

Creating a culture of intolerance for sexual harassment

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About the session

- Why this is still a concern
- What we see in our casework
- Reminder of our standards
- How to manage the risks

Why this is still a concern?

- Lessons for us all from the Harman Review
- Impact on the profession
- Steady stream of reports to the SRA
 - Number of reports has increased year on year since 2021
 - Significant reduction in the time taken to investigate

What we see in our casework

- Social events involving alcohol
- Taking advantage where there is a power imbalance
- Unwanted sexual attention – including on social media
- Increasing reports about individuals who are not solicitors
- More work to support witnesses so cases can progress
- Recent outcomes at the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal

Reminder of our standards

- Standards of behaviour also apply outside of practice
 - integrity of the perpetrator
 - wider trust in the profession
- Seriousness of the conduct
 - Sexual misconduct is inherently serious
 - factors which affect seriousness
- Potential criminal liability

How to manage the risks

- Don't be complacent
- Meeting the proactive duty to prevent sexual harassment
- Clear expectations around alcohol consumption and personal relationships
- Clear internal reporting processes and track record of addressing complaint
- Duty to report to us – what and when