

Grievance Policy & Procedure

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Grievance Policy & Procedure

1. ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE

1.1 Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion with your line manager. If this does not resolve the problem, you should initiate the formal procedure set out below.

1.2 This procedure applies to all employees regardless of length of service.

1.3 This procedure does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. It may be amended at any time and we may depart from it depending on the circumstances of any case.

2. INFORMAL RESOLUTION STAGE

2.1 Unless your grievance is so serious that it would not be reasonable to expect you to raise informally, you are expected in the first instance to raise a matter of concern informally with your line manager. This should be raised within 3 months of any alleged incident. If you feel it would be inappropriate to raise the matter with your immediate manager as it is relating to their behaviour, you should raise the concern with your Head of Department or HR.

2.2 You and your line manager should make every effort to resolve the matter of concern at this stage. After an issue has been raised, your manager should advise you within five working days of the action they consider appropriate to address the matter. Any proposed informal actions will be confirmed in writing, including any deadlines for appeal by making a formal grievance.

2.3 Both parties should consider mediation as a means to aid resolution if informal attempts to address the concern are unsuccessful and where it is appropriate to do so. If one party is prepared to enter mediation and the other party does not, this will be noted at the Formal Grievance stage. (For more information about mediation and how to access it, please contact HR.)

2.4 We reserve the right to seek assistance from external mediators at any stage in the grievance procedure. Where both parties agree to undertake mediation, the grievance process will be suspended whilst this is ongoing.

3. WRITTEN GRIEVANCE

3.1 Where it has not been possible to resolve the issue informally or through mediation, or you should put your grievance in writing and submit it to your line manager. If your grievance concerns your line manager, you may submit it to HR or the Principal.

3.2 The written grievance should set out the nature of the complaint, including any relevant facts, dates, names of individuals involved and the desired outcome of your grievance so that we can investigate it.

4. Stage 1

4.1 You should raise the grievance in writing with your line manager. This should explain the nature and extent of the grievance and indicate the outcome you are looking for.

4.2 If your grievance relates to concerns regarding your line manager, you may enter the procedure directly at stage two.

4.3 If the nature of your grievance is such that you would not feel comfortable raising it with your line manager due to the proximity in which you work, you may enter the procedure directly at stage two. Stage two can also be used as the starting point where there are allegations of bullying or discrimination against your line manager.

4.4 Concerns regarding any matter which would fall within the scope of legislation on public interest disclosures (otherwise known as whistleblowing) must be raised directly using stage three of the procedure.

4.5 Under stage one, a meeting will be arranged between your line manager and yourself. A minute taker will also be present. You may be accompanied by a fellow colleague or trade union official. The meeting will be held to discuss the grievance in detail and you should take any documents or evidence you have regarding the grievance to the meeting.

4.6 Your line manager will complete a full investigation into the matter. This may involve holding investigation meetings with witnesses, requiring witness statements to be produced and reviewing written evidence. A decision will be taken by your line manager following the investigation and the grievance will be responded to, in writing, within 7 working days of the meeting being held. You will be informed of actions to take if you wish to appeal the outcome.

4.7 Notes of the meeting will be taken and copies will be made available to you. A copy of the notes will be stored by the HR department.

5. Stage two

5.1 The matter will progress to be heard by a Head of department in place of your line manager if you wish to appeal the outcome of stage one. You should write to the senior manager setting out the reasons for your dissatisfaction within 7 days of receiving the outcome. Stage two will involve the same procedural steps as stage one, and the outcome will be provided to you within 7 working days of the hearing. The hearing will be held by the senior manager. You will be informed of actions to take if they wish to appeal the outcome.

6. Stage 3

6.1 The matter will progress to be heard by a member of the Senior Leadership team in place of the Head of department where stage 1 has been skipped due to those reasons stated in 4.2 and 4.3 or 4.4. You should write to HR setting out the reasons for your dissatisfaction. Stage three will involve the same procedural steps as stage two, and the outcome will be provided to you within 7 working days of the hearing. The hearing will be held by a member of the senior leadership team.

6.2 There will be no further appeal after stage three. The decision on the grievance will be final.

7. Simultaneous grievance and disciplinary matters

7.1 We will make a decision on how to progress matters when a grievance is raised about a disciplinary procedure involving you. Acas guidance suggests that disciplinary hearings may be suspended for a short duration while the grievance is investigated. We will assess the exact nature of the grievance and will have the final say over suspension of a disciplinary procedure.

8. Extending timescales under the procedure

8.1 The timescales outlined in this procedure will be adhered to whenever this is reasonably practicable. There may be extenuating circumstances that are outside of either parties' control, for example, where a key witness is unavailable or the grievance requires extensive investigation.

8.2 Where it is not reasonably practicable to adhere to the deadlines, both parties will discuss and agree any extension to the timelines.

9. Protection against detriment

9.1 Nothing in this procedure is intended to prevent an employee from raising any concerns you have. Employees who raise concerns under this procedure will not be subject to any detrimental or less favourable treatment as a result of doing so.

9.2 Where the grievance is made with malicious intent, you will be subject to UCFB's disciplinary procedure.