

# Dignity and Respect – Organisational Policy

**Actors Touring Company** believes that everyone who comes into contact with ATC and its employees and trustees has the right to be treated with respect.

This policy applies across our working culture and practice in all its forms and represents our desire to be fair, open and inclusive. We want to promote a secure and positive atmosphere for everyone with whom we work, so that they can give of their best in an atmosphere free from harassment or bullying.

The following principles aim to provide a framework for working successfully with others, and for addressing any difficulties that may occur.

## **Principle 1**

People are entitled to be treated with respect.

## **Principle 2**

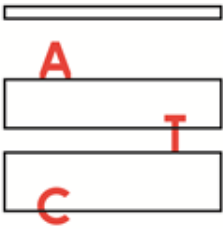
We want to create an empowering environment for all our colleagues. We believe that people give their best when professional boundaries are explicit, understood and maintained at all times.

## **Principle 3**

A colleague's well-being is always a fundamental concern.

## **Who this applies to**

- Anyone we employ (full-time, part-time and freelance)
- Any paid or voluntary participant in a workshop or production
- Our trustees and associated positions on our Board of Directors
- All writers, directors, actors, creative teams, dramatherapists, intimacy directors, stage management, technicians, and other theatre staff, whether employed directly by us or by our co-producing partners or touring venue partners



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- All others we encounter on a professional basis and to whom we represent our company

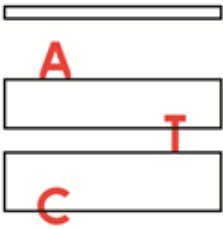
For the purposes of this policy, all the above people are referred to below as ‘colleagues’.

## Where this applies

- Rehearsal rooms and workshop spaces
- Venues with which we are co-producing
- Venues to which we are touring – aka our ‘touring partners’
- Our offices
- Meetings (online, in our office or elsewhere)
- Auditions and interviews
- Professional social events, such as press nights
- Professional industry events, such as conferences, seminars or training
- On social media – both the company’s and your own, if your comments could be seen as representing your role with ATC
- On public media (digital, broadcast, and printed), if your comments can be construed to represent you in your role within ATC or in any way to reflect the company’s attitude

## When it applies

- There is no time limit to raising a concern or making a complaint. You can raise issues with us whenever is right for you.
- It could be helpful in our work to resolve issues or take appropriate action, if you raise concerns as soon as possible, for the following reasons:
  - Please note that there is no legal framework for us to take action against employees if they have left the company, or against freelance workers once they completed their period of engagement with us.
  - We can and will investigate issues that you raise, to the best of our ability, but please be aware that this may be limited once an employee or freelance worker is no longer engaged by this company.
  - This applies to complaints or concerns about workplace behaviour. If you believe a colleague has committed a criminal act, then this should be reported to the police,



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irrespective of whether the colleague is still in ATC's employment. Please note that statutes of limitations may apply to such cases.

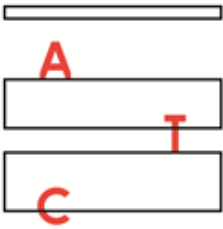
## Appropriate behaviour: some examples

- Treating all colleagues with equal respect and dignity
- If you are managing others, remembering your duty of care to your colleagues – with power comes responsibility
- Making reasonable adjustments for colleagues, including for access requests
- Always conducting our work in an open environment (e.g., avoiding private or unobserved situations unless such work is absolutely essential and can be justified as such)
- Rehearsals, workshops etc often entail physical and emotional openness, the nature and need for which should be explored with care, respect and sensitivity by all colleagues and specialist practitioners (such as Intimacy Directors, Dramatherapists etc.) employed where appropriate
- Boundaries both physical and emotional are to be discussed and agreed before or at the start of rehearsal
- Using good practice, in order to lead by example
- Recognising and responding to the needs of others is part of ensuring their welfare
- Being aware that it is not always possible to assume the emotional robustness of a colleague
- Those in positions of authority have a right and responsibility to discharge managerial duties. In doing so they may need to adopt a firm or assertive style, but they should take care not to demean, devalue, or intimidate colleagues
- Mutual respect is essential

## Inappropriate behaviour: some examples

Examples of behaviour that is never appropriate, unless directly required within the nature and context of the production/workshop and only after appropriate discussion and mutual agreement by all concerned:

