

What to do if you don't like what you hear

It is difficult to challenge this behaviour, it can be amplified in mess room situations where some members feel they have to go along with the joke or risk being ridiculed themselves.

Awareness

If you feel able to do so, speak to the person(s) involved, they may not realise what they said was offensive or inappropriate. You could save their job!

Challenge

If you have witnessed unacceptable language in the workplace – challenge it, explain why it wasn't banter.

Help is here

If you are unhappy with language you have heard, whether it was directed at you or not, but don't feel able to confront the culprit you can speak to ASLEF for advice. You can contact your Local Rep, District Organiser or Representative committee members for support.

Contact

Contact details for the representative committee members in your district can be found in the ASLEF diary.

Get involved with the Mind the Gag campaign:

 ASLEF Mind the Gag Campaign

 #MindTheGag

Sign the pledge to show your commitment to dignity and respect in the workplace.

Download the pledge card from the ASLEF website:

www.aslef.org.uk

For more information please contact: equalities@aslef.org.uk



MIND THE GAG!



MIND THE GAG!

Banter:

The playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks.

Oxford English Dictionary definition

Working on the railway you often hear the word 'banter' and when it's light hearted jokes between friends or work colleagues there's nothing wrong with that, everyone likes a joke right?

However sometimes you hear the word banter used as justification for bullying, harassment of hate speech. That's when banter isn't funny any more.

It can be hard to get the balance right between a 'bit of banter' and abuse.

Stop and think!

Is it actually funny?

Will you offend anyone?

Remember, taking things too far could not only get you into trouble with your employer, it could also get you in trouble with the law.

When banter isn't just banter...

It's no joke

"When I started working here they joked I was gay even though I'm married with kids, three years later they still joke about it. I did find it funny but the joke has worn thin now, I have had enough"

Driver, District 4

Crossing the line

"What I heard when I walked in would embarrass anyone never mind the guy they were talking to, that was NOT banter and I don't want to hear that kind of talk in my workplace"

Driver, District 1

Equality for all

"He wasn't there so others thought it was OK to tell a racist joke, I didn't agree"

Train Operator, District 8

Is this bullying?

"I felt I had to laugh along or I would be the brunt of the next joke"

Driver, District 2

Who else is listening?

"I'm gay but there's no way I would come out at work, the last guy who came out got 'jokes' at his expense all the time and I couldn't handle that"

Driver, District 7

Is this harassment?

"They comment about my breast and how my uniform fits, I laugh along but I feel really uncomfortable and now don't go into the mess room"

Trainee Driver, District 5

Banter isn't always funny

"It was just banter but a manager overheard me and now I'm up on a disciplinary, I could lose my job"

Driver, District 3