

Grievance Policy

1. Purpose

The grievance policy provides a framework, which outlines how an employee may raise a concern, regarding any aspect of their employment and seek a resolution within a reasonable timeframe. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Grievance Policy Practice Notes.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all current Council employees, except those teachers directly employed by the Council and all staff appointed by schools operating under local management of schools, which have their own procedure.

Complaints from ex-employees should be dealt with by the Council's corporate complaints process.

3. General Principles

3.1 Informal Resolution

Many grievances can be resolved quickly through informal discussion and employees are encouraged to seek informal resolution in the first instance.

Where informal resolution is not successful, employees should raise their grievance formally in writing using the grievance submission form as soon as is practicable but normally within three months of the cause of the grievance.

3.2 Formal Action

Should informal action not lead to a resolution then a formal grievance may be made in writing, detailing the nature of the complaint together with all the relevant facts, dates and names of individuals concerned.

Formal grievances should always be dealt with in a reasonable timeframe and in any event within 28 calendar days unless a revised deadline has been agreed by all parties.

A formal grievance cannot be progressed if the nature of the resolution is not within the control of the Council. Neither will it be recognised as a grievance if the underlying purpose of the submission is to disrupt or confound another internal procedure such as disciplinary, investigation, audit, etc.

3.3 Investigation

Dependent upon the nature of the formal grievance it may be necessary for an investigation to be carried out. The purpose of an investigation is to establish the facts relating to the grievance.

3.4 Grievance Meeting

A grievance meeting will be arranged as soon as is reasonably practicable after the receipt of the formal grievance.

The primary purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Allow the employee to present any evidence to support their grievance
- Clarify any issues or points within the grievance
- Set out the process to be followed
- Agree the scope of the investigation (if required)

3.5 Right to be Accompanied

An individual has the right to be accompanied at a grievance meeting or appeal hearing. The statutory right is to be accompanied by a fellow worker, a trade union representative, or an official employed by a trade union. The employee should let the council know in advance the name of the companion where possible and whether they are a fellow worker or trade union official or representative.

3.6 Outcome

The outcome of the grievance investigation will be communicated in writing without unreasonable delay and where appropriate, should set out what action the employer intends to take to resolve the grievance.

3.7 Right to Appeal

If the grievance has not been resolved to the employee's satisfaction, the employee has the right to appeal the outcome. This is the final stage of the grievance procedure.

3.8 Confidentiality

Grievances will be dealt with sensitively and with due respect for the individuals involved. Any information communicated during the course of an investigation or as part of a grievance must be treated as confidential.

No detriment will be suffered by anyone raising a grievance in good faith, however, any matter raised with malicious intent may be dealt with under the disciplinary policy.

There is a separate whistleblowing policy to provide advice to employees on how to report illegal activities, wrongdoing or malpractice within the organisation.

4. Further References

Grievance Policy Practice Notes

Disciplinary Policy

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

Document Control

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