



Respectful Communication & Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

How we keep communication safe and workable — in both directions.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy owner	Jasper Armitage-Williams, Founder
Version	2.0
Status	Approved — replaces "How We Handle Unacceptable Behaviour"
Approval date	September 2026
Read alongside	WheelieQueer Client Terms · Complaints & Feedback Policy · Cancellation & Missed Appointments Policy
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1. About this policy

This policy explains how WheelieQueer keeps communication safe and workable for everyone — clients, advisers, PA and admin support, and interpreters.

It applies to communication in both directions. We will treat you with dignity and respect, and we ask the same of you. Your **Client Terms** set out the contractual position on pausing or ending support; this policy explains how we approach it in practice.

2. Start here: what is not unacceptable behaviour

None of this is unacceptable behaviour

We are a disabled-led organisation working with disabled, Deaf and neurodivergent people, usually about a system that is stressful and often unfair.

- being distressed, upset, angry or frustrated;
- communicating directly or bluntly, or a tone that reads as abrupt;
- using capital letters, punctuation or particular formatting, including for access reasons;
- asking the same thing again, or asking for clarification more than once;
- finding it hard to regulate emotion, or to judge what is urgent;
- finding social conventions in communication difficult;
- emailing at any hour that suits you — you can send us things whenever you like, you just can't require an immediate reply;
- changing or cancelling something at short notice because of your disability, health or circumstances;
- telling us we've got something wrong, or complaining about us publicly or privately.

We do not police tone. If something about how we're communicating isn't working for you, tell us — we would rather adjust than misread you.

3. What we actually look at

When something isn't working, we look at:

- **The behaviour** — what specifically is happening, rather than how it feels in the abstract.
- **Its impact** — on the person on the receiving end, and on your case.
- **The context** — including disability, distress, access needs, misunderstanding, or something happening in your life.
- **Whether it can be adjusted for** — is there a communication method, format or arrangement that would solve this?
- **Whether safe and effective work can continue** — can we still do your casework properly?

4. What we mean by unacceptable behaviour

A • Threatening, abusive or discriminatory behaviour

- threats or intimidation;
- targeted personal abuse;
- discriminatory or hateful behaviour;
- harassment.

B • Behaviour that seriously disrupts our ability to provide support

- repeated conduct that prevents a session or casework from progressing;
- persistent pressure for work outside the agreed scope or our capacity, after this has been explained;
- repeated contact in a way that becomes unmanageable, after we have tried to agree a workable communication arrangement with you.

C • Unsafe or inappropriate conduct

- recording or sharing a session without agreement;
- deliberately misusing video, chat or messaging functions;
- conduct that creates a genuine safety risk.

D • Serious disregard of access needs or professional boundaries

- knowingly pressing a Deaf or disabled worker to work without the access support they need;
- deliberately bypassing agreed safe communication arrangements after the reason has been explained;
- discriminatory treatment of interpreters, PAs or others supporting the service.

These describe a pattern, or a serious single incident — not a one-off slip. Addressing an interpreter rather than the adviser once, or forgetting an agreed arrangement, is something we'll simply mention to you.

5. How we respond

- 1 **Clarify or remind.** We explain what's causing a problem, why, and what needs to change — and check whether an access need, misunderstanding or adjustment is actually what's going on.

- 2 **Agree boundaries or adjustments.** For example a different contact method, keeping contact to one email thread, agreeing what response times are realistic, having another person present, changing the meeting format, or another reasonable measure.
- 3 **Restrict or pause particular contact or support.** Only where necessary and proportionate. We will tell you what is being restricted, why, for how long, and what remains available to you.
- 4 **End support.** A last resort, where behaviour is persistent and serious and reasonable steps haven't worked — or immediately, where conduct is sufficiently serious, threatening or unsafe.

We won't always work through every stage. Serious threatening or unsafe behaviour can be acted on straight away. Equally, most situations never get past stage 1.

6. Before we pause or end support

We will think about:

- any disability or access factors we know about;
- whether the step is proportionate to what has happened;
- any urgent benefit deadline in your case;
- whether a different adviser or contact arrangement would solve it;
- what you need to know to protect your case.

Where support ends, we follow the process in the **Client Terms** for outstanding work, live deadlines and ending representation.

7. If you think we've got this wrong

You can ask us to review the decision, or use our **Complaints & Feedback Policy**. Using this policy against you is itself something you can complain about.

Criticising WheelieQueer is not unacceptable behaviour. You are free to say publicly that you were unhappy with us. We may invite you to use our complaints process, because it gives us a structured way to look into it and respond — but that's an invitation, not a requirement, and not a condition of continuing support.

You will never be treated adversely simply because you raise a concern or complaint. Raising a complaint will not in itself be a reason to restrict or end your support.

Approved by: Jasper Armitage-Williams, Founder, WheelieQueer · **Version:** 2.0 · **Approval date:** September 2026 · If you need this policy in another format, please tell us and we will do what we reasonably can.