

TBD

**LinkedIn Bullying and
Harassment Survey
Results 2024**

“The worst one was being threatened to be raped because they liked ‘vulnerable girls’. This was from a man who worked at a large retail chain and I did report it to them, but got no response.”

A UK lawyer responding to our 2024 survey

A foreword

Simon Marshall, founder and CEO of TBD Marketing

The TBD team and I have been lucky enough to help forge the Legal LinkedInfluencers group, a warm, inclusive and supportive community of legal professionals who have all found their voice on the LinkedIn platform.

But with power comes responsibility. Over the course of 2024, it dawned on me that merely celebrating the achievements of the LinkedInfluencers is not enough: having encouraged literally thousands of lawyers and business professionals to spend some of their working week using LinkedIn to build their personal brand, it didn't sit well with me when many of them started telling me about their awful experiences of being bullied and harassed on this platform.

It was a problem I simply couldn't ignore, and therefore decided it was high time to do something about it. Which is why the TBD team and I conducted our very first LinkedIn Bullying Survey.

This report is for those brave people who came forward and told me that there were times when they didn't feel comfortable expressing themselves on LinkedIn. I hope it makes you feel seen and heard – and that, by shining a spotlight on what is still a very underreported problem, we can collectively make the platform a safer space for our clients, colleagues and friends.

I strongly believe that if we can persuade the legal profession to establish best practices when it comes to online safeguarding and wellbeing, this will have positive ripple effects for everyone who uses LinkedIn.

By training and inclination, lawyers are problem-solvers. So let us work together to tackle the problem of bullying and harassment on LinkedIn and reclaim this platform!

"I have had marriage proposals. Sexual messages, threats." – Survey respondent

An introduction

Sophie Wardell, People Director at Higgs LLP

It is fair to say that in the offline world, workplace culture within the legal sector has improved a great deal in recent years, with a much greater awareness of, and emphasis on, mental wellbeing, diversity, equity and inclusion.

Though it isn't entirely clear what is cause and what is effect, it is certainly true that the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) has greatly increased its focus on workplace culture, having introduced new guidance on health and wellbeing in the workplace in 2023.

Given the long-hours culture and hierarchical structure found throughout much of the legal sector, it is apparent that the regulator wants to make law firms more psychologically safe environments for those that work there – a fact entirely in keeping with the SRA's principles, which state that solicitors must act in a way that "encourages equality, diversity and inclusion" (Principle 6) and "upholds public trust and confidence" (Principle 2).

These principles, coupled with the introduction of the Worker Protection Act in October 2024, which amends the Equality Act 2010 to impose a new duty on employers to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace, signals a decisive shift. With this important legal framework in place, the space for toxic workplace cultures to persist is rapidly shrinking.

In the physical world, at least. However, many of these positive developments offline have yet to translate into the online world, which represents something of a blindspot or the unknown for the vast majority of law firms, which have been slow, or rather cautious, when embracing social media as an effective platform for marketing, business development and networking.

And yet being online in a professional capacity is becoming ever more of a necessity for legal sector professionals in the modern, post-pandemic era. In many ways, LinkedIn can be considered a virtual extension of the workplace, as users represent their firms when they engage and network with others on this platform. It is therefore

incumbent on employers to consider how to make this as safe as possible for their employees and partners through guidance, training and other measures.

In addition to the legal obligations they are subject to (such as the Worker Protection Act 2023, discussed by Florence Brocklesby below), firms also have a moral duty in this regard: no law firm can claim to have a great culture if it isn't proactive in safeguarding its people online. Moreover, there is a real opportunity here for law firms to lead the way and create best practices for what is still relatively new and uncharted territory.

This is an urgent task, as the survey results clearly highlight. From personal experience, I understand that using LinkedIn comes with its challenges. There's an inherent tension in navigating the platform effectively: while we encourage people to lower or remove their work mask and share their authentic selves, the more genuine users are in their posts, the more likely they are to reveal their humanity and potentially their vulnerabilities. Unfortunately, this authenticity can also increase the risk of their content being exposed to the platform's darker corners, attracting unwanted attention.

