

Staff Grievance Procedure

1. Application and Scope

- 1.1 The University is committed to promoting effective working relationships and creating an environment in which employees feel able to raise work related issues with their managers.
- 1.2 The operating principles and definitions contained in Ordinance 25 apply to this procedure.
- 1.3 This procedure aims to:
 - (i) provide a clear and transparent framework to deal with concerns, problems or complaints raised by employees in the course of their employment in relation to:
 - (a) matters affecting themselves as individuals; or
 - (b) matters affecting their personal dealings or relationships with other employees
 - (ii) achieve an appropriate and prompt resolution to individual grievances.
- 1.4 This procedure does not apply to complaints, grievances or appeals where other policies or procedures are in place, for example those in relation to conduct, redundancy, capability, ill health, dismissal for some other substantial reason, academic promotions etc. unless specific provision is made within such policies or procedures to use all or part of this procedure.
- 1.5 This procedure cannot be used:
 - (i) to settle disputes between the University and the Trade Unions;
 - (ii) to change collective terms and conditions of employment or University policies and procedures;
 - (iii) if the grievance relates to matters that are already being considered pursuant to another policy or procedure;
 - (iv) after employment has ended.
- 1.6 If employees have a common grievance the University may deal with them together. If employees bring a grievance jointly with students, this grievance procedure will be used.
- 1.7 Employees must raise their grievance(s) without unreasonable delay.

2 Early Resolution

- 2.1 This procedure should not be used as a substitute for normal day to day discussions which should ordinarily resolve an employee's concerns. Wherever possible concerns raised by employees should be resolved informally without recourse to formal procedures. It is expected that individuals will enter into the procedure in good faith with the aim of resolving matters at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.2 The University encourages employees to resolve any concerns which arise in the workplace at the earliest opportunity and are encouraged to discuss their concern(s) with their line manager in the first instance. Managers will attempt to address the employee's concerns appropriately and promptly.
- 2.3 It is the manager's responsibility to seek to resolve any concern(s) that has been raised. Where a concern has been resolved as a result of such discussions it may be helpful for the manager to confirm their understanding in writing to the employee to ensure that there is a common understanding of the outcome.
- 2.4 If following discussion of the concern(s) or where the concern(s) raised involve inter-personal relationships and the manager considers it appropriate they may decide that one or a combination of the following actions should be taken:
 - (i) a facilitated discussion takes place; or
 - (ii) the matter is referred to the Mediation Service.

Both routes are voluntary and will only take place if all parties agree. It is however hoped that employees will recognise the benefits of seeking to resolve issues by either of these routes and will be amenable to and co-operate with this approach.

(iii) the concerns be considered under the Acceptable Behaviour at Work Guidance; or

(iv) the concerns be dealt with under the formal procedure (see below)

3. Formal Procedure

- 3.1 Where the grievance raised is not capable of early resolution the employee should raise the matter formally by writing to the Appropriate Manager within three months of the date when the act(s) complained of took place, or within 28 days of the completion of steps taken to attempt to resolve the issue informally.

- 3.2 If the grievance involves the employee's line manager, the employee may write to the next senior level of management as appropriate. If the grievance involves the Vice-Chancellor, the employee should write to the Chair of Board of Trustees through the University Secretary (in each case referred to as "the Manager" below).
- 3.3 The employee should set out the nature of the grievance using the template available in the guidance for staff, the evidence on which it is based, and the remedy sought.
- 3.4 On receipt of the completed template setting out a grievance the employee will be asked to attend a formal grievance meeting in order to discuss the grievance. This meeting will normally take place within 14 days of the written acknowledgement of the grievance.
- 3.5 As a result of the first grievance meeting, the Manager may determine that it is necessary to make further enquiries and/or may appoint an investigating officer to conduct an investigation into the background facts or into any allegations made by the employee.
- 3.6 If after discussion, the grievance is found to be vexatious or trivial the Manager may dismiss it without further consideration. The employee will be advised accordingly.
- 3.7 If it is concluded that the employee has made a malicious or vexatious allegation or with a view to personal gain and particularly where they persist in making them, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual concerned
- 3.8 The Manager may also consider whether it is appropriate for the grievance to be dealt with pursuant to alternative University procedures.
- 3.9 Where the grievance relates to other employees, the individuals involved will be informed in writing of the nature of the grievance and will be given an opportunity to submit a response.

4. Investigation

- 4.1 If an investigation is deemed appropriate, the Manager will appoint an appropriate independent person to investigate the grievance and provide a report to the Manager.
- 4.2 The report may also be made available to the employee raising the grievance and the parties to the grievance.
- 4.3 Following the investigation, the Manager may take such further action as appropriate, for example:
 - (i) meet with the individual raising the grievance;
 - (ii) seek clarification on any further issues that might have arisen;

- (iii) allow those concerned to comment on the findings of the investigation; or
- (iv) meet with the individual raising the grievance and those grieved against.

The Manager will inform the employee when he or she has completed such actions.

5. Outcome

- 5.1 The Manager will determine the outcome of the grievance. They may reject the grievance or may uphold the whole or parts of the grievance and indicate what steps have been or should be taken to resolve it.
- 5.2 The Manager will inform the parties to the grievance in writing of the decision normally within 14 days of the notification set out in 4.3 above.

6. Appeal

- 6.1 If the grievance remains unresolved and the employee who brought the grievance wishes to take further action, the employee may write to the Chief PeopleHR Director within 14 days of the date of the letter confirming the decision appealed against. The employee must identify the part(s) of the grievance that remain unresolved and the remedy sought.
- 6.2 Appeals will normally be considered by another manager of at least equal seniority (Appeal Officer). The Appeal Officer will have had no prior involvement in the case and will be supported by a member of the Secretary's Office or HR team.
- 6.3 The Appeal Officer will meet with the employee in order to discuss the appeal. The meeting will normally take place within 14 days of the written acknowledgement of the appeal.
- 6.4 As a result of the meeting, the Appeal Officer may determine that it is necessary to make further enquiries and/or may appoint an investigating officer to conduct an investigation into the background facts or into any allegations made by the employee.
- 6.5 Following the investigation, the Appeal Officer may take such further action as appropriate, for example:
 - (i) meet with the employee raising the appeal;
 - (ii) seek clarification on any further issues that might have arisen;
 - (iii) allow those concerned to comment on the findings of the investigation; or
 - (iv) meet with the individual raising the appeal and those grieved against.

The Appeal Officer will inform the employee when they have completed such actions.

- 6.6 The Appeal Officer will determine the outcome of the appeal. They may reject the appeal or may uphold the whole or parts of the appeal and indicate what steps have been or should be taken to resolve it.
- 6.7 The Appeal Officer will inform the parties to the grievance in writing of the decision normally within 14 days of the notification set out in 6.5 above.
- 6.8 The decision on appeal is final.