



EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS

Claimant

Respondent

Miss Sophie Cole

v

Royal Mail Group Limited

Heard at: Bury St Edmunds Employment Tribunal

On: 6-9th May 2025, 17 June 2025 & 1 August 2025

Before: Employment Judge King

Members: *Ms H Gunnell*
Ms J Hartland

Appearances

For the Claimant: In person
For the Respondent: Mr B Brown (solicitor)

JUDGMENT

1. The Claimant's claims for direct discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment are successful in part.
2. The Claimant's claims for harassment related to gender reassignment are successful in part.
3. The Claimant's claims for direct discrimination on the grounds of sex succeed on one allegation.
4. The Claimant's claim for harassment related to sex succeeds on one allegation.
5. In respect of the claimant's claims the respondent do pay the claimant the sum of £12,500 broken down as follows:
 - 5.1. Injury to feelings £10,000 including an award of £2,000 in respect of aggravated damages;
 - 5.2. Uplift in the sum of £2,500 for an uplift of 25% for failing to follow the ACAS COP1 in respect of the Claimant's two grievances.
6. In respect of the Claimant's claims the Tribunal makes a number of recommendations:

- 6.1. That the Claimant and Nick Cavanagh do not work together going forward but that the Claimant is not subject to any detriment particularly in respect of hours, location or role to give effect to this recommendation.
- 6.2. That Mr Howard Bearder undertakes within 6 months of today, external training on how to handle difficult conversations;
- 6.3. That the Respondent considers mediation between the Claimant and Mr Howard-Bearder within the next 3 months;
- 6.4. That those involved in the processes in this case namely Amy Woods, Steve Potter, Mr Howard-Bearder, Miss Robinson and Mr Balderson receive external training within 6 months of today on how to handle grievances to include how to recognise them, communication and appropriate timescales.
- 6.5. That all employees on the site where the Claimant worked and those named in section 6.4 undergo training within 6 months of today on how to prevent harassment unless they have completed such training within the last 12 months.
- 6.6. That the Respondent implement a safe harbour namely an agreed person to whom the Claimant can approach with issues in the workplace and treatment she experiences. The person to be agreed between the parties and in place within 3 months of today.

Approved by:

Employment Judge King

Date: 1st August 2025

Sent to the parties on:

01/09/2025

For the Tribunal:

Note

Reasons for the judgment having been given orally at the hearing, written reasons will not be provided unless a request was made by either party at the hearing or a written request is presented by either party within 14 days of the sending of this written record of the decision.