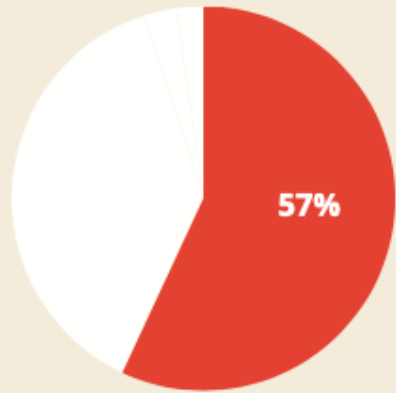


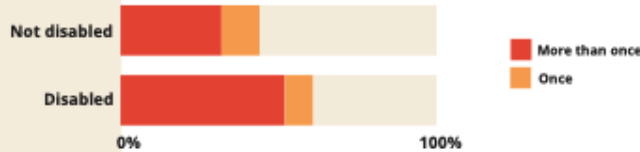
Graphical Summary



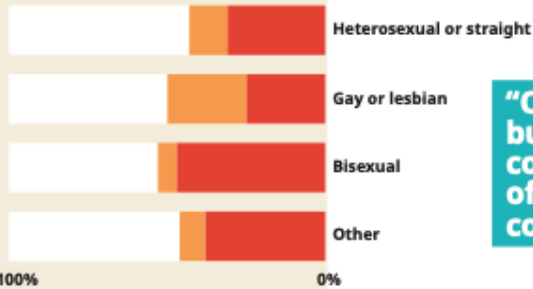
“Senior staff are not aware of the impact of their actions.”

More than half the respondents had witnessed instances of bullying, harassment and unwanted behaviours

Disabled people experienced bullying and harassment more frequently during the last 2 years



Gay, lesbian and bi people experienced more frequent incidents of bullying and harassment in the last 2 years



“One person who bullied me is on the committee in charge of upholding the code of conduct”

BAME respondents experienced more bullying and harassment in the last 12 months



“Known bullies and harassers in UK astronomy have not lost their jobs.”

Bullying and Harassment Report 2023

Royal Astronomical Society

We acknowledge the lived experience of our respondents and thank them for taking part in the survey.

The RAS recognises its role in advocating for equal access to astronomy and geophysics for all, but cannot directly change the policies and procedures of workplaces and organisations in the field.

However, we hope that by giving a voice to the experiences of our Fellows and colleagues, universities, research councils and other workplaces in the sector will improve their working practices as a result.





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THE REPORT:





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RAS Code of Conduct at meetings: <https://ras.ac.uk/code-conduct-ras-meetings>

RAS anonymous reporting form: <https://ras.ac.uk/form/anonymous-reporting>

Places you can find support: <https://ras.ac.uk/education-and-careers/places-you-can-find-support>

Bullying is defined by ACAS as: 'Unwanted behaviour that can be offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting, from a person or group. An abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates, denigrate or causes physical or emotional harm to someone.'

Harassment is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as: 'Unwanted conduct related to protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity/paternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation), which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.'

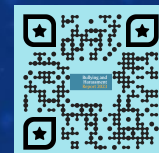


ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT PROGRESS

- Reactive - case by case basis - Fellows coming to us.

Led to:

- New RAS website - diversity section and anonymous reporting, diversity monitoring forms attached to every application form
- Harassment hotline at events
- Working with Prospect Union and other useful partnerships
- Case by case basis still occurring – Fellow asked for us to run a survey
- Harassment and bullying survey and results



INTRODUCTION

- Evidence suggests, from high profile individual cases in astronomy and geophysics, that bullying and harassment is likely to occur frequently in many institutions.
- Bullying and harassment affects mental health, staff retention, and people from minority groups are more likely to be affected by it.
- Prior to this study no data capturing the extent of the issue in our sector had been collected.
- Understanding the experience of employees in astronomy and geophysics, both positive and negative, is crucial for the future health of the sector.
- We hope that these results will influence leaders in different workplaces, and in funding bodies, to shape a better workplace environment for all.



AIMS

The aims of the survey were to:

- Capture the experiences and perspectives of the astronomy and geophysics community regarding bullying and harassment, workplace culture and policies;
- Understand which communities are most likely to be adversely/disproportionately affected by these issues;
- Generate a robust dataset as a starting point and baseline for change in the fields.



