Grievance Policy

The purpose of the grievance procedure is to provide a framework for staff to raise concerns and deal with issues which have not been resolved through the normal working relationship.

The procedure will apply to all staff and will cover all cases where you wish to raise a particular grievance in connection with your employment.

This procedure is not a replacement for good day-to-day communication where we encourage you to discuss and resolve daily working issues in a supportive atmosphere. Many problems can be solved on an informal basis very satisfactorily if all staff are prepared to keep the channels of communication between themselves open and working well. This procedure is designed to deal with those issues that need to be approached on a more formal basis so that every route to a satisfactory solution can be explored and so that any decisions reached are binding and long lasting.

The procedure

Informal action

If you have a concern regarding any matter affecting your employment you should in the first instance raise it informally with your manager. Where the grievance is about your manager, you should raise the matter with Human Resources or the COO.

During any informal discussion you:

- may be accompanied by a work colleague or Trade Union representative if you wish;
- will be advised of the grievance procedure by your manager; and
- will be given the opportunity to fully discuss the grievance.

Managers are responsible for establishing and recording the facts covered at the discussion and for producing a written record of the outcome for issue to all concerned, including a copy for your personnel file.

Formal action

If the matter cannot be settled informally, you should write to your manager setting out the nature of the grievance. It will be dealt with as impartially as possible.

The matter will be investigated and a meeting arranged as soon as possible. You will have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague (or by a Trade Union official as long as they have been certified by their union as having experience of, or received training in, acting as an employee's companion at grievance hearings).

If your companion cannot attend on the proposed date, you can suggest an alternative time and date so long as it is reasonable and is not more than five working days after the original date.

You must take all reasonable steps to attend the grievance meeting.

Your companion has a right to confer with you and address the hearing to put forward your case, sum up your case and respond on your behalf to any view expressed at the meeting, but no right to answer questions on your behalf.

An independent note taker may also attend the meeting to take the minutes.

You will receive a response to your grievance within 10 working days of the meeting and copies of all documentation will be placed on your personnel file. The response will confirm your right of appeal against the outcome.

Appeal

If you are still not satisfied with the decision you should write to the COO, within 5 working days of receiving the outcome letter, who will deal with it as impartially as possible.

You will be invited in writing to an appeal meeting, at which you have the right to be accompanied. An independent note taker may also attend the meeting to take the minutes.

You will receive a decision on your grievance within 10 working days of the meeting and copies of all documentation will be placed on your personnel file. The decision notified will be final.

Former staff

Grievances may also be raised by ex-staff members after their employment has ended. In this case, the grievance procedure set out above will continue to apply, unless both parties agree in writing that a modified form of grievance procedure will apply instead. Under the modified grievance procedure, you must set out the details of your grievance in writing and we will then formally respond in writing.

If your complaint relates to your dissatisfaction with a dismissal decision, you should not invoke the grievance procedure but should instead appeal against that decision in accordance with the appeal procedure with which you will have been provided.

Protection against detriment

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

Where the grievance is made with malicious intent, the employee will be subject to our disciplinary procedure, up to and including dismissal.