CONCEPT

Workplace Investigations Training Course: Harassment, Bullying and Misconduct Complaints



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Introduction:

Workplace investigations into harassment, bullying and misconduct complaints are the subject of this 1-week course for HR, employee relations, compliance and ethics staff, who produce a Harassment Complaint Investigation Report with interview records and an evidence schedule. Organisations lose trust, face retaliation claims and see findings overturned when complaints are triaged inconsistently, interviews are leading and reports mix opinion with fact. Nominees already receive or handle internal complaints, and teaching is by role-played interviews with complainants, witnesses and respondents. CoreConcept Training Center delivers this workplace investigations course.

Course Objectives:

- Triage incoming complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination and policy breaches and decide whether a formal investigation is warranted
- Draft an investigation mandate and plan that sets scope, allegations, investigator independence and timetable
- Put interim protective measures in place for complainants and witnesses while managing retaliation risk
- Gather documents, emails, CCTV footage and system records within privacy and data-minimisation limits
- Plan and conduct fair interviews with complainants, witnesses and respondents using the PEACE model
- Weigh evidence against the civil standard of proof, assess credibility and write a findings report for decision makers

Target Audience:

- HR officers who receive and investigate internal complaints about colleague conduct
- Employee relations staff who handle bullying, harassment and discrimination allegations
- Compliance and ethics staff who run investigations arising from speak-up reports
- Internal audit and risk staff asked to support conduct investigations
- Line HR business partners who appoint or oversee investigators

Course Outline:

Day 1: Complaint Intake, Triage and the Decision to Investigate

- Complaint Typology Covering Harassment, Bullying, Discrimination and Policy Breaches
- Intake Form and First Contact Record With the Complainant
- Triage Matrix Rating Seriousness, Urgency and Pattern Indicators
- Route Selection Between Informal Resolution, Mediation and Formal Inquiry
- Allegation Framing Into Specific, Testable Statements of Conduct

Day 2: Investigation Mandate, Independence and Interim Protection

- Investigation Mandate Setting Scope, Allegations and Reporting Line
- Investigator Selection With Conflict of Interest Declaration
- Investigation Plan Listing Evidence Sources, Interviewees and Sequence
- Interim Measures Such as Reporting Line Changes and Paid Leave
- Retaliation Risk Assessment and Protection Plan for Complainants

Day 3: Evidence Gathering and Investigative Interviewing

- Document, Email and Chat Message Retrieval Within Privacy Limits
- CCTV, Access Log and Device Record Preservation Steps
- PEACE Model Planning, Engagement and Account Phases in Practice
- Open, Probing and Closed Question Sequencing for Interviewees
- Interview Record Wording, Review and Signature by Interviewee

Day 4: Fairness, Credibility and Weighing Conflicting Accounts

- Respondent Rights to Know Allegations and Answer Them
- Civil Standard of Proof Applied to Each Allegation
- Credibility Factors of Consistency, Plausibility and Corroboration
- Handling Vulnerable Interviewees, Companions and Interpreters
- Bias Traps Including Confirmation Bias and Halo Effect

Day 5: Role-Play Capstone on a Harassment Complaint Investigation

- Case Briefing and Investigation Plan for a Harassment Complaint
- Role-Play Interview With the Complainant Using PEACE Phases
- Role-Play Interviews With a Witness and the Respondent
- Findings Analysis and Handover Note for Disciplinary Decision Makers
- Harassment Complaint Investigation Report Completion and Record Retention

Skills You Will Gain:

- Complaint Triage
- Investigation Planning
- Interim Protective Measures
- Digital Evidence Handling
- Investigative Interviewing
- Credibility Assessment
- Evidence Weighing
- Findings Report Writing

Why Attend This Course:

- Deliver a Harassment Complaint Investigation Report with interview records and an evidence schedule to the HR director or conduct committee
- Decide whether a complaint needs informal resolution, mediation or a formal inquiry, and which interim measures it calls for
- Avoid overturned findings, retaliation claims and privacy breaches caused by leading interviews or unlawful evidence collection
- Coach colleagues and line managers on intake, confidentiality and fair interviewing using the course templates

Conclusion:

Back at work, the participant hands the Harassment Complaint Investigation Report to the HR director, conduct committee or disciplinary decision maker, who uses its findings on each allegation to decide on outcomes, support for the complainant and any wider remedial action. Ethics and employee relations colleagues reuse the triage matrix, mandate and interview templates on new complaints. After the first investigation run under this approach, the unit should review timeliness, complainant and respondent feedback and any retaliation reports, then refine its templates and records retention rules.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

What should participants know before a workplace investigations course on harassment, bullying and misconduct complaints?

Participants should already receive, triage or handle internal complaints in HR, employee relations, compliance or ethics roles. No legal qualification is needed. Anonymised complaint summaries or policy documents from their organisation help during the role-plays.

How does this workplace investigations course differ from courses on disciplinary procedures or fraud investigation?

It concentrates on fact-finding into conduct complaints, from intake to findings report. Disciplinary hearings, sanctions and labour disputes, financial fraud examination and criminal inquiries are touched only where they meet the investigation, and are covered in depth by separate courses.

Why is the respondent interviewed last in most workplace investigations into harassment complaints?

Interviewing the respondent after the complainant and key witnesses lets the investigator put every allegation and relevant evidence to them at once, giving a fair chance to answer. Further interviews remain possible if new points arise.

What do participants take back from the workplace investigations course on harassment and misconduct complaints?

Participants take back a completed Harassment Complaint Investigation Report from the capstone case, with interview records and an evidence schedule, plus triage, mandate, interview and handover templates ready for their next complaint.