Bradford Arts Centre

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

(HARD COPY KEPT OFFLINE IN BRADFORD ARTS CENTRE OFFICE)

Contents

1. Introduction 2
2. Zero-Tolerance Approach 2
3. Definitions and Examples 2
4. What you should do if you experience or witness sexual harassment 3
5. Third Party Sexual Harassment 4
6. Support 4

Last Reviewed:	**October 2026 (new policy)**
Board Approved:	**28 October 2026**
Next Review:	**October 2028**

1. Introduction

Bradford Arts Centre is committed to creating an environment which is free from sexual harassment and sexist behaviour. We do this by being clear about the behaviours that are unacceptable and by fostering a culture of respect which ensures a welcoming, safe and secure environment.

The behaviour standards set out in this Policy, and the proposed procedures for investigating breaches of the policy, apply to Trustees and all those who work at Bradford Arts Centre. They apply to behaviours when working on site at Bradford Arts Centre and when representing the company elsewhere.

2. Zero-Tolerance Approach

Bradford Arts Centre has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexist behaviour. This applies to everyone in the organisation, regardless of role or status. Every person has the right to work in an environment that promotes respect, fairness, equality and dignity and which enables them to make their best contribution.

Sexist behaviour and sexual harassment do not belong at Bradford Arts Centre. We are committed to creating the shared understanding of appropriate behaviours, culture and accountability mechanisms that will eradicate these behaviours.

This means that we will:

- Take steps to prevent sexism and sexual harassment from occurring and support culture and behaviour change through information and education.
- Take steps to try to prevent sexual harassment by or of third parties, such as audience members, artists and visitors.
- Take complaints seriously, ensuring we deal with them promptly and sensitively.
- Have policies and processes which are transparent, easily accessible and understood by those who need to use them.
- Ensure principles around confidentiality within the grievance process are clear.
- Respond in a manner which is consistent, fair and proportionate.
- Ensure that there are consequences for sexist behaviours and sexual harassment, including disciplinary action.

3. Definitions and Examples

Sexist behaviour is any behaviour which is, or is perceived to be, motivated by prejudice or discrimination, including behaviour or attitudes that stereotype individuals based on gender.

Examples of sexist behaviour include:

- Saying something to someone of one gender that you wouldn't say to another (such as the form of address) or making assumptions based on gender (such as asking mothers about the impact of childcare on their job but not asking the same question of fathers).
- Using different language to describe attributes depending on gender (such as saying a man is decisive, but a woman is aggressive).
- Reinforcing gender stereotypes by treating people differently (such as assuming women are the junior employees in the room or criticising men for expressing emotion).

Sexual harassment occurs when an individual engages in unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It can be an isolated incident or persistent behaviour and is essentially about the effect on the recipient, not about what was intended.

Sexual harassment can come in many forms, such as:

- Comments of a sexist nature.
- Looks, comments or gestures of a sexual nature, including comments about someone's body or appearance.
- Circulation by email or sharing digitally comments or jokes of a sexual nature.
- Being asked questions of a sexual nature.
- Unwanted text messages, emails or other communications of a sexual nature.
- Unwanted physical contact e.g. touching, groping, kissing or invasion of personal space.
- Unwanted persistent attention to form an intimate relationship.

Research shows that sexual harassment and sexist behaviour are disproportionately carried out by men against women. As it is directly related to gender, it can also occur between people of the same sex or directed towards someone who is transitioning. It can be a product of power imbalance and of inequality. Therefore, other protected characteristics such as race, disability and age can further impact the prevalence and experience of harassment.

4. What you should do if you experience or witness sexual harassment

If you experience or witness sexual harassment at Bradford Arts Centre, or by a representative of the company elsewhere, you should follow the Early / Informal Resolution processes as set out in the company's Grievance Policy.

As set out in the Grievance Policy, your complaint should be made to one of the following:

- Your manager.
- Your manager's manager.
- An equivalent level of manager or a Board member.

Given the nature of this grievance, should you wish, you may also make your report to the company's Safeguarding Lead.

The manager or Safeguarding Lead you report to will discuss options with you for dealing with the complaint formally or informally. Please note that some situations may be too serious to deal with informally.

Managers will deal with any complaints using the procedure set out in the company's Grievance Policy.

5. Third Party Sexual Harassment

If you experience or witness sexual harassment from a third party – for example, a visitor or artist using our space – you should report this using the same process as outlined above.

In the instance of sexual harassment by someone who does not work for Bradford Arts Centre, we will not be able to use the processes set out in our Grievance Procedure.

The manager will instead meet with the complainant to investigate the incident and identify steps the company may be able to take to prevent sexual harassment happening again.

These findings will be reported to the Board at the next Quarterly Board meeting at the Safeguarding standing agenda item.

6. Support

Support will be available to both the person making the complaint and the person against whom the complaint is made throughout any process.

However, raising a complaint and having it dealt with is not the end of the story for either the complainant or respondent. People may experience increased stress and anxiety. Therefore, ongoing support will also be provided after the process is finished.

Support will also be provided for the manager dealing with the Sexual Harassment complaint both during and after the process.