

Bullying and Harassment

HBLN Home Education WA and Event Organisers regard the dignity and autonomy of all people as a core value. Harassment and bullying behaviour is based on the misuse of power in human relationships, and negates the dignity and autonomy of its victims.

HBLN and Event Organisers regards the health and safety of its volunteers and families as a key responsibility.

HBLN and Event Organisers are fully committed to eliminating, as far as possible, all forms of bullying in organised activities and in its relationships with its members through a culture of openness, support, and accountability.

DEFINITIONS

Unreasonable behaviour is behaviour that is offensive, humiliating, intimidating, degrading or threatening. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal abuse
- Initiation pranks
- Excluding or isolating members/event participants
- Giving a person the majority of an unpleasant or meaningless task
- Humiliation through sarcasm, or belittling someone's opinions
- Constant criticism or insults
- Spreading misinformation or malicious rumours
- Deliberately setting routines or procedures to inconvenience certain members/event participants
- Displaying written or pictorial material which may degrade or offend certain members/event participants

Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person or group of persons. It includes behaviour that could be expected to intimidate, offend, degrade, humiliate, undermine or threaten.

Harassment is uninvited, unwelcome behaviour, which does not have any event function. Harassment includes any written, physical, or verbal conduct that from the perspective of a reasonable person is intimidating, offensive or humiliating against another person. Harassment is any behaviour, which is not asked for and not wanted and that happens because of a person's sex, race, age, pregnancy, marital status, disability, transgender (transsexuality) or sexuality.

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Harassment can include:

- Sexual or suggestive remarks or gestures
- Displaying or circulating sexually suggestive, offensive or degrading/insulting material
- Making fun of someone, imitating someone's accent, spreading rumours, unwelcome practical jokes
- Obscene or unsolicited telephone calls, letters, faxes, texts or E-mail messages
- Invasion of personal space, unnecessary physical contact
- Continually ignoring or dismissing someone's contribution in a meeting/discussion.
- Pushing, shoving or jostling or assault
- Threats, insults, name calling, inappropriate language

PROCEDURES

Where a parent/guardian wishes to address their child(ren)'s behaviour, this should be dealt with discreetly as it arises (please ensure this is done calmly, quietly and away from others). However, if you have any repetitive/continual issues and concerns with any aspect of HBLN Events and/or its members/event participants (adults and children), please ensure you report your concerns to the Event Organiser(s) as soon as the issue arises. The Organiser(s) will respect your privacy and investigate any issues and concerns discreetly.

HBLN and Event Organisers strongly encourage any member/event participant who feels they have been bullied, or have witnessed bullying taking place, to take action by making it clear that such behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.

- Instructors, Volunteers and Members/Event Participants are encouraged to first discuss the matter with the involved party prior to lodging a formal complaint.
- If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should provide written details of their concerns and the nature of the complaint, to the Event Organiser(s).
- The Event Organiser(s) will initiate an informal meeting with the complainant to discuss the complaint and come to a full understanding of it.
- If the matter involves a member/event participant and the organiser(s), the complainant may discuss the issue directly with another of the group organiser(s) or with the HBLN Coordinator.
- The Event Organiser(s) should address the complaint with a view to resolving it within two weeks. This may take the form of the Event Organiser(s) prescribing certain actions to be adopted which address the issues and find a resolution.
- On completion of the investigation the Event Organiser(s) will determine a course of action to be taken.

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Possible course of actions may include, but not be limited to, any combination of the following:

- formal apologies and undertaking that the behaviour will cease;
- removing a participant who is engaging in bullying or harassing behavior from the class without recourse to a refund for fees already paid;
- exclusion from future activities organised by HBLN ;
- disciplinary action against the person who complained if there is strong evidence that the complaint was vexatious or malicious;
- official warnings recorded on a confidential file kept by the Event Organiser(s) ;
- official warning to the person who complained if there is strong evidence that the complaint was vexatious or malicious;
- conciliation/mediation conducted by an impartial third party where the parties to the complaint agree to a mutually acceptable resolution;
- If HBLN or the Event Organiser finds that a particular member/event participant is repeatedly disruptive to the Code of Conduct and the overall well-being of those attending the event, that family may be asked to leave the event.

Record keeping

A register of complaints and appeals will be kept in a confidential file held by the Event Organiser(s). The register will be maintained by the Event Organiser(s) and will record the following for each complaint or appeal:

- Details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint
- Date lodged
- Action taken
- Date of resolution and reason for decision
- Indication of complainant being notified of outcome
- Complainant response and any further action

Copies of all correspondence will be kept in a confidential file.

The documents and files will be confidential and access is restricted to the Event Organiser(s).

Written documents produced as part of the dispute should be held on this confidential file by the Event Organiser(s) for a period of twelve (12) months and destroyed if no further conflicts arise.