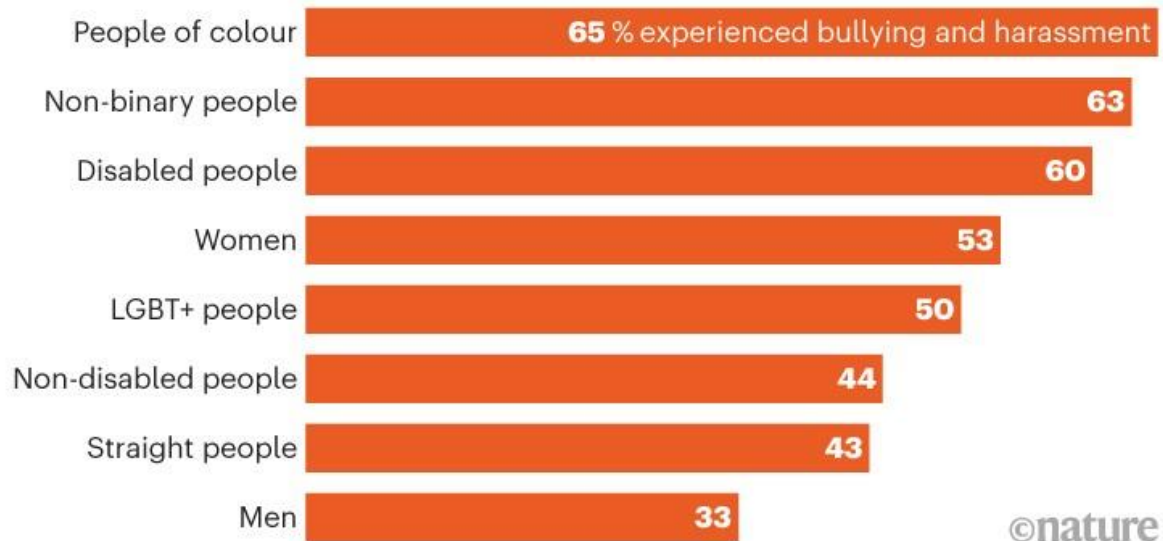


Key initial findings show:

- Disabled, and Black and minority ethnic astronomers and geophysicists are 40% more likely to be bullied than their non-disabled and White colleagues respectively.
- Women and non-binary people in the field are 50% more likely than men to be bullied and harassed.
- 50% of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer astronomers and geophysicists were bullied in the last 12 months, and 12% of bisexual astronomers reported being bullied at least once a week.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT IN ASTRONOMY

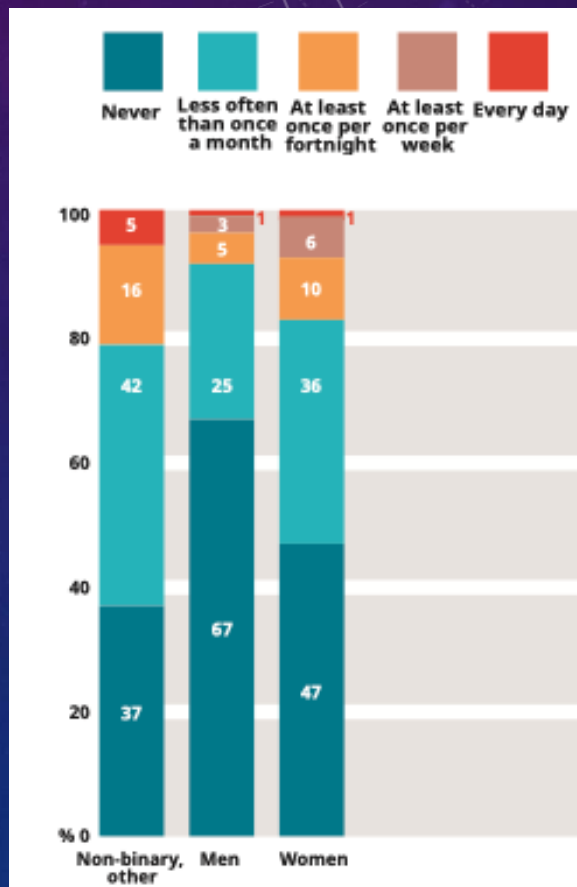
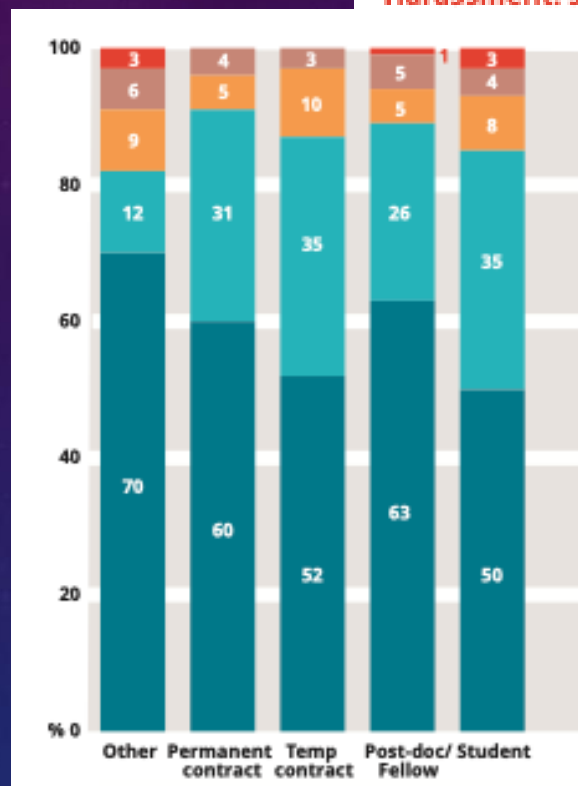
A survey of 661 astronomers and geophysicists found that 44% of respondents had experienced bullying and harassment in the past two years — but people from certain demographics and marginalized groups reported more negative experiences than others.





