



Federation of European  
Microbiological Societies

## Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy

We believe people should be treated with fairness, equality, dignity and respect. We seek to eliminate behaviour not meeting our values and high standards of expected behaviour. The reporting of issues is encouraged, simple, and confidential. Where necessary, we will conduct a thorough, impartial and fair investigation of all complaints, which will be treated confidentially and in line with our Compliant Handling Policy. This policy applies to all people employed, volunteering or providing services financially supported by FEMS or using our services.

### What do we mean by bullying, harassment and discrimination?

**Harassment**, in general terms any conduct, actions or comments viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient. It may be related to age, gender, race, disability, religion, belief, sexuality, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident.

**Bullying** is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying or harassment may be by an individual against an individual or involve groups of people.

**Discrimination** is any prejudiced treatment, or unfavourable distinction made towards individuals or groups of individuals, based on the gender, race, sexual orientation, class or any other category to which they are perceived to belong.

For further guidance see:

[www.gov.uk/workplace-bullying-and-harassment](http://www.gov.uk/workplace-bullying-and-harassment)

[www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/l/r/Bullying\\_and\\_harassment\\_employer\\_2010-accessible-version-July-2011.pdf](http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/l/r/Bullying_and_harassment_employer_2010-accessible-version-July-2011.pdf)

### Procedures

Reports of bullying, harassment or discrimination, or information from staff relating to such occurrences, will be dealt with fairly, confidentially and sensitively using the general format set out in [FEMS Reporting Procedure](#). Bullying and harassment are serious issues and will be treated as such. If incidents of bullying or harassment involve your line manager approaches should be made to the Managing Director, President or another appropriate manager.

### Investigation

Reports of bullying, harassment or discrimination will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and objectively. All complaints will be treated confidentially and if suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct come to the attention of the Managing Director Executive or President, he/she will coordinate the next steps to be carried out, in line with the general format outlined in [FEMS Reporting Procedure](#).



Federation of European  
Microbiological Societies

If the suspicion cannot be confirmed, no information as to the suspicion or person(s) involved will be released. The follow up and/or names of the person(s) involved will only be disclosed to the extent legally required. To the extent possible, an anonymous report on any follow up will be provided to the person who reported the complaint.

## Counselling

Counselling or mediation may be used where appropriate, particularly where investigation shows no cause for disciplinary action, or where doubt is cast on the validity of the complaint. Counselling may be used to resolve the issue or help support the person accused as well as the complainant.

**Dr Hilary Lappin-Scott, FEMS President**

**Date of endorsement**

December 2019

**Date last reviewed**

November 2018

