



Grievance Policy

Review: September 2021

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When a problem arises in the workplace, it is in the best interests of everyone to resolve it as soon as possible. The School recognises that failure to deal with a dispute can have a serious impact on all staff in terms of lost time, stress and the possible breakdown of the employment relationship.

The School hopes that all disputes can be resolved informally at an early stage and for this reason the School and employees should both raise issues promptly and not unreasonably delay meetings, decisions or confirmation of decisions.

It is hoped and anticipated that most problems will be sorted out in the normal day to- day contact that employees have with their immediate manager. It is the policy of this School to encourage dialogue in an effort to resolve any disputes in the work place. Only if this informal stage fails to produce a satisfactory solution should an employee invoke the grievance procedure.

Likewise, the School will discuss problems that have arisen relating to a person's employment in that hope that they can be resolved informally and without the need for disciplinary action.

The procedures detailed in this policy provide practical guidance on how to handle disciplinary and grievance situations in the workplace, and should an explanation of this policy be required, an employee should raise this with their immediate Line Manager.

There are occasions when an employee raises a grievance during a disciplinary process. If the two matters are separate, then the School may temporarily suspend the disciplinary process in order to deal with the grievance. If the two matters are related, then the School may deem it appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

The following procedures are non-contractual in their effect and do not form part of normal terms and conditions of employment unless otherwise stated in your contract of employment. The School reserves the right to change the terms of these procedures from time to time and to introduce replacement procedures as may be required.

1. PROCEDURE

- 1.1 An employee should raise a grievance with their immediate manager however if that person is the subject of the grievance then it should be referred to the next management level.
- 1.2 Where a grievance is held by a number of employees they may nominate one of these people as a representative, and that representative may follow the procedure outlined below on all employees' behalf.

2. INFORM THE SCHOOL OF THE NATURE OF THE GRIEVANCE

- 2.1 The employee must write to the School with details of their alleged grievance. Where possible this should be sent to their line manager (unless they are the subject of the grievance and if this is the case they should write to the next level of management).
- 2.2 If an employee has trouble putting their grievance in writing, they should ask a work colleague or a trade union representative / trade union official for assistance.
- 2.3 The grievance letter should provide as much information as possible regarding the complaint to enable the School to investigate properly. If the employee wishes to be accompanied at any subsequent grievance meeting they should make a reasonable request to the School.
- 2.4 Having submitted their letter an employee must allow the School 28 days (unless otherwise exempt from going through the process) in which to respond.

3. HOLD A MEETING WITH THE EMPLOYEE

- 3.1 An employee will be invited to at least one meeting when the alleged grievance will be discussed.
- 3.2 The time and place of any meeting will be agreed between the employee and the School but must be reasonable to both parties.
- 3.3 If the School requires more information to enable a thorough investigation of the grievance then the employee will be asked to provide further details either in writing or at a meeting however, the meeting may have to be adjourned for further investigation before the School can notify the employee of an outcome.
- 3.4 At the meeting the employee will be given an opportunity to explain their grievance and how they think it can be resolved.
- 3.5 Minutes will be taken at the meeting and both the employee and School will be asked to sign a copy of these to confirm they are an accurate record of discussions. Employees will be provided with a copy of the minutes for any meeting they were present at.
- 3.6 Employees must take all reasonable steps to attend meetings and are entitled to be accompanied by a work colleague or a trade union representative / trade union official.
- 3.7 If the accompanying person is unable to attend a hearing at the given date and time, then the employee will be permitted to postpone the hearing for up to five days from the date offered.
- 3.8 After the meeting the School will notify the employee of a decision in writing without unreasonable delay. Employees have a right to appeal any decision they are not satisfied with and should do so within five working days of receiving the outcome.

3.9 Should an employee fail to attend a meeting without good reason, a decision may be made in their absence.

4. HOW TO TAKE THE GRIEVANCE FURTHER IF YOU FEEL IT HAS NOT BEEN RESOLVED

4.1 If an employee considers that their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, they must inform the School that they wish to appeal.

4.2 An appeal must be lodged in writing within five working days of being notified of the decision.

4.3 An appeal meeting will be convened without unreasonable delay and will, where possible, be heard by someone more senior than the person who conducted the initial hearing. Where this is not possible, the same person will hear the appeal as attended the grievance meeting, but they will act as impartially as possible.

4.4 As previously, employees are entitled to be accompanied by a work colleague or a trade union representative / trade union official / trade union official.

4.5 Following the meeting, the decision will be communicated in writing without unreasonable delay.

4.6 This decision is final.

Any malicious or vexatious abuse of the grievance procedure may be treated as a disciplinary offence.