EXPERIENCES OF HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

Career Stage and Experiences of Bullying and Harassment: students report highest levels

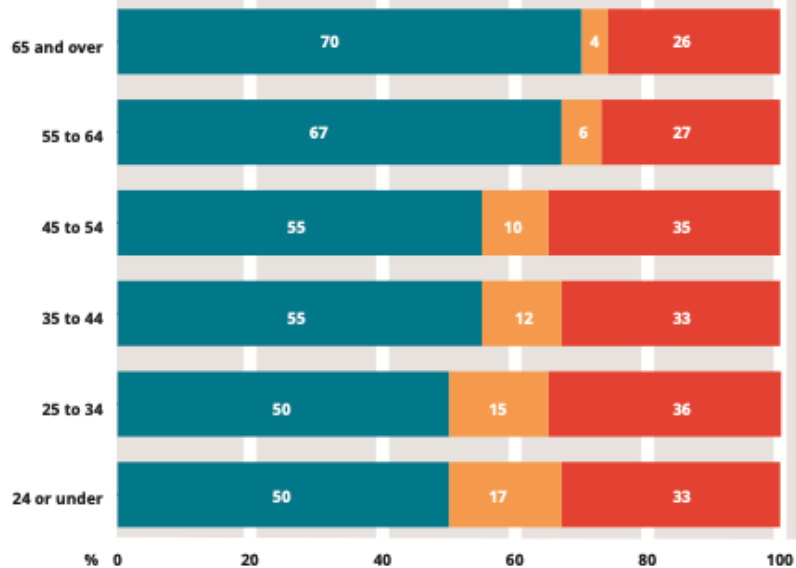


Gender and Experiences of Bullying and Harassment: non-binary and other genders fare worst

Frequency of bullying and harassment during 12 months preceding survey (by gender)

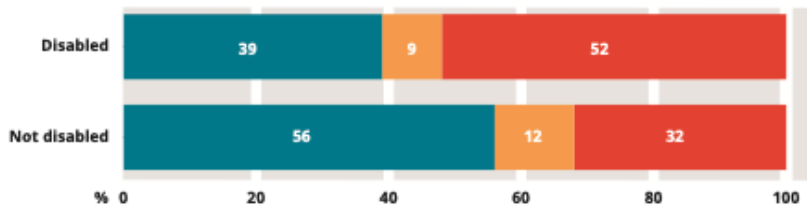


EXPERIENCES OF HARASSMENT AND BULLYING



Frequency of bullying and harassment during 2 years preceding survey (by age)

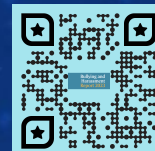
Age and experiences of bullying and harassment: older respondents experienced less bullying or harassment



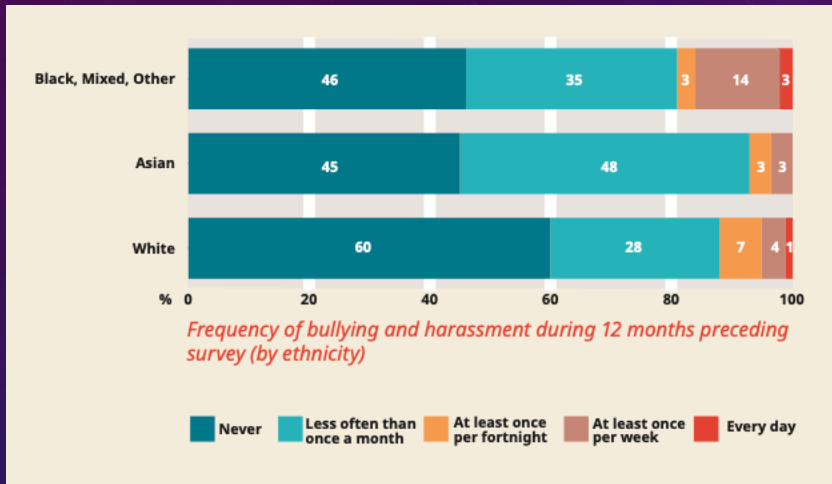
Frequency of bullying and harassment during 2 years preceding survey (by disability)

Disability and experiences of bullying and harassment; disabled people experienced more bullying and harassment

No Once More than once

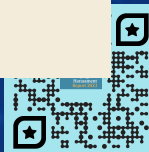
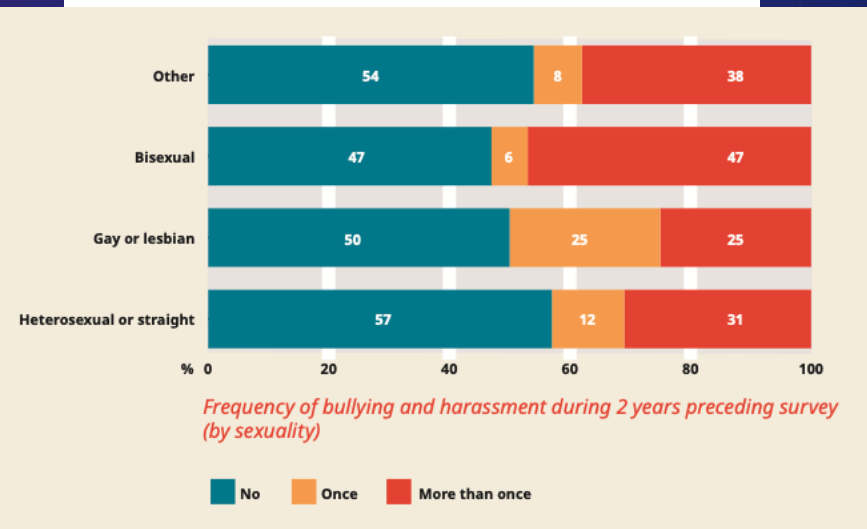