- Rough and/or sexually provocative games, including horseplay



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- Allowing or engaging in any form of intimate touching
- Using language which might be perceived to be inappropriate, discriminatory
- Singling out of an individual by treating them differently from others

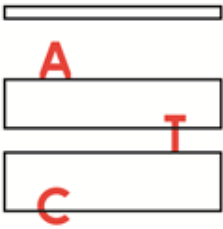
Examples of behaviour that is never appropriate:

- Exerting pressure on any performer to be pushed into areas of physical intimacy and touch that they are not comfortable with; whether during the process of rehearsal or in final performance
- Making sexually suggestive comments, even in fun
- Making unsolicited personal remarks about a colleague, sexual or otherwise
- Making personal comments about professional colleagues on any form of social media
- Arguing aggressively in public with, or shouting at, colleagues
- Persistent or unfair criticism and constantly undervaluing effort
- Ostracising people, using threats and instilling fear
- Inappropriate use of email or social media (please refer to relevant guidance in the ATC Handbook for Staff and Freelance Workers)
- Spreading malicious rumours
- Withholding information and removing areas of responsibility
- Imposing inappropriate tasks
- Failing to act promptly upon and to record any allegations made by a colleague in a timely manner (see below for how we will address concerns)

## How we will address concerns

Colleagues should be confident that they can report or discuss any problems. Clear lines of reporting are as follows:

- **Full-time staff, freelance workforce and trustees**  
***Report to ATC Administration Director***
  
- **Production staff including actors and stage management**  
***Report to the production's Company Manager***



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➤ **Participants in workshops**

***Report to Workshop Associate, identified in your Intro Pack***

**Alternatively**, in cases where a colleague is considering raising a concern about the person shown above, the colleague can instead contact the permanent organisational team at ATC: the Executive Director; or if appropriate, the Chair of the ATC Board.

Contact details for the above are given at the time of contract or can be requested from the Administration Director - you don't need to say what it's about, you can just ask for contact details and say you need to get in touch with that person.

*If you raise a concern with us, all conversations you have are treated as confidential. No-one else is informed until it the appropriate moment in the process described below. If you wish to remain anonymous in raising a concern, then your wish will be respected.*

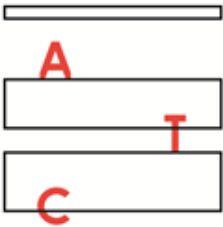
*If your concern relates to a colleague with whom you work closely, for example sharing an office or working on a project, we will immediately ensure that contact between you is limited, until the concern is resolved. In cases of concerns about a potential gross misconduct, we may take an action to request the individual(s) against whom a complaint is made, go on agreed leave for a period of time whilst the finding of any investigation is concluded.*

## **Resolving Problems**

We want colleagues to always feel that their concern is valid. Managers have a responsibility to respond to and record all complaints; and to respect the confidentiality of complainants. 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.

## **What happens when breaches of the Dignity and Respect Policy occur?**

- We encourage informal resolution wherever possible and appropriate.
- In cases of significant and irreconcilable concerns, the company's Grievance Policy may be used by the colleague to raise a formal complaint.



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- In cases of Grievance, this will then be investigated by a Senior Manager and dealt with in a timely manner.
- Concerns raised about a potential breach of trustee’s Key Responsibilities and Behaviours (as outlined in the Trustee’s Induction Pack) will be investigated by the Chair and / or Vice Chair.

**Breach of this policy is likely to result in a formal warning. Serious breach of this policy is likely to result in dismissal.**

**For full details of the company’s Grievance Procedure and Policy, see the Staff Handbook** (an integral part of contracts), which is available to all staff (employed and freelance) on request.

*Policy created: January 2018*

*Policy cycle: every 2 years*

*Most recent review: November 2023*

*ATC is an Ethical Manager with ITC (Independent Theatre Council) and followed guidance published by ITC, ACAS and Equity in producing this policy.*

## **Useful Resources**

- ACAS: [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)
- Advice on bullying at work: [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)
- Equality & Human Rights Commission: [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)
- Tackling work-related stress [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
- EU: [\*\*Protection of Dignity of Men and Women at Work\*\*](#)
- Unite: [\*\*Dignity at Work\*\*](#)