

Third party harassment and sexual harassment statement

Accountable GLT member: Director of People & Transformation	Effective date: <i>October 2026</i>
Document owner: <i>BMJ HR</i>	Due next review: <i>October 2029</i>

Our commitment

BMJ Group is committed to providing a professional, respectful and inclusive environment for everyone we work with. To meet our legal obligations and our commitment to safety, we are taking all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and harassment related to a protected characteristic. This commitment extends beyond our employees to all third parties who work or interact with us, including but not limited to; freelancers, consultants, contractors, agency workers, suppliers, partners, customers, authors, reviewers, editors, delegates, speakers and visitors.

We expect everyone who represents, works with or provides services to BMJ Group to uphold the same standards of dignity, respect and professionalism that we expect within our own organisation.

What we mean by harassment

Harassment can take different forms. It can occur in person or through online or digital communications and can arise during meetings, events, conferences, business travel, social activities connected with work, or other work-related interactions.

Harassment related to a protected characteristic

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

The relevant protected characteristics for these purposes are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Harassment related to a protected characteristic may include, but is not limited to:

- Offensive, derogatory or degrading comments, jokes or remarks
- Insults, ridicule or inappropriate stereotyping
- Inappropriate or unwanted comments about a person's identity, appearance, background or personal characteristics
- Displaying, sharing or sending offensive material
- Deliberately excluding, intimidating or humiliating someone in circumstances related to a protected characteristic
- Other unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment

A person does not need to possess the protected characteristic themselves for conduct to amount to harassment. For example, harassment may relate to another person's protected characteristic or to a characteristic that someone is perceived to have.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that violates a person's dignity or creates an offensive, hostile, or intimidating environment. A single incident can constitute harassment. Examples include, but are not limited to, unwanted physical contact, sexual comments, jokes, or remarks, inappropriate questions, persistent requests for social or sexual contact, and sharing inappropriate or sexual content. This applies to all interactions, whether in person or via digital communication.

Our expectations of third parties

We expect all suppliers, contractors, freelancers and other third parties who work or interact with BMJ Group to:

- Treat everyone they interact with through BMJ Group with dignity and respect
- Maintain appropriate and professional standards of behaviour at all times
- Refrain from sexual harassment, harassment related to a protected characteristic, discrimination and victimisation, as well as other inappropriate or bullying behaviour
- Take reasonable steps within their control to prevent inappropriate behaviour by their employees, workers, representatives or subcontractors when interacting with BMJ Group
- Support a culture in which concerns can be raised safely and appropriately
- Take concerns raised with them seriously and respond appropriately
- Cooperate with BMJ Group in reviewing or investigating alleged misconduct where appropriate
- Where appropriate, BMJ Group will engage with suppliers to provide guidance on our standards and will periodically review our third-party relationships to ensure our commitment to a harassment-free environment is maintained.

These expectations apply across all interactions connected with BMJ Group, including meetings, conferences, events, business travel, online communications and work-related social activities.

Raising concerns

We encourage anyone who experiences, witnesses or becomes aware of sexual harassment or harassment related to a protected characteristic involving a BMJ Group employee or a third party acting on behalf of, or in connection with, BMJ Group to report their concerns.

Reports will be treated seriously, sensitively and, where possible, confidentially. We are committed to ensuring that individuals who raise concerns in good faith are not subjected to retaliation, victimisation or disadvantage as a result. Please be aware that disclosures regarding sexual harassment may constitute a "protected disclosure" (whistleblowing) under current legislation, which provides specific legal protections.

Concerns may be raised through the appropriate BMJ Group contact, project lead, the HR team (hr@bmj.freshservice.com) or through our independent reporting channels where available.

How we respond

Where concerns are raised, BMJ Group will review the matter promptly and take appropriate action. Depending on the circumstances, this may include:

- Investigating or otherwise reviewing the concern
- Requiring corrective or preventative action
- Restricting participation in BMJ Group activities or events
- Ending a contractual or commercial relationship
- Reporting matters to relevant authorities where appropriate

The action taken will depend on the circumstances of each case and the nature and seriousness of the conduct.

Our ongoing commitment

We recognise that preventing harassment is a shared responsibility. Through our policies, standards and ways of working, we aim to foster an environment in which everyone who engages with BMJ Group can do so safely, confidently and with respect.

We expect our suppliers, freelancers and business partners to support this commitment and help us maintain a workplace and business environment that is professional, inclusive and free from sexual harassment.