

Information Sheet - Institute of Welfare

Harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation

'It is unlawful for an employer, in relation to employment by him/her, at an establishment in Great Britain, to subject to harassment, a person whom he employs or who has applied to him for employment'.

Any unwanted conduct (any act you reasonably perceive as violating your dignity) made towards you as a result of your sexual orientation, is covered by this act.

This also includes, creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

If you are receiving unwanted conduct from colleagues at work or at a club or society you belong to then you are able to take action.

Report the incident to your line manager or club leader etc. Your employer has a duty to take action to prevent all harassment. If your boss is the perpetrator then you should discuss the situation with him/her and request that s/he changes his/her behaviour.

Failure for your employer to take action to prevent unwanted conduct could result in you taking action against them. It has been known for people to leave employment following harassment, and successfully claim for constructive unfair dismissal.

There is a time limit for taking action against your employer and you may need to show that your employer was aware of the harassment and failed to act.

Keep a record of all incidents. Write down what happened and why you believe it to be offensive. Record the time, date and location, who it involved, names of any potential witnesses and what action you took at the time to stop the unwanted behaviour.

Useful Website

www.acas.org.uk Type sexual orientation into their search facility.

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August 2012