisational changes.
 - Following significant incidents or lessons learned.
 - At least once every 3 years.
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Support and Advice

National Bullying Helpline

Website: <https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk>

NSPCC Helpline

Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Website: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk>

Childline

Telephone: 0800 1111

Website: <https://www.childline.org.uk>

Kidscape

Website: <https://www.kidscape.org.uk>

Anti-Bullying Alliance

Website: <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

NSPCC Sport (formally known as CPSU)

Website: <https://sport.nspcc.org.uk>
