



Protection & Conduct

Whistleblowing & Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment Investigations - Employer Handling & Governance Checklist

Purpose:

To help employers review whether their whistleblowing arrangements, manager awareness and handling of sexual harassment disclosures are compliant and workable following strengthened protections for workers who raise concerns.

Strengthened protections increase the risk to employers where disclosures about sexual harassment are mishandled, delayed or followed by unfavourable treatment of the individual raising the concern.

Policy Structure & Accessibility

- Whistleblowing policy clearly titled and easy to locate
 - Sexual harassment policy clearly set out or cross-referenced
 - Reporting routes clearly explained
 - Policies included in employee handbook or HR system
 - Language is clear and accessible
 - Policies version controlled and dated
 - Confidentiality and non-retaliation clearly stated
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Manager Awareness & Recognition

- Managers understand what constitutes whistleblowing
 - Managers recognise that disclosures about sexual harassment may qualify as whistleblowing
 - Informal disclosures treated appropriately
 - Managers understand escalation requirements
 - HR involvement triggered at an early stage
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Receiving & Responding to Disclosures

- Clear process for receiving whistleblowing concerns
 - Disclosures acknowledged promptly
 - Initial response is neutral and non-defensive
 - No assumptions made about intent or outcome
 - Appropriate safeguarding considerations assessed
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Documentation & Evidence

- Disclosure details recorded accurately
 - Decisions and actions documented
 - Communications retained securely
 - Confidentiality maintained appropriately
 - Records retained in line with governance requirements
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Protection from Detriment

- Managers understand the risk of detriment following disclosure
 - No unfavourable treatment of the individual raising concerns
 - Any changes to role, duties or treatment reviewed carefully
 - Performance or conduct processes assessed for risk
 - Advice sought where potential detriment arises
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Manager Guidance & Support

- Managers briefed on strengthened whistleblowing protections
 - Clear guidance on what managers should and should not do
 - HR support clearly signposted
 - Managers encouraged to seek advice early
 - Templates and guidance available to support handling
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Review & Governance

- Whistleblowing and harassment policies reviewed ahead of April 2026
 - Managers briefed on upcoming changes
 - Governance and approval processes reviewed
 - Review dates diarised
 - Ongoing monitoring in place
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Final Note

The strengthened protections around whistleblowing and sexual harassment highlight the importance of handling concerns carefully, consistently and without delay. Employers who follow clear processes and avoid any form of detriment are better placed to reduce risk and maintain trust.

This guide provides general information only and does not constitute legal advice.

Need Help?

Our HR experts can help you review your HR policies, update documentation, and deliver manager training, HR Surgeries or Q&A's in relation to the Employment Rights Act 2026.



Contact HR:4UK today to stay ahead of the changes and protect your business.



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