

Affiliate briefing

# Tackling and preventing sexual harassment training sessions background

The TUC is committed to do all it can to support all our affiliates with our shared commitment to the elimination all forms of sexual harassment and violence against women, and to lead by example by implementing good policies and practices within our own organisations. We have been working with experts to develop a training course aimed at how to build preventative cultures within the trade union movement.

Our intention is to work with our affiliates to develop and deliver best practice on tackling and preventing sexual harassment within our own organisations, ensuring every trade union has a workplace culture, led and modelled by all those in leadership positions, where a preventative approach to sexual harassment is mainstreamed, supported by strong procedures and a shared understanding across the TUC and our affiliates and the role we all must play in putting policies into practice.

This training must be part of a broader programme of work to tackle and prevent sexual harassment and is aimed at building the knowledge and understanding of participants in what sexual harassment is, how it manifests, what the barriers are in tackling and preventing sexual harassment and how they can be overcome through commitment and action towards culture change.

By developing this training for the trade union movement, our objective is to lay the foundations for:

* Embedding cultural change in the trade union movement to build preventative cultures in relation to sexual harassment for trade union staff, officials, and lay members.
* Building the capacity of the trade union movement to effectively challenge and respond to reports of sexual harassment from within the trade union movement.
* Embedding the processes and actions that need to be taken to build preventative cultures into the movement.

The style of training is values-led, positive, inclusive and aims to empower leaders. It will take a forward-looking approach. The training will focus on:

* Why leadership is important for addressing cultures supportive of sexual harassment.
* Knowledge base: legal and theoretical definitions of sexual harassment in the workplace - how sexual harassment is related to power and to violence against women; intersectionality.
* Understanding: thinking about barriers to reporting; looking at the psychology of perpetrators and those subjected to sexual harassment; concepts of ‘justice’; the collegiate workplace and victim-blaming; how do we change workplace cultures.
* Practical leadership skills, actions and practices: thinking about handling disclosures, climate surveys, data, policy and procedures.

The training is not a space for people to make formal reports of incidences that have happened to them or that they have witnessed, though people may well draw on their experiences to inform the discussions, so it is important to ensure any support resources available are signposted before and after the training.

## Who is the training for?

This training is based on the training delivered to the TUC SMT, Executive and General Council by Dr Helen Mott, an independent expert and consultant in tackling violence against women and girls and culture change.

The training was developed and piloted with leadership in mind, emphasising that leadership buy-in is essential for culture change. In line with that, this training is aimed in the first instance at leadership structures within our movement and those that have decision making power and responsibility for process and practice – Senior leaders and officials, senior lay activists, SMTs, line managers, Executives and personnel functions for example.

However, we recognise that reps and activists are also leaders in our movement and can help to drive change from the grassroots of our movement as well as driving change within their own branches, local structures and workplaces. By having a conversation with the trainer beforehand about who you are running the session for, the trainer can think about the best way to adapt the activities and facilitate the discussion for that audience.

It is important when planning a session that you consider the power dynamics of who will be in the room as this may well have an impact on how comfortable participants feel to engage with the training. We would recommend having sessions that are effectively peer to peer rather than for example mixed sessions for senior leaders and reps or line managers and the staff they line manage.

## About the trainers

In our first cohort we have recruited 12 trainers from across our movement. We went through a recruitment process that saw hundreds of people express interest in becoming a trainer and a panel drawn from the TUC staff working on this project and independent experts interviewed nearly 40 people. As part of the interview process candidates were set a task that helped to demonstrate their understanding of misogyny and sexual harassment and the cultures that enable it, and they were asked questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of trade unions.

Some of the trainers are employed by unions, some are activists and reps, some are Trade Union tutors, all of them are highly skilled and have significant knowledge and understanding of sexual harassment and the cultures that enable it and of our movement and its structures and processes.