I hope that this report serves as a starting shot for meaningful change in our industry, or at least greater accountability. We are asking our lawyers and legal professionals to put themselves out there by using the LinkedIn platform to build their networks and market their services; we have to ensure that they feel safe, and are kept safe, as they do so.

"I have received a very suggestive and inappropriate message from someone. It was not only sexually explicit but it was also derogatory in respect of where I am from and how it was perceived I would be as a person. It was attempted to be played off as humorous; however, it was far from it and was inappropriate and a form of harassment." – Survey respondent

A legal perspective

Florence Brocklesby, founder and Principal of Bellevue Law

For many people, LinkedIn sits in a grey area between their personal and professional lives. Accounts are held in individuals' names, but the social network is a professional one and employees often use it to promote their employer, whether directly (sharing company updates) or indirectly (raising their own profile to generate work).

Employers differ in their approach to their teams' use of LinkedIn: very few require or expect it, but many offer training on its use as a BD tool and encourage their teams to share company updates. Regardless of the approach adopted, however, employers have a duty of care towards their employees; if they are supporting their people to be on the network, they should be considering how they can protect them there, just as they would in respect of in-person events.

This is particularly the case in respect of sexual harassment, which the survey suggests is prevalent (and, unsurprisingly but depressingly, especially directed at women); the new Worker Protection Act 2023, which came into force in October 2024, imposes a positive duty on employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of employees, including from third parties.

To comply with this obligation, employers should be conducting sexual harassment risk assessments, and the survey's results suggest that they should be considering online harassment amongst such risks. In practice, how can employers protect their teams online?

First, by making it clear that employees are not expected to tolerate virtual bullying or harassment – whether from colleagues, clients or others – and including in LinkedIn training or social media policies advice about what their options are if they do experience it.

Likewise, employers should be clear with their own employees that bullying and harassment on LinkedIn – whether of colleagues or third parties – will be treated as serious misconduct and take appropriate action when they receive complaints. To increase the prospect of complaints being taken seriously, employers might consider offering support to employees who want to report perpetrators to their own employers, or to make the report on their behalf if they prefer.

Additionally, many LinkedIn users in the legal sector will be regulated, and there are potential regulatory implications for inappropriate behaviour online. Solicitors are required by the SRA to treat colleagues fairly and with respect, and not to bully or harass them or discriminate unfairly against them – and law firm partners are required to challenge behaviour that does not meet this standard.

This is relevant where online bullying takes place between colleagues. More widely, solicitors are required to act in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the profession, with integrity and in a way that encourages equality, diversity and inclusion. The SRA first issued a warning notice about online behaviour as far back as 2017, and is clear that it is willing to investigate and prosecute offensive, abusive and harassing communications.

It must also be noted that in some cases, online abuse may amount to a criminal offence of harassment and/or malicious communication, in which case it may be appropriate to involve the police.

However, while the potential for serious consequences for online misbehaviour is very real, in practice it is often not treated with the seriousness it merits. It is unsurprising that only 36% of survey respondents who had experienced such behaviour chose to report the perpetrators, given the feedback from the survey that such reports weren't always acted upon. The legal framework to tackle this issue exists, but implementing it will require a cultural shift.

Finally, it is important for LinkedIn users and employers alike to be mindful of what amounts to harassment and bullying, so that we do not throw out the baby of lively and respectful debate with the bathwater of abusive online conduct.

Social media has the power to be a place for sharing and shaping ideas and creating change, but much of the toxicity in online discourse arguably results from the unwillingness to sit with others' beliefs which may feel uncomfortable to us, and tolerate views we do not share. There is no place for behaviour that is intimidating, frightening or humiliating, but we must keep space for respectful and agreeable disagreement.

"Comments on my appearance (because they are often so ridiculous) don't tend to get to me. But I once had a woman message me over 40 times about how ugly my lip fillers were (I don't have lip fillers)." – Survey respondent

The mental health impact of online bullying

Jodie Hill, founder of Thrive Law

As a lawyer, mental health advocate and someone who has personally navigated the challenges of being vocal and vulnerable on LinkedIn, I've seen the darker side of the platform. My work involves raising awareness of mental health, neurodiversity, and inequality in the legal profession and in workplaces more generally –issues that can provoke uncomfortable conversations. While many people engage positively, I've also experienced criticism and pushback that can feel deeply personal and professionally damaging.

