



Hollywood Sparks Momentum to Eradicate Workplace Harassment

The recent revelations from Hollywood about sexism and harassment have rightly prompted a strong global reaction. Given what we have learnt, can we genuinely be surprised by the BBC's statistics published this week in relation to workplace harassment? The poll, undertaken for the BBC, identified that of those surveyed half of British women and a fifth of men have been sexually harassed at work or in a place of study; the majority of individuals affected confirmed that they did not tell anyone about their experience.

Despite the Equality Act 2010 making harassment including sexual harassment unlawful and legal rights and duties being widely publicised the findings are concerning.

Helen Taylor Head of [Employment Law](#) at award winning and leading regional law firm Pictons says, "Employers will play a significant role in maintaining the momentum which is gathering for change. The findings suggest that for many organisations there will need to be a significant cultural shift if the aim is to get rid of [discrimination and harassment](#) in the workplace; behaviours and attitudes will need to change. Saying that there is a zero tolerance approach towards bad behaviour and demonstrating this with reference to internal policies is not going to be enough. The problem requires much more than a set of rules.

Policies will only be effective if employers and staff understand the law, and those affected feel able to report their concerns in the knowledge they will be investigated and resolved. The importance of anti discrimination and harassment training for all staff and managers should not be underestimated when it comes to transforming attitudes and conduct. A multipronged attack on discrimination and harassment incorporating all these elements can have a positive effect on staff morale and retention, productivity and also minimise the risk of costly legal claims."

If you need advice on any of the above issues or are interested in Employment and HR training, please contact Helen Taylor or one of her team on [0800 302 9448](tel:08003029448) or email helen.taylor@pictons.co.uk