

GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE *(all staff)*

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Policy Statement

This organisation is aware that, from time to time, staff may have an issue about their colleagues or management of the organisation. It is important that staff are aware that any grievance brought to this organisation be listened to and acted upon by the management. This document outlines the policy of this organisation in relation to staff grievances.

Principles

A 'grievance' is any complaint made by a member of staff under specified procedures that alerts the management to, instigates the investigation of, and if necessary redresses the unreasonable actions of the organisation, a manager or another member of staff.

The *Employment Rights Act 1996* imposes an obligation on employers to specify, in their written statements of terms and conditions of employment, the person or position to whom employees can apply for the redress of any grievance relating to their employment and how such applications should be made.

This organisation aims to ensure that its staff feel fully involved in the work of the organisation and form a cohesive team in the interests of providing high-quality services. We therefore wish to identify and deal with any grievances that a member of staff has with the work of colleagues or managers. We believe that this will foster communication between staff and managers; ensure that staff concerns are recognised and dealt with promptly; help managers to identify areas for improvement in the work of the organisation; and give early warning of potential sources of more serious conflict.

Procedures relating to grievances, however, must be clearly distinguished from any action taken under the organisation's Disciplinary Policy and procedures, and an appeal against disciplinary decisions will not be treated as a grievance.

Procedure

-  It is important that if you feel dissatisfied with any matter relating to your employment you should have an effective means by which such a grievance can be aired and, where appropriate, resolved.
-  Nothing in this procedure is intended to prevent you from informally raising any matter you may wish to mention. Informal discussion can frequently solve problems without the need for a written record. However, if you wish to raise a formal grievance you should normally do so in writing from the outset.
-  You have the right to be accompanied at any stage of the procedure by a fellow employee who may act as a witness or speak on your behalf to explain the situation more clearly.
-  If you feel aggrieved at any matter relating to your work (except personal harassment, for which there is a separate procedure following this section), you should first raise the matter with the person specified in your Statement of Main Terms of Employment, explaining fully the nature and extent of your grievance. You will then be invited to a meeting at a reasonable time and location at which your grievance will be investigated fully. You must take all reasonable steps to attend this meeting. You will be notified of the decision, in writing, normally within ten working days of the meeting, including your right of appeal.
-  If you wish to appeal you must inform the Registered Manager within five working days. You will then be invited to a further meeting, which you must take all reasonable steps to attend. As far as reasonably practicable, the organisation will be represented by a more Senior Manager



than attended the first meeting (unless the most Senior Manager attended that meeting).

Following the appeal meeting you will be informed of the final decision, normally within ten working days, which will be confirmed in writing.

Informal Resolution of Grievances

If a member of staff has an issue with the behaviour of a manager or another member of staff that makes them unhappy or uncomfortable then they should mention the matter to their immediate supervisor or line manager as soon as possible. If the issue relates to the supervisor or manager to whom the staff member would normally have reported, or if the relevant supervisor or line manager is not available, the staff member may approach any other manager.

The person presented with the issue should take steps to investigate and deal with it as quickly as possible in order to resolve the matter before it becomes more serious. They should report back to the employee as quickly as possible on either the action they have taken or the reasons for not taking action.

If the staff member is not satisfied that their grievance is being acted on sufficiently seriously, or with the manager's decision in relation to the grievance, they have the right to request that their grievance should be dealt with by a more senior manager. In these circumstances the original supervisor or manager should arrange for the staff member to explain their grievance at a higher level. The senior manager should then review whatever investigation and action has been taken already in relation to the grievance; conduct any further investigation they consider necessary; and report back, to both the employee and the original supervisor or manager, as quickly as possible on either the action they have taken or the reasons for not taking action.

Grievance Hearings

If the staff member is still not satisfied after their grievance has been considered informally by two tiers of management, the matter should be referred to a very senior manager or a manager specifically designated to deal with personnel issues. This manager should then arrange as quickly as possible for a formal grievance hearing at which all of the relevant facts relating to the issue can be heard and considered. The person conducting the hearing should be a manager who has not been involved in the earlier investigations.

At the hearing the staff member should be given the opportunity to present their grievance and their reasons for continuing dissatisfaction. They may produce evidence and witnesses. Any staff or managers who are the subject of the grievance should then be given the opportunity to state their point of view, producing evidence and witnesses as appropriate. Witnesses may be cross-examined on what they say and questioned by the manager conducting the hearing. After the matter has been thoroughly explained the manager conducting the hearing should consider and announce a decision.

Appeals

Any appeals relating to the grievance procedure will be held and conducted according to the relevant guidance issued by the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS). ACAS produce guidance that is updated regularly and appropriate for employees and employers.

Remedies

If at any stage, informal or formal, of the handling of a grievance the staff member's complaints are found to have substance then the relevant manager should consider what action should be taken to deal with the offending issue. This may take the form of a change of procedure, an apology from another staff member, or, in extreme cases, the initiation of disciplinary action against the staff member who caused offence. If no action is to be taken the reasons should be explained as fully as possible to the person who initiated the grievance.

Representation

The *Employment Relations Act 1999* gives all employees the right to be accompanied by a fellow employee or trade union representative during any stage of a grievance process. The organisation undertakes to ensure that any employee assisting another employee under these circumstances will not be dismissed or victimised.

Anonymity

If the subject of the grievance is discrimination or harassment and the staff member making the complaints wishes to remain discreet, managers should make every effort to conduct their investigations in a way that protects the complainant.

Training Statement

All staff members will be given a copy of this policy and encouraged to read it during induction.

Related Policies

Appraisal

Bullying and Harassment

Disciplinary

Supervision