It's easy to underestimate the impact of a dismissive comment or a targeted attack, but the mental toll is real. For lawyers who already operate in high-pressure environments and often have type A personalities, this can lead to anxiety, self-doubt, and even burnout. I've learned that while LinkedIn is a powerful tool for change, it requires resilience and support to navigate the negativity that sometimes accompanies it to ensure we protect our mental health.

The effects that online bullying can have on people's mental health should not be underestimated:

1. Increased anxiety and stress

Lawyers face a unique combination of workplace pressures and reputational concerns, which can be exacerbated online by the smallest perception of rejection or feelings of not belonging. Negative comments, direct attacks, passive-aggressive comments or public shaming on LinkedIn can trigger overthinking and self-doubt, leaving individuals feeling exposed and uneasy every time they post.

2. Erosion of self-confidence

Public attacks on professional platforms like LinkedIn can hit harder than on other social media. When someone questions your expertise or dismisses your voice on LinkedIn, it can make you doubt your worth—not just as a lawyer but as a person. This erosion of confidence can have long-lasting effects on your willingness to engage or share insights. It can also impact pre-existing self-doubts and anxieties of feeling inadequate, and reinforce those feelings.

3. Isolation and disconnection

Bullying can leave lawyers feeling unwelcome in their own professional community. Whether they are the victim of it themselves or 'merely' observe it taking place, this behaviour can lead many to retreat from discussions or avoid posting altogether, creating a cycle of isolation. For me, stepping back to protect my mental health has been necessary at times. But this also made me feel disconnected from the community I was trying to help.

4. Impact on professional and personal well-being

The mental health effects of bullying often bleed into a lawyer's work and personal life. Poor sleep, diminished focus and constant worry can impair performance. I have heard from others in the legal profession who feel their ability to advocate for themselves or their clients has been affected by the mental strain of online negativity.

The fact is that being active on this platform can prove a real challenge for lawyers. LinkedIn is a key platform for them to showcase their expertise and credibility. Any attack on these qualities can feel like a direct threat to their career and reputation. For so many lawyers, their sense of self and their identity are intrinsically linked to their legal career.

It is particularly difficult for those lawyers who are breaking away from the mould, who advocate for progressive causes like mental health and diversity and call out practices which impede the evolution of our profession. When you challenge

traditional norms or speak about uncomfortable truths, the backlash can feel personal and relentless at times.

Additionally, the hyper-visibility of LinkedIn means that negative interactions are often public, adding to the pressure. In a profession where image matters deeply, such incidents can feel like a professional and personal crisis, not to mention the worry about what your employer or clients might have to say about any backlash.

So where does this leave us? As lawyers, we're taught to have thick skin, but that doesn't mean we're immune to the emotional impact of bullying—especially in spaces like LinkedIn, where our reputation is on the line. What we need is a culture shift, both on the platform and within the legal profession.

It's okay to stand up for what you believe in and to share your voice. But we must also recognise the importance of self-care and boundaries. For me, finding my tribe online—people who support and amplify my work—has made all the difference.

Every voice matters. Don't let the fear of negativity stop you from contributing to the change we so desperately need in this profession. Together, we can create a healthier, more inclusive professional space, both online and off.

“Sexual advances and flirting become more of a problem when I post my posts with a photo, I've had men say all sorts in my messages.” – Survey respondent

“Someone once said to me, ‘Where did you get your law degree from, do you even have one? You clearly are thick and know nothing’. Others have said things about my appearance, sexualising me, saying I can't be trusted because of how I look, which is deeply personal.” – Survey respondent

The rationale for this report

Networking and marketing have always been a key part of the practice of law. However, the way that we network has fundamentally changed in the digital, post-pandemic era. It's not just that the younger generation tends to prefer networking online – they often have no choice in the matter.

Marketing and BD budgets are tightly controlled by heads of practice and other senior people within the firm, which means that many lawyers early in their careers do not have access to the funds required for hosting networking events, meeting and entertaining potential clients, or other in-person BD activities.