EXPERIENCES OF HARASSMENT AND BULLYING



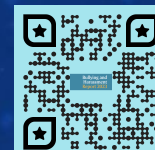
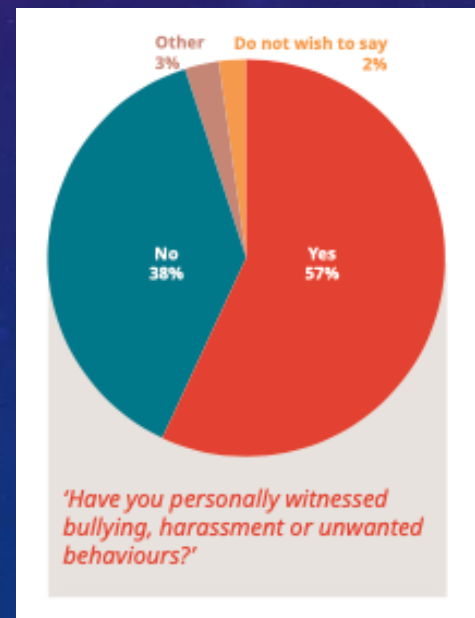
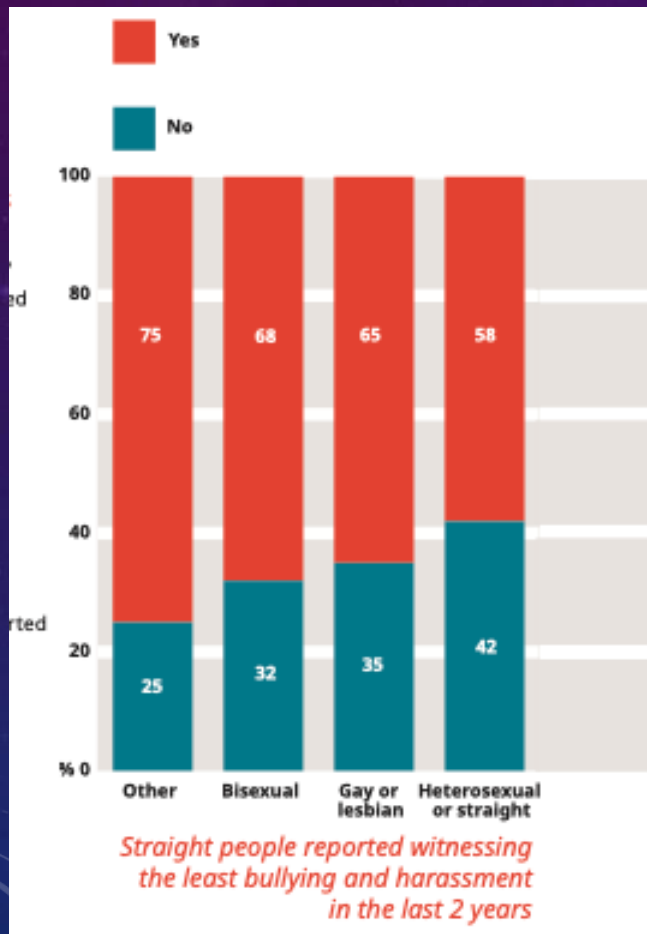
"50% of gay/lesbian respondents and 47% of bi respondents experienced bullying and harassment in the two years before the survey"

"Our data suggests BAME respondents are around 35% more likely to experience bullying and harassment"



