

Set of Principles

To tackle and prevent bullying and harassment in the screen industries





Bullying and harassment have no place in our industries. These Principles aim to eradicate such abuse. They can also help employers meet legal requirements and offer a shared vision to promote and maintain a safer, more inclusive workplace environment for everyone working within the screen industries. All employers, employees, officers, workers, agency workers, trainees, volunteers, trustees and freelancers should adhere to the following principles.

1. Everyone is responsible for creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace that is positive and supportive.
2. We recognise that harassment may be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010.
3. Those of us who are employers accept our responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
4. We do not tolerate bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment, and will ensure that processes are in place for the reporting and investigation of these serious issues.
5. We recognise that bullying and harassment can have significant adverse impacts on the productivity, long-term health and well-being of affected people and we will work to eradicate it. This will mean providing adequate protection for complainants and victims, and, where bullying or harassment is found to have occurred, taking appropriate action against bullies or harassers.
6. We value inclusivity, appreciate difference, welcome learning from others, and consider people equal without prejudice or favour. We build relationships based on mutual respect. We will all work to give and receive feedback in a constructive way, which we know will improve creativity and productivity.
7. We understand that reporting bullying or harassment can be intimidating. We will respect confidentiality where possible and aim to make the process of reporting clear and straightforward. If anyone comes forward to report behaviour which might amount to bullying or harassment, we will endeavour to investigate objectively. Individuals who have made complaints of bullying and harassment or participate in good faith in any investigation should not suffer any form of reprisal or victimisation as a result.
8. We will respect each other's dignity, regardless of the seniority of our role in an organisation.

Notes to the Principles

These Principles have been commissioned by the BFI, working in partnership with BAFTA, BBC Films, BECTU Sector of Prospect, British Film Commission, British Society of Cinematographers, Creative England, Creative Scotland, Creative Skillset, the Cinema and Television Benevolent Fund, Directors UK, the Edinburgh International Television Festival, Equity, Ffilm Cymru Wales, Film4, Film London, Independent Cinema Office, Into Film, Motion Picture Association, Northern Ireland Screen, Pact, The Production Guild, Sheffield Doc/Fest, UK Interactive Entertainment, UK Screen Alliance, Women in Film & TV, and Writers' Guild of Great Britain together with Challenge Consultants (specialists in equality, diversity and inclusion training and policy development).

The BFI will expect all projects that seek to benefit from their public funding, or associate with our industry organisations named above, to sign up to these Principles and adopt a zero-tolerance approach to breaches of the Principles.

What are the Principles?

These Principles should be read in conjunction with the relevant Guidance notes. Together, they provide information about bullying and harassment in the workplace. Above all, they intend to set the tone of behaviour that is essential in the screen industries, and they define and aim to prohibit behaviour that may cause harm or detriment to individuals and expose organisations to legal action.

By outlining specific boundaries of appropriate behaviour, we intend to help organisations, all employers, employees, officers, workers, agency workers, trainees, volunteers, trustees and freelancers to create a positive tone and culture.

Why are the Principles important?

Understanding what constitutes unacceptable behaviour is an important step in establishing an inclusive culture for all aspects of the screen industries. The high proportion of freelance and casual workers in the screen industries makes it especially important to ensure that they are covered by these Principles. Everyone working for a company or an organisation, or on a project or production, should be fully aware of the expectations that relate to acceptable behaviour and recognise that the manner in which they perform their role is just as important to ensuring success as technical competence or creative ability.

Commitment from Industry Leaders

It is essential to have a genuine commitment from senior leaders across the screen industries to help create an inclusive culture. Visible endorsement of these Principles indicates a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. We encourage all employers to actively promote the Principles.

Making the Principles accessible

The Principles should be made available to everyone working within an organisation or on a project with such organisations, including senior leaders such as heads of department and managers, as well as remote workers, freelancers and casual workers. They can be distributed in print format and electronically via email or online posting, making them as prominent as possible to everyone and in as many different formats as possible. All employees, workers and freelancers should be given a copy of the Principles along with their contract and asked to sign a declaration to uphold the Principles at the beginning of any work. All contracts with employers, employees, officers, workers, agency workers, trainees, volunteers, trustees and freelancers should include provisions along the lines of the following:

1. The individual shall comply with these Principles (as amended from time to time).
2. Breaches of the Principles may lead to disciplinary action and/or termination of the contract.
3. Individuals should familiarise themselves with the Principles and the Guidance and should act in accordance with the information and advice.

This Set of Principles has been commissioned by the BFI working in partnership with BAFTA and with the input of leading screen sector industry organisations and Challenge Consultants (specialists in equality, diversity and inclusion training and policy development) and produced in accordance with advice recommended by workplace experts Acas.

The following organisations have supported the development and shaping of the Set of Principles

BFI
BAFTA
BBC Films
BECTU Sector of Prospect
British Film Commission
British Society of Cinematographers
Creative England
Creative Skillset
Directors UK
Edinburgh International Television Festival
Equity
Ffilm Cymru Wales
Film4
Film & Television Charity
Film London
Independent Cinema Office
Into Film
Motion Picture Association
Northern Ireland Screen
Pact
The Production Guild
Sara Putt Associates
Screen Scotland
Sheffield Doc/Fest
Society of Authors
Society of Musicians
SOLT – Society of London Theatre
UK Interactive Entertainment
UK Screen Alliance
Women in Film & TV
Writers' Guild of Great Britain