Nor do they have the time for such face-to-face networking, as the increased salaries now paid in the sector are attached to higher billable hours targets, leaving less capacity for BD activities away from one's desk. And since the pandemic and the resulting seismic shift in how we work, many lawyers are not only working from home, but also having to network from home, which is obviously something of an impossibility without the use of online tools.

All of this means that the younger generation of lawyers and business professionals doesn't have the same means available to build their professional network as their senior colleagues did ten or 20 years ago. Thus a whole tranche of the legal sector is increasingly reliant on virtual networking to supplement the connections they are able to forge offline. And LinkedIn happens to be the world's most popular platform for this endeavour.

A lot of what we do at TBD revolves around instilling legal professionals with the skills – and the courage – to find their voice on LinkedIn, because we know what a powerful tool it is when used correctly. In doing so, we have created an entire community of Legal LinkedInfluencers, whose successes we celebrate each quarter. We strongly believe that this is a force for good. In fact, we know it is, because so many people tell us so.

However, we have also become increasingly aware that LinkedIn is by no means immune to the poor online behaviours common to other forms of social media. As a professional BD and networking tool, LinkedIn should be the safest of social media platforms – and yet our survey findings show that this isn't the case. And if lawyers cannot feel safe on LinkedIn, there is little hope of convincing them to use X, Facebook or any other social media platform.

Given that we at TBD are some of the most vocal advocates for using LinkedIn, we feel we would be failing in our duty if we didn't also draw attention to the downsides of being active on this platform, and do everything in our power to make it a safer space for everyone.

And so we are evolving the Legal LinkedInfluencers project to be about more than purely celebrating people's successes. That remains a central pillar of the programme – but from here on out, we also want to play our part in shaping the legal sector's online safeguarding standards of the future.

And new standards are urgently needed, because our survey shows that legal professionals are being bullied online. Sometimes by strangers. Sometimes by clients and targets. Sometimes by colleagues and ex-colleagues.

To the senior partners, managing partners, HRDs and CMOs – and, indeed, to any member of the legal profession – reading these words: you can help to stop this toxic behaviour. It's essential work, as the legal sector often signals what is acceptable to other sectors. And so it starts with us.

“Lots of sexually suggestive messages, sexism, asking for my WhatsApp, sleazy comments etc. Getting less now, thankfully, as I'm getting older, but it still happens. The misogyny is astounding though.” – Survey respondent

Methodology

Our aim was to obtain a snapshot of any bullying and harassment experienced by the most high-profile people from the UK legal sector when using LinkedIn. We wanted to learn about the prevalence of such experiences, but also wanted to obtain more granular and nuanced insights into the nature and impact of these behaviours.

To this end, we created a short survey using SurveyMonkey with a range of closed, multiple-choice and open questions to yield both quantitative and qualitative data (please see the appendix for a copy of the survey). We then asked the top 100 Legal LinkedInfluencers and the top 20 management team members, independents and barristers to fill in our survey.

Using a special edition of the TBD newsletter as well as several LinkedIn posts, we also offered anyone else within the TBD network working in the legal profession the opportunity to take part, so that we could compare and contrast (hopefully) between those who have a little more profile on LinkedIn than others.

We wanted to know what the tax was on being a little LinkedIn famous. Was it worth it? Retrospectively, that is the one question we should have asked every survey participant: is the fame worth the pain on this platform?

Our survey was open for a three-week period, so as to allow enough time for lawyers and other busy legal professionals to complete it. Even after it closed, we still encouraged people to share their experiences with us confidentially, to help us obtain a clearer picture of the extent and nature of any bullying and harassing behaviours that LinkedIn users encounter on the platform.

Although we did still receive further details from people in our network, some of it quite disturbing, we have excluded this qualitative data from our survey findings to preserve the integrity of our results.

Key findings

Our survey was completed by 106 people in total, with a 60:40 ratio of female respondents to male respondents. This may reflect the fact that TBD's professional network contains more women than men, but also the reality that women are more likely to have experienced (sexual) harassment and therefore felt more compelled than their male colleagues to share their experiences with us.