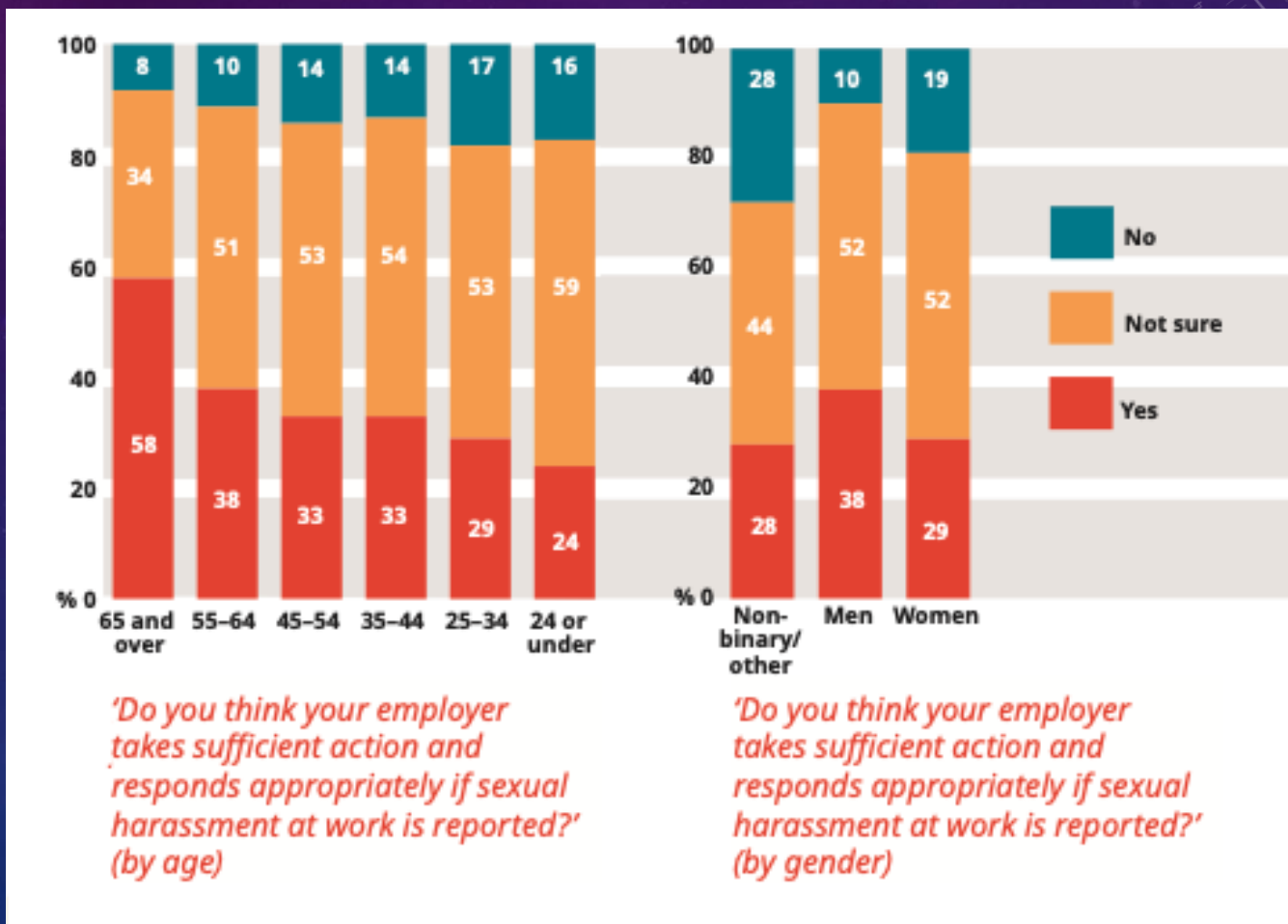
WITNESSING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

"Astronomers and geophysicists between the ages of 25 and 44 are much more likely to witness bullying and harassment than their younger and older colleagues"





PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYERS' RESPONSES TO HARASSMENT AND BULLYING



EXPERIENCES OF PREVENTATIVE MEASURES IN THE WORKPLACE

“Do you think your employer takes sufficient action to prevent bullying and harassment or unwanted behaviours at work?”

37% of all respondents said yes to this, 33% said no, and 27% said they were not sure (3% responded with ‘other’).

Respondents had the opportunity to explain their answer. There were some positive examples:

- Clear communication
- Chains of command
- Reporting procedures at their workplace. Although reporting differs from prevention, many respondents mentioned this. The existence of reporting procedures may deter perpetrators.



EXPERIENCES OF PREVENTATIVE MEASURES IN THE WORKPLACE

Many more respondents expanded on their answer with negative examples.

- Unclear reporting procedures at many institution
- Supervisor relationships make reporting/whistleblowing difficult
- Policies aren't there to protect staff or prevent bullying and harassment, they are there to cover organisations' backs
- Those in positions of power and influence are perceived as 'invincible' and are not punished; many perceived that there were no sanctions for those who secure large grants for their universities

