Commonword Enterprises Ltd
Harassment and Bullying Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines Commonword's commitment to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for everyone involved in our work. We do not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying, whether between employees, volunteers, artists, service users, or members of the public. Everyone has the right to work and participate in a setting free from abuse, intimidation, or harm.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees (including permanent, temporary, freelance, and contract workers)
- Volunteers and trustees
- Service users (including participants, visitors, audience members, community members)
- Collaborators, contractors, and anyone engaging with the organisation

It covers all settings: in-person, remote, online, at venues, and at any events or activities connected to Commonword.

3. Definitions

3.1 Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted behaviour — verbal, physical, written, digital, or otherwise — that causes a person to feel distressed, humiliated, offended, threatened, or undermined. It does not have to be related to a protected characteristic and may be a single incident or a pattern of behaviour.

Examples of harassment include:

- Offensive, degrading or threatening comments or actions
- Intrusive or unwelcome questions or attention
- Unwanted physical contact
- Intimidation, shouting, or aggressive behaviour
- Spreading rumours or discrediting others
- Demeaning jokes or sarcasm
- Unsolicited messages, calls, or digital harassment

3.2 Bullying

Bullying is repeated or sustained negative behaviour that seeks to hurt, intimidate, undermine, or exclude an individual or group. It involves an abuse of power and can occur between people at any level.

Examples of bullying include:

- Persistent criticism or belittling
- Isolating or excluding someone deliberately
- Manipulative or controlling behaviour
- Misuse of authority or influence
- Online abuse or harassment

4. Our Commitment

We are committed to:

- Maintaining a respectful, safe and inclusive environment
- Preventing bullying and harassment through clear policies and education
- Responding promptly and fairly to any complaints
- Supporting those affected by bullying or harassment
- Promoting a culture of dignity and mutual respect

5. Responsibilities

All individuals involved with Commonword are expected to:

- Treat others with respect and care
- Be mindful of their words, actions and the impact on others
- Challenge and/or report behaviour that may constitute bullying or harassment
- Uphold the values of inclusion, dignity, and collaboration

Staff, managers, and volunteers have a duty to take concerns seriously and model respectful conduct.

6. Reporting and Responding

6.1 Reporting Concerns

If you experience or witness harassment or bullying, please report it as soon as possible. You can:

- Speak to the Safeguarding Lead, or another named contact
- Submit a written report via email to pete@cultureword.org.uk
- Use the feedback form via our website.

We encourage an open culture where concerns can be raised without fear of retaliation. All reports will be treated seriously and in confidence as far as possible.

6.2 What Happens Next

All concerns will be assessed and, if necessary, investigated. Depending on the situation, outcomes may include:

- Informal conversation, mediation or facilitated resolution
- Verbal or written warning
- Temporary or permanent exclusion from activities or venues
- Termination of contract, employment or volunteer relationship
- In serious cases, referral to external authorities

Both complainants and those accused will be treated fairly and informed of the process and decisions.

7. Support

We will provide or signpost support for anyone affected by bullying or harassment. This may include:

- A named support person
- Adjustments to working or participation environments
- Access to mental health or advocacy services

8. Raising Awareness

All staff, volunteers, and regular service users will be made aware of this policy. Expectations of conduct will be embedded in onboarding, training, and participant agreements as appropriate. Visible signage, codes of conduct, or online notices will reinforce a culture of safety and respect.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually. Commonword will continuously develop this policy to ensure it remains fit for purpose and is in line with current legislation.