Over half of the respondents have been in the industry for over 15 years. More than three quarters of them have had a LI account for more than seven years. Ninety percent of respondents use LI at least once a day; 20 percent of respondents don't post, or only do so once a month.

Our headline finding: 65 percent of respondents have received harassing, negative or 'troll' messages or comments on LinkedIn. Thirty-five percent of respondents receive sexual comments sometimes, frequently or very often. Only 52.63 percent have never received sexual comments. Two in five were less likely to use LinkedIn as a result. One in two were less likely to connect with new people as a result. One in four felt less confident at work as a result.

Out of 106 respondents, 44.26 percent have received sexual advances or been sexually harassed via LinkedIn private message or comment. The Equality Act 2010 defines sexual harassment as "unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for them".

Seventy percent of respondents reported that it had happened to a friend or colleague of theirs. When this happened, two-fifths reported the user; two-thirds blocked the user; one in five confronted the user; and one in four spoke to a colleague about it. Some individuals reported it to the user's employer, and considered taking it to the police in more serious instances. Seventy percent felt that the action they took resolved the issue. But what about the other 30 percent whose issue is unresolved?

One in eight respondents have experienced sexual harassment from people they know on the platform (albeit that they may also know the other person in real life too).

Key recommendations for employers

As our survey results show, LinkedIn users are by no means safe from the bullying and harassing behaviours perhaps more typical of other social media platforms.

What makes our findings so disturbing is the fact that the very nature and purpose of LinkedIn inevitably means that the vast majority of users are present on the platform in a professional capacity – this creates a context in which we perhaps wouldn't necessarily expect to encounter the toxic or offensive behaviours more familiar from other online platforms; and yet, as we know all too well, many professional settings are not immune to unprofessional behaviour, and it appears that LinkedIn is no different in this regard.

Depending on the nature and source of the online bullying and harassment encountered by employees, there may be no immediate legal obligation on the part of employers to take action (although there certainly is if the harassment is sexual in nature), but there is certainly a strong moral imperative to do so: employers cannot in all good conscience encourage their people onto LinkedIn without also attending to their welfare online.

It also makes complete sense from a business perspective: employees and partners that feel safe online are more likely to thrive in their use of LinkedIn, with many positive downstream results for their law firm, including a strong reputation for championing employee wellbeing.

The question is, what can employers do to help protect their people when using what amounts to an increasingly essential tool of their profession?

Here are our key recommendations, developed in consultation with HR professionals and employment law experts:

- Develop and communicate an effective social media policy that defines acceptable behaviour, defines harassment and explains the consequences of

misconduct (including disciplinary action and reporting incidents to the SRA or other regulatory bodies/the police where appropriate).

- Clearly define harassment in its own policy, setting out the reporting channels and support available (linking policies like the social media to this).
- Ensure there is firm-wide awareness and understanding of the relevant policies, and that employees, workers and partners are given the opportunity to ask questions.
- Provide regular training to both managers and all staff, and make resources available covering subjects such as responding to online harassment, managing an online profile and maintaining strong cybersecurity practices such as multi-factor authentication.
- Any effective training will also encourage people to do the right things online, ensuring all staff act in a respectful manner and that the company line is clear in terms of zero tolerance of any discriminatory or bullying behaviour.
- Share guidance on protecting personal information and using appropriate privacy settings effectively. This may be particularly important for high-profile/senior people.
- Create a safe environment for people to report online harassment, with robust systems for logging and addressing complaints.
- Make mental health support available to those affected if required, and clearly signpost this support in your policies and the workplace
- Work in collaboration with social media platforms to report behaviour and clarify the legal position where harassment becomes cyberstalking or doxing (i.e. publishing private or identifying information about a particularly individual, typically with malicious intent).
- Identify social media mentors or champions within the firm who can provide support as and when issues arise.

- Engage your teams in personal branding workshops and coaching to support them with finding their voice on LinkedIn, as this will improve their confidence to stand up to any inappropriate behaviour rather than be deterred from it.

By educating employees, workers and partners about how to behave appropriately online and what actions to take if they encounter bullying and harassment, employers can go a long way to making LinkedIn a safer space for their people.