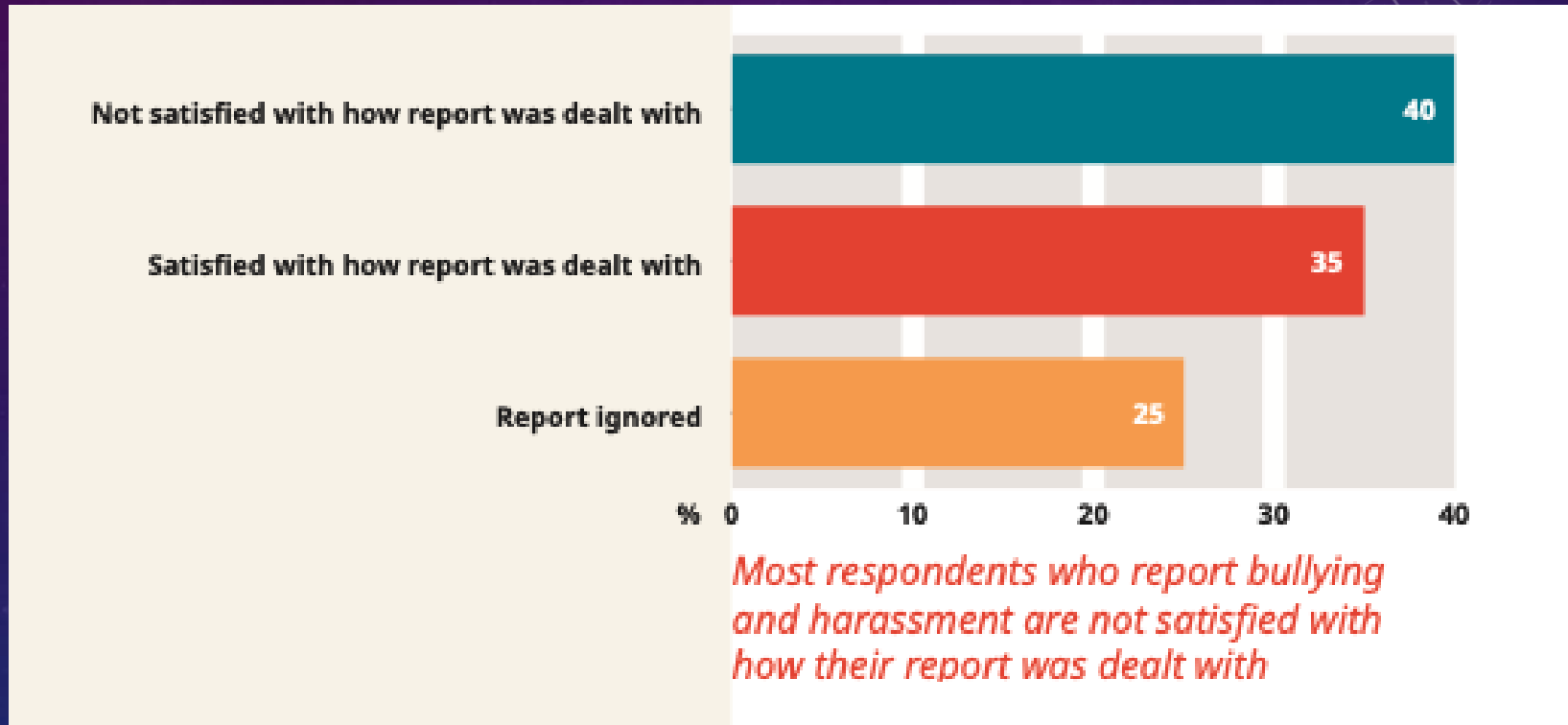
"A code of conduct exists, but one of the persons who bullied me is one of the chairs of the committee in charge of upholding it"

"On paper they do, but there are always some people in more 'powerful' positions who don't treat students with respect, especially those who are struggling with a disability"

"It is difficult to educate senior staff on their behaviour. Some individuals are not aware of the impact of their actions and do not believe they have done anything wrong."



REPORTING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT



The sample size of the answers to this question was not large enough to allow us to look at disaggregated responses to this question for most demographic groups. This is because this question addresses only those who had reported bullying and harassment and a disaggregated analysis of this group would not be statistically sound. An elementary analysis suggested women were approximately twice as likely as men to be dissatisfied with how their reports were dealt with.



AIMS

The aims of the survey were to:

- Capture the experiences and perceptions of the astronomy and geophysics community regarding bullying and harassment, workplace culture and policies;
- Understand which communities are most likely to be adversely/disproportionately affected by these issues;
- Generate a robust dataset as a starting point and baseline for change in the fields.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS



BULLYING AND HARASSMENT WORKING GROUP

- In analysing the report we realised that whilst the evidence was important, what would be more important would be to create a set of actions and recommendations for the RAS and the wider community.
- A working group was set up to discuss what these actions and recommendations should look like.

The Bullying and Harassment working group met from May-July 2023 and consisted of:

Charlotte Thorley (chair)
Sheila Kanani (RAS staff lead)
Dominic Galliano (freelance)
Jonathan Piotrowski (UKRI)
Julie Wardlow (Lancaster University)
Claire Davies (University of Exeter)
Em Truman (UKSEDS)
Shanice Dunk (IOP)



- What follows is a series of recommendations that can be actioned by individuals, by managers and workplaces, and by organisations and associations.
- More explicit permission is needed to enable individuals to act, report, or disclose when harm is done. This permission is useless if those involved cannot also trust that this will be acted upon, and received with the support it requires.
- To that end these recommendations are suggestions for how we might build that sense of permission and trust, focusing on three critical areas: **prevention, reporting and accountability.**
- It is our intention that by enacting these recommendations, we can all make headway towards a safer and more inclusive workplace.