The sessions will be treated in the strictest confidence by all trainers, these sessions are designed to be positive and values-led to support unions in taking a proactive approach to tackling and preventing sexual harassment and lead by example. Nothing from the discussions that take place in the training will be fed back to the TUC or affiliates.

Trainers will ask participants to fill in an evaluation form, this is just to find out what people thought of the training. A template of the evaluation form is attached in the appendix of this briefing.

## About the training

Below is important information to consider when planning the training.

* The training can be delivered online or in person subject to affiliate preference and trainer availability.
* We would recommend a maximum of 10 to 12 people per session to enable the best possible conversations, though you can discuss this with the trainer when deciding on the logistics of the session(s).
* There may be a need or preference for co-tutoring in some instances, and when being delivered online there will either need to be two tutors for tech support or the union may need to have someone who is able to support with tech on the day (moving slides along, playing videos etc) depending on trainer preference.
* The sessions are run over a full day (e.g. 10-4pm) to facilitate deeper conversations and enable breaks for participants as the subject matter and training is quite intensive.
* Consider the power dynamics of who will be in the room as this may well have an impact on how comfortable participants feel to engage with the training.
* There will need to be a nominated point of contact from your union for any sessions in case any participants following the training wish to raise any issues in relation the training or feelings and experiences the discussions may have triggered.
* A template participant briefing will be provided to affiliates by the trainers, affiliates will want to edit this before sending to participants to include a named point of contact and any support offered by the union e.g. Employee Assistance Program, links to union sexual harassment policy and/ or reporting processes for example.
* A pre-meeting with the trainer (or trainers if co-tutoring) will be required to talk to them about:
* timings and logistical arrangements,
* who the training is being offered to and how many people, and
* where your union is at with work around tackling and preventing sexual harassment within your organisation (e.g. do you have a policy or an action plan already, have you used any elements of the TUC toolkit or had other training/ used other resources etc).

Trainers can also give an overview of the key elements of the course. This conversation will help the trainer understand the best way to manage the timings on the day and which areas may require more focus and discussion so that your union and participants get the most out of the training.

* Trainers are there to deliver the training course as developed by the TUC. While the trainers can discuss broader issues and offer informal advice, the TUC and our trainers aren’t able to provide any official advice that could be used as part of any HR or investigation process.
* The TUC has worked to develop and pilot this course and act on feedback, and we are currently in the process of having the course assured and independently evaluated, it is TUC endorsed training, but it is not a course paid for by the TUC. Participants will be able to claim a digital badge for completing the training.
* Trainers charge a day rate of £450 and associated costs (e.g. travel and accommodation expenses if in person, preparation time) must also be covered by the union.

## How do I book training?

If you wish to make an enquiry about booking the training, then please contact governance@tuc.org.uk

The TUC will then set up an initial conversation with you to discuss your needs including cohort, scale, and location. The TUC will then make introductions to between you and the appropriate trainer(s). As part of the introduction the TUC will also share with the affiliate and the trainer an overview document that sets out roles and responsibilities of the affiliate, the trainer(s), and the TUC.

Once the introduction is made, affiliates will then need to schedule a pre-meeting with their trainer(s) to discuss their training needs, audience, and logistics of the session(s). This is also a good opportunity to give the trainer an overview of any work the union has done or is planning to do on tackling and preventing sexual harassment within their organisation, so the trainer has a good understanding of the context in which they are delivering the session(s) – this will be treated confidentially by the trainer.

At this point the affiliate and trainer will be liaising directly without any further input from the TUC, unless a question or a need for further discussion arises/ is requested.

The TUC will work with the trainers to collate feedback and keep track of the reach we are achieving with the training. This will include a record of the number of sessions, attendees and their position within the union structure and general feedback on the session. It will not include any sharing of details or conversations had during the session; all sessions will be treated confidentially.

Following the session, should affiliates wish to have further conversations regarding any work they are doing or planning to do to tackle and prevent sexual harassment within their organisation, the TUC will of course be available.