“A very well-known ‘feminist coach’ posted blatant Jew-hating content/support for terrorists. [I challenged her on it privately but] then received death threats and multiple threatening emails and DMs [as a result].” – Survey respondent

Our recommendations for LinkedIn

Although the majority of our recommendations arising from our survey results are aimed squarely at law firms, we do also feel that there is scope for improvement within the LinkedIn platform itself.

By implementing the following suggestions, we feel LinkedIn could help prevent bullying and harassment in the first place, and greatly improve the user experience when such incidences do occur:

- Do more to respond to issues raised with greater speed and to close the loop by confirming the outcome once an issue has been reported.
- Increase the granularity of settings so users have greater control over their privacy settings, further restricting who can see their connections/posts/profile details and who can comment and interact with them.
- Improve anti-harassment policies and enforcement, explaining to users what the consequences may be should people engage in sexual harassment, unwanted solicitation and discriminatory behaviour.
- Utilise AI to proactively detect potentially discriminatory language and enhance moderation, and ban users who engage in discriminatory behavior.
- Create educational campaigns about what constitutes harassment and use notifications to warn people that their behaviour may be construed as harassment.
- Give better support to individuals who have been harassed, perhaps following up with them and making resources available. A community support feature may be worth exploring.
- Make employers accountable for the behaviour of employees and partners by working with organisations to formulate effective social media policies and guidance.

Conclusion

“The bullying I have faced has been from colleagues due to using LinkedIn to share my experiences to try to help, support and inspire others.” – Survey respondent

Our survey represents the merest snapshot of a pernicious issue taking place each day on LinkedIn. And yet, based on the unsettling picture that emerges from our findings, it is fair to say that it would behoove Managing Partners, Senior Partners, Human Resources Directors and Chief Marketing Officers in particular to take the phenomenon of online bullying very seriously indeed.

Much of the harassment experienced by our survey respondents is sexual in nature. The law has recently changed and employers now have an active duty to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace; LinkedIn represents a virtual extension of the workplace, and as such may constitute something of a blindspot for many law firms, even though they may be vicariously liable for any sexual harassment their people encounter here. And they are likely to do so, with everything from rape threats to micro-aggressions in the form of unwanted compliments about personal appearance.

The SRA’s regulations regarding workplace culture have also evolved in recent times, and there now exists a much greater expectation for law firms to be proactive in fostering the mental wellbeing of their people. In other words, the net is closing around toxic behaviours in professional settings. Although bullying and harassment most frequently occurs offline, plenty of it also goes on in the virtual sphere, as our survey shows.

As the words of one of our survey respondents at the start of this section show, some of the toxic behaviour that people experience on LinkedIn constitutes blue-on-blue bullying and harassment. This can be addressed by implementing a clear social media policy and a social media strategy. At the moment, many firms have a policy, but not a ‘permission to get on with it’ strategy – this leaves those colleagues who

buck their firm's conservative trend by using LinkedIn open to bullying from their colleagues.

However, there is also a strong element of 'stranger danger' when using LinkedIn, especially when posts go viral and travel widely throughout the platform. Law firm leaders need to be aware that in requiring their people to network and win work – which will invariably involve an online dimension – they are inevitably also asking them to potentially place themselves in harm's way. In other words, law firms need robust and effective social media safeguarding every bit as much as they do social media policies and training.

We feel there is scope for law firms to be at the forefront of creating best practices in terms of social media safeguarding and employee wellbeing. LinkedIn and social media still represent something of a brave new world in the inherently conservative legal sector; however, in the AI era, use of these platforms will become ever more vital to winning business and remaining competitive. Keeping employees, workers and partners safe in the process is set to become an ever more urgent task.

We at TBD are working with senior leadership teams to be part of the vanguard and help drive positive change. We are developing best-in-class training materials and workshops to help law firms implement safeguarding best practices for their people when using LinkedIn. And we are set to collaborate with LinkedIn itself to help make this platform a safer space for our clients, colleagues and friends.