PREVENTION AND UNDERSTANDING

- Prevention should be our ultimate goal.
- Work is needed to:
 - develop more constructive working patterns and relationships
 - challenging systemic issues that lead to the normalisation of acceptance of bullying and harassment (B&H).
- We need individuals and organisations to understand that it is the *consequences* of the bullying and harassment that matters most, not their own perceptions of what is acceptable.
- We can achieve this by challenging the power dynamics and considering how structures and systems interact to perpetuate the issue.
- We want to assure the next generation of astronomers and geophysicists that our community is safe and welcoming.



Individuals

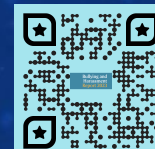
- Increase your understanding of what behaviours might be considered bullying and harassment. This might include: proactive EDI engagement, training, learning about other cultures, diversifying news and media feeds.
- Increase your understanding of what to do if you see bullying and harassment (like active bystander training).
- Actively engage in teaching, management, leadership and mentoring training opportunities to keep practice up to date.
- Consider joining a union for support, guidance and advice in these areas.

Managers and Leaders

- Create a culture of sharing around cultural and social understandings. This might include scheduling shared coffee breaks/ lunches, profiling people's backgrounds and interests in newsletters, bringing in training around differences represented in your team, etc.
- Commit to keeping yourself and other colleagues up to date on best practice with respect to B&H (training, reading, listening). This needs to include behaviour in online spaces and at external events and activities, as well as your place of work, and to extend to all relationships whether in the lab, classroom, office, corridor, canteen or beyond.
- Commit to regularly reviewing that all members of the team are given equal/equivalent access to opportunities (projects, training, collaborations).
- Openly discuss B&H at committees, management team meetings and elsewhere to contribute to the culture of awareness around B&H.

Organisations

- Offer regular training and learning opportunities that are particularly relevant to issues faced by your staff/ membership and their managers.
- Promote good working practices through membership activities (registration, newsletters, events, terms and conditions) and fostering inclusive environments.
- Advertise anti-bullying and harassment initiatives and EDI training, including through equitable existing structures, such as annual reviews, promotions and organisational membership criteria.
- Recognise the role of individuals in contributing to a safe and inclusive workplace by seeking positive attributes in recruitment.
- Ensure events have a strong and actionable code of conduct.
- Regularly review training and learning offerings, liaising with other similar bodies to keep the whole sector informed.



REPORTING AND RELATED PROCESSES

- Current reporting processes for individuals to report instances of B&H maintain the working cultures where bullying and harassment get overlooked or deliberately ignored.
- Processes need challenging to ensure those who have been harmed are able to safely trust that their experience is being taken seriously.



Individuals

- Find out what your reporting options are (employer, memberships, police). Update this knowledge every year.
- If you witness any behaviour that might be considered to be B&H, make a note of the circumstances, who, what, where and when. Be prepared to share this with the person who was harmed.
- You may also wish to directly report the incident, or at least seek advice from a local EDI or anti-bullying and harassment champion.
- If you witness any behaviour that is harmful to you directly or by association, feel empowered to report this.
- If someone tells you they have experienced B&H then take time to listen, signpost, and support reporting.

Managers and Leaders

- Keep up to date on your institutional reporting mechanisms. Invite HR or an external expert in to keep your team up to date.
- Take every case brought to your attention seriously. Make time to follow procedure and regularly follow up.
- Ensure there is a designated point of contact for reporting B&H issues and that you are clear on who it is and how to contact them.
- Be clear about what might be reported and by who. Have processes in place to account for those who are being harmed directly, those who are being harmed indirectly or by association, and those who have witnessed harm.

Organisations

- Ensure that reporting processes are accessible and transparent, and for these processes to be comparable across relevant institutions (learned associations, membership bodies, universities, industry).
- Set timelines on which B&H reports will be investigated and the results communicated to all parties involved.
- Review membership of B&H panels (for example a panel member hearing allegations of B&H as part of a grievance or disciplinary procedure) to ensure members, are suitably impartial and properly trained to understand issues around B&H.
- Review terms and conditions, and the skills of the panel, to ensure that bad practice is not being perpetuated.
- Ensure there is a clear process for acting on witness statements of B&H, and ensure that procedures account for that fact that witnessing a behaviour can constitute B&H, even if the witness is not the direct target.
- Ensure the quality and coverage of organisational policies in order to ensure seamless reporting, even from outside the organisation.
- Emphasise to staff that having things reported is a good thing





ACCOUNTABILITY, CONSEQUENCES AND COMMUNICATION

- Individuals and institutions who have caused harm need to be held accountable for their actions in such a way that has real consequences.
- These consequences should enable the injured party to go on and thrive in their career.
- Communicating these clear and transparent procedures publicly, including potential sanctions if an allegation is upheld, and any other potential impacts (e.g. pay progression, and potential requirement to report B&H to certain grant funders), without creating more work for the injured party, should be prioritised.





Individuals **Managers and Leaders** **Organisations**

- Understand that something that seems harmless or acceptable from your perspective might not be for a given individual.

● Be prepared to learn, and to do better in the future. No-one is expected to be perfect, and mistakes will happen.

- When issues of B&H are raised, be prepared to discuss these in team and group meetings. Trust is built through transparency; whilst specifics might need to be protected on behalf of those involved, any incident that occurs is a learning opportunity for everyone.

