Terms of Reference: FMD Bullying and Harassment Stakeholder Group

Background and Rationale

The FMD Bullying and Harassment Stakeholder Group is established as a parallel and complementary body to the FMD Bullying and Harassment Steering Group. Whilst the Steering Group leads on the development and implementation of faculty-wide initiatives, the Stakeholder Group exists to ensure that those initiatives are grounded in the lived experience of faculty staff, are trusted by the wider community, and are evaluated against meaningful measures of cultural change.

The group operates independently of faculty management structures, providing an evidence-based and community-led perspective. It acts as a two-way channel between the faculty community and the Steering Group: gathering intelligence, producing recommendations, and ensuring that the voices of those most affected by bullying and harassment are heard, valued, and acted upon.

Purpose/Key tasks for the working group:

The Stakeholder Group and individual members operate to:

1. Represent the perspectives and lived experience of faculty staff and PGR, including those who have experienced or witnessed bullying and harassment, and those passionate about driving cultural change.
2. Conduct independent data-gathering exercises as the group sees fit, including surveys, focus groups, and qualitative enquiry, to build an evidence base that complements institutional datasets.
3. Analyse findings and produce reports and formal recommendations, using a consensus-with-dissent model (see Mode of Operation), which are submitted to the Steering Group, FMD Executive Board, Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team, HR, and distributed via FMD newsletters as appropriate.
4. Hold the Steering Group accountable by reviewing its decisions, activities, and progress against meaningful indicators of behavioural and cultural change.
5. Act as a trusted, community-facing channel to engage the wider faculty with initiatives underway, providing accessible communication that builds buy-in and transparency.

6. Provide a confidential space where staff who have navigated formal reporting processes can share their experiences, enabling the group to identify systemic patterns and gaps, without competing with or substituting for formal processes.
7. To follow up on recommendations made by the group, ensuring they are progressed in a timely and appropriate manner by the relevant person or body, and to raise concerns where recommendations have not been adequately addressed.

Relationship to the Steering Group

The Stakeholder Group operates with independence from the Steering Group, whilst maintaining a structured feed of intelligence and recommendations into it. The relationship is not one of oversight in a hierarchical sense, but of informed accountability and co-direction: the Stakeholder Group provides the community-rooted evidence and perspective that the Steering Group needs to make effective, trusted decisions.

The relationship operates as follows:

- Minutes and action points from all Steering Group meetings will be made available to the Stakeholder Group, ensuring transparency of process and decision-making.
- The Co-Convenors (EDI Deputy for Culture and Community and EDI Officer) sit on both groups, acting as the primary conduit between them.
- A rotating Stakeholder Representative attends Steering Group meetings as a full member, with the right to speak and to table items on behalf of the Stakeholder Group. The duration of rotation and selection process is determined by the Stakeholder Group itself.
- The rotating representative is expected to report back to the Stakeholder Group following each Steering Group meeting.
- Formal recommendations from the Stakeholder Group will be tabled as a standing item at Steering Group meetings, with a record kept of how each recommendation was considered and acted upon.

Membership Specification:

Membership of the Stakeholder Group is open to all staff within FMD who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Have experienced or witnessed bullying and/or harassment within FMD.

- Are passionate about driving positive cultural change in relation to bullying and harassment.

Membership is sought via an open expression of interest process, supplemented by active outreach to ensure representation across the sampling frame below. The expression of interest process will include a confidential section allowing applicants to indicate relevant personal experience, which will be considered by the shortlisting group only.

The group aims for approximately 15-20 members, with representation across the following dimensions (noting that one person may count across multiple categories):

- All FMD Institutes
- All protected characteristics
- All job role categories: Professional Services, PhD/PGR, Post-doctoral Researcher, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader, Professor.

Membership will be publicly listed to promote transparency, faculty-wide awareness, and recognition of contribution.

Two permanent members sit on the group by virtue of their institutional roles: the EDI Deputy for Culture and Community, and the EDI Officer. Permanence attaches to the role, not the individual, ensuring continuity as personnel change.

Membership of Working Group:

Member's name	**Job Title**	**Committee Role**
EDI Deputy for Culture and Community	Permanent member by role	Co-Convenor
EDI Officer	Permanent member by role	Co-Convenor
Institute Representatives	One per FMD Institute (open recruitment)	Member
Protected Characteristic Representatives	Representation across all protected characteristics (open recruitment)	Member
Job Role Representatives	PS, PhD/PGR, Post-doc, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer (including Clinical), Reader, Professor (open recruitment)	Member

Stakeholder Representative to Steering Group	Rotating member, nominated from within the group	Member + Steering Group Representative

Membership Tenure and Review

- Recruited members serve a term of three years, in line with standard QMUL committee cycles.
- Members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms (six years) before a mandatory break, to ensure renewal of perspectives whilst retaining institutional knowledge.
- Where possible, membership renewal will be staggered to ensure continuity of experience within the group. In the founding cohort, voluntary early step-down at the one- or two-year point will be supported to establish this stagger organically over time.
- Membership is reviewed annually as part of the group's annual review process. Members who consistently fall below the attendance commitment (see Mode of Operation) will be invited to a supportive conversation prior to any formal action.

Mode of Operation:

- The Stakeholder Group will meet monthly, with an expectation that members attend a minimum of 8 out of 12 meetings per year. Members who are unable to attend should notify the Co-Convenors in advance.
- There is no quorum requirement for standard meetings, to maintain momentum particularly in the group's early stages. A quorum of 50% of membership is required for the agreement of formal recommendations or other significant decisions.
- The group operates on a consensus-with-dissent model. Where full consensus is not reached, the recommendation is documented alongside a clear and respectful account of minority or dissenting views. Both are submitted together, ensuring the Steering Group and other recipients receive the full texture of opinion rather than a simple majority position.
- Meetings are facilitated by the Co-Convenors. The facilitation approach will prioritise equitable contribution and the protection of confidential disclosures.
- Members are expected to maintain confidentiality of all discussions held within the group. Identifiable information shared within the group will not be relayed

outside it. Data collected through group-led activities will be handled in accordance with QMUL data governance and ethical guidelines and will be accessible only to named members of the Stakeholder Group.
- The group is not an alternative reporting route for individual bullying and harassment cases. Where a member becomes aware of a disclosure that may require a formal response, they should signpost the individual to appropriate institutional support. The group may, however, gather anonymised experiential intelligence from those who have navigated formal processes, in order to identify systemic patterns.

Reporting and Dissemination

Reports and recommendations produced by the Stakeholder Group will be shared with:

- The FMD Bullying and Harassment Steering Group
- FMD Executive Board
- FMD EDI Strategy Group
- Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team
- HR
- The wider FMD community via faculty newsletters and other appropriate channels
- Other relevant personnel or bodies deemed appropriate by the group

Simultaneous distribution to multiple recipients is intentional as it ensures transparency and prevents any single body from gatekeeping the group's findings.

Annual Review

The Stakeholder Group will undertake a formal annual review covering:

- Progress against the group's stated purposes and tasks
- Membership composition, attendance, and renewal
- The effectiveness of the relationship with the Steering Group, including how recommendations have been considered and acted upon
- Whether the group's ways of working remain fit for purpose

The outcome of the annual review will be shared with the Steering Group and FMD Executive. The group will continue beyond its initial year subject to the outcome of this review and continued institutional support.