"I posted about going into London on Saturday. A commenter asked me if I wanted to meet up. [...] He invited me to meet up for sex, telling me about himself, his history with the courts, and that he was raising money for the prostitutes collective (or similar). It was certainly harassment and, as an employment lawyer, I'd also class it as bullying because it was designed to, or certainly had the consequence of, intimidating me and making me feel incredibly uncomfortable about posting photos or any vaguely personal information." – Survey respondent

Credo

As part of our drive to make LinkedIn a safer space for legal professionals, we have written a credo that enshrines the conduct we expect members of the Legal LinkedInInfluencer community, including ourselves, to adhere to. We encourage every member of the legal profession who uses LinkedIn to sign up to it.

In our capacity as Legal LinkedInInfluencers, we, the undersigned, hereby commit to serving as ambassadors for a kind, collegiate and inclusive online community of legal professionals on LinkedIn.

Being of the firm belief that everyone should feel safe when using the world's most powerful business development and networking platform, we pledge to neither participate in nor condone any behaviour that constitutes bullying, harassment, or intimidation of our peers and colleagues.

Wherever we encounter such behaviour, we commit to calling it out, supporting those affected and, where appropriate, reporting the offending behaviour to LinkedIn and/or relevant professional bodies.

Further, we pledge to hold ourselves accountable for the impact that our own words and actions have online.

By signing this credo, we reaffirm our commitment to maintaining LinkedIn as a positive, supportive and welcoming space where all legal professionals can contribute, learn and grow. We are proud to stand together for a community rooted in respect, integrity and mutual support.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Survey questions

1. Are you happy to be contacted for further comment? If so, please share your LinkedIn URL below.
2. If you would like to receive the results of the survey, please share your LinkedIn URL here. Given the sensitive subject matter of the report, we'll send the results via DM. If you don't want to receive the results or be contacted for further comment, feel free to leave this blank.
3. What is your age?
4. What is your gender?
5. What level role do you hold at your firm?
6. How many years have you spent in your industry?
7. How long have you had a LinkedIn account?
8. How often do you use LinkedIn (scroll the feed, check messages)?
9. How often do you post on LinkedIn?
10. Have you ever received, harassing, negative or 'troll' messages or comments LinkedIn?
11. Which type of unwanted messages or comments do you most commonly receive, and how often?
 - a. Racism
 - b. Sexism
 - c. Ableism
 - d. Transphobia
 - e. Physical shaming
 - f. Sexual comments
12. What were these negative effects? (If applicable, select all that apply)
 - a. Made me hesitant to use LinkedIn
 - b. Made me reluctant to connect with new people
 - c. Made me less likely to post or share content on LinkedIn
 - d. Made me consider not using LinkedIn

- e. Made me feel less confident at work
13. Have you ever received sexual advances or been sexually harassed via LinkedIn private message or comment?
 14. Which of the following actions did you take after receiving these harassing, negative or 'troll' messages? (Select all that apply):
 - a. I ignored them
 - b. I reported the user to LinkedIn
 - c. I blocked the user
 - d. I confronted the person
 - e. I discussed it with a colleague or friend
 - f. Other (please specify)
 15. What can we do better as an industry to balance the benefits and threats of using social media for work?
 16. Did this action resolve the issue?
 17. Have you ever experienced these messages from people you personally know?
 18. Would you class these messages or comments as 'bullying'?
 19. Overall, have these types of negative messages or comments made you less likely to use LinkedIn?
 20. Has a colleague or a friend ever mentioned experiencing these types of negative messages or comments?
 21. Would you like to tell us more about your experience?
 22. We'd like to hear more about your story. Please tell us about a specific experience of negative interactions with others on LinkedIn which pertain to 'bullying'. You may also reach out to send us documentation to further your story. In this case, please be sure to omit sensitive information relating to other parties involved. As a reminder, this is 100% anonymous.

Appendix 2 – Resources from LinkedIn

1. [Keeping LinkedIn a Safe, Professional Community Where Everyone Can Thrive](#)
2. [LinkedIn Community Report](#)
3. Help Centre: [Sexual innuendos and unwanted advances](#)
4. Help Centre: [Recognize and report spam, inappropriate, and abusive content](#)
5. Help Centre: [Automated detection of harmful content](#)
6. Help Centre: [Manage the types of messages you receive](#)
7. [Verifications on your LinkedIn profile](#)

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