Remember that it is important to maintain confidentiality/ personal data so anonymise names and some specific details as appropriate.

- Seek any external badging of anti- B&H status offered (e.g., methods of accreditation/recognition for anti- B&H courses taken), and support team members to do the same.

- Procedures should clearly and transparently demonstrate appropriate and proportionate potential outcomes and sanctions. These might include removal from boards, roles, events, funding, membership or employment.
- Ensure that any 'warnings'

that are given following a disciplinary hearing are transparently communicated, and remain 'live' (commonly 6 months for a first formal warning and 12 months for a final written warning) for the appropriate time. Procedures should also transparently communicate any consequences of a further instance of B&H during the period the warning is 'live'.

- Extend accountability beyond individuals to research groups, teams and institutions, to challenge cultures of B&H.
- Individual employment matters should be confidential – unless they have been heard before an employment tribunal which is a public forum. There may be certain duties of disclosure, e.g. to funders in confidence – but organisations should not disclose unless there is a clear duty to do



ACTIONS FOR THE RAS

Actions	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Share the report and recommendations and publish the report and Nature Astronomy article, and launch the recommendations online and at an in-person event.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lead by example.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Communicate the B&H working group, process, and future plans for B&H work in RAS documents and to partners and other learned societies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Maintain links to the IOP work on the Physics Inclusion Award, and the UKRI work on B&H processes, to ensure these recommendations are considered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Consider if there is further work to be done in this area: could the RAS work with UKRI to provide barriers to funding, for example?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Instigate training offerings for relevant RAS staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● One relevant staff training per year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Carry out a case study with one university to explore how the wider recommendations might be actioned.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Review the recommendations in one, two, and three years' time to check progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Have one working group meeting in Autumn 2024, Autumn 2025 and Autumn 2026.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Repeat the survey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Next survey could be in 2025.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Offer accreditation for individuals (staff and members) and managers as anti-B&H champions, through participation in training or logging learning.	





<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Work with university departments and external conference organisers to ensure safety at all RAS related events and conferences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Review the process and approach for action if there is a breach in the code of conduct at RAS events.● Ensure organisational information is communicated to future conference organisers and processes are enforced.● Ensure events have a strong and actionable code of conduct. Ensure the actions are carried out.● Offer appropriate training for LOC, volunteers and Chairs in how to deal with incidents properly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Create a solid process for selecting speakers and accepting awards nominees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Work with the awards officer and events officer to make this process as strong as possible.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Work with our journal publishers (OUP) and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) to ensure our publications fit COPE requirements.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Offer to work with Individual/Manager/Organisations to help prevent or report B&H where possible.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Awareness for Individual/Manager/Organisations to report to the RAS, whether that be regarding B&H at a RAS event/space, but also more generally.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Help the community work towards a better system, one in which we retrain, relearn and use restorative justice. Keep communication channels open and for preventative measures, as opposed to defensive.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sign up to the UKRI Forum on Tackling Bullying and Harassment principles and see if the RAS can join the Forum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Completed, November 2023



SUGGESTIONS FROM A UNIVERSITY HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

- Use any resources you can.
- EDI role in Senior Management Team.
- Lead by example, educate senior managers.
- Actively look at workload with staff who are more likely to experience bullying.
- Actively check in with staff who are more likely to experience bullying.
- Engage views of staff and students in multiple ways.
- Support embedding inclusivity into Universities (inc. assessments, curriculum, review awarding gaps).
- Role Modelling - posters representing a diversity of excellent scientists.
- Fellowship application feedback, mentors for all PGR students outside their group.
- Clear signposting - dignity at work contacts and staff with wellbeing training.
- Collect data and use it. Feedback to Universities regarding cases.
- Support RAS EDI staff to be able to present their work at meetings.
- Evaluate the EDI experience after large conferences and meetings.
- Consider self nomination without a reference.
- Continue to engage with the community - seek out unheard voices.

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CONCLUSIONS

- This report is a snapshot of the workplace environment in 2020, but its results should concern the astronomy and geophysics community.
- The survey data reveal that astronomy, solar system science and geophysics has a bullying and harassment problem - 44% of the 661 respondents reported suffering it in the workplace in the two years preceding the survey.
- Historically marginalised and under-served groups are much more likely to be bullied and harassed. Our data also show that those at more precarious stages in their careers (students and those on temporary contracts) are also more likely to be bullied and harassed.
- Respondents from these under-served groups had the least trust in workplace procedures and policies against bullying and harassment and feel their workplaces do the least to prevent bullying and harassment.
- The majority (65%) of our respondents who reported concerns of bullying and harassment felt that their concerns had been handled inadequately.
- We must put in more effective policies, procedures and safeguards to protect all our colleagues, to support students, and to ensure that everyone can achieve their potential and work in a safe and satisfying environment, regardless of their background.





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THANK YOU!

HER PLACE FOR  SPACE

EDUCATION | ENGAGEMENT | EDI

Any questions?

saturnsheila@herplaceforspace.com

Caption

STEMM BHIP project coming soon!

