



## Grievance Policy

### 1. Introduction

The aim of this Grievance Policy is to settle grievances or complaints fairly, and it is intended to operate simply and quickly. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue at the earliest possible stage, and at each stage efforts will be made in order to settle the issue amicably and avoid proceeding to the next stage.

If an employee has a problem with any other member of staff, and is unable to sort it out informally, the matter should be referred to the employees' line-manager, in the hope of agreeing an informal solution between the two parties involved.

If the problem is serious, or remains unresolved, or the employee wishes to raise the matter formally, the employee can use the formal grievance procedure.

In the case of a grievance being taken out as a counter-grievance, or in response to the start of disciplinary action, it may be appropriate to deal with both issues at the same time. If appropriate, the disciplinary procedure may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance.

### 2. The Procedure

#### a. Raise the Grievance in Writing

The employee should raise a grievance with their line manager without unreasonable delay, normally within one month of the incident (or final incident) which gives rise to the complaint.

If the grievance is against the line manager, the matter should be raised with the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Whoever deals with the grievance at the meeting will normally be excluded from hearing any appeal.

The employee must detail in writing the specific circumstance or circumstances which constitute the grievance, with dates, times, witnesses, etc. as applicable. Employees should stick to the facts and avoid insulting or abusive language.

#### b. Invitation to a Grievance Meeting

The line manager will invite the employee to attend a meeting, without avoidable delay, to discuss the matter. The line manager will also state that the employee is entitled to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague at the meeting.

### **c. Grievance Meeting**

Where possible, a note-taker, who must be uninvolved in the case, will take down a record of the proceedings.

The line manager (or Chair of the Board of Trustees as appropriate) will introduce the meeting, read out the grounds of the employee's grievance, and ask the employee to confirm that the details are correct. If anything is unclear, the employee to be required to provide clarification. The employee will then be given the opportunity to put forward their case and say how they would like to see it resolved. The employee may call witnesses and refer to any documents previously provided to the line manager (or Chair).

The line manager (or Chair) may question the employee and any of the employee's witnesses.

The employee/companion will be given the opportunity to sum up, but may not introduce any new material.

The meeting may be adjourned by the line manager (or Chair) if undertaking further investigation is considered necessary to establish the facts of the case. The meeting will then be reconvened as soon as possible after any necessary investigations have been carried out.

Having considered the grievance, the line manager (or Chair) will give their decision regarding the case to the employee in writing. This will normally be within five working days. If appropriate, the decision will set out what action the employer intends to take to resolve the grievance, or if the grievance is not upheld, will explain the reasons. This will also include notifying the employee of their right of appeal and the procedure to be followed.

### **d. Appeal**

If still unresolved, the employee may refer the matter, in writing, to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, or if the Chair has already been involved in an earlier stage of the procedure, to another nominated Trustee.

The employee wishing to appeal against a grievance decision must do so in writing within five working days of receiving written notification of the grievance decision, stating the reasons for the appeal. Any documents submitted in support of the appeal must be attached.

Arrangements for the appeal meeting, which should be held without avoidable delay, will be made by the Chair (or the Vice-Chair if appropriate) who will ensure that a note-taker is present if at all possible.

Where possible, at least two members of the Board will constitute an Appeal Panel. The Trustee or Trustees hearing the appeal should, if at all possible, have had no direct involvement in the case.

The employee is entitled to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague at the appeal.

The meeting may be adjourned by the Appeal Panel or person hearing the appeal if undertaking further investigation is considered necessary. However, the meeting will be reconvened as soon as possible.

The decision of the Appeal Panel or person hearing the appeal shall be final.