

## **GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **1. Policy statement**

- 1.1 In most cases issues at work and other grievances can be resolved on an informal basis by raising the matter with your line manager. However, if an informal approach does not resolve the problem or if it is not appropriate, you should follow the grievance procedure set out below.
- 1.2 Please note, if your employment contract is subject to a collective agreement, a different grievance policy and procedure may apply. If you are unsure, please speak to your line manager.

### **2. Formal grievance procedure**

- 2.1 You must set out in writing the nature of your grievance and send it to a manager without delay. Where possible, please provide details such as relevant witnesses, times and dates relating to your grievance.
- 2.2 If you have difficulty writing or English is not your first language, you should let the Company know or get assistance from a colleague or a trade union or other employee representative.

### **3. Meeting to discuss your grievance**

- 3.1 After the Company has had an opportunity to consider your grievance, you will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the grievance without unreasonable delay and usually within 14 days of the date of your grievance.
- 3.2 The meeting will be chaired by a manager. A notetaker will also be present at the meeting.
- 3.3 You will have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a trade union representative or colleague. Please see below for details about the role of companions at meetings.
- 3.4 You must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. If you or your companion cannot attend on the date suggested, you must notify the Company and propose an alternative date for the meeting to be held without delay – usually within 5 working days of the date originally proposed.
- 3.5 At the meeting you will be asked to explain your complaint and how you believe it should be resolved. You may present evidence at the meeting.
- 3.6 The meeting may be adjourned for any necessary investigation to be carried out.

### **4. Following the meeting**

- 4.1 After the meeting the person who oversaw it will decide on what action, if any, to take. The grievance outcome will usually be provided to you within 10 working days of the grievance meeting.
- 4.2 You will be informed of the Company's decision in writing and this will be communicated to you without unreasonable delay and usually within one week of the meeting. You will be notified of your right to appeal against the decision if you are not satisfied with it.

### **5. Appeal**

- 5.1 You have the right to appeal against the grievance outcome if you feel that the grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved.

- 5.2 If you wish to appeal, you must inform the Company in writing within five working days of the date of the original decision providing full grounds for your appeal. You will then be invited to attend another meeting. You will have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a trade union representative or colleague.
- 5.3 If you or your companion cannot attend on the date suggested, you must notify the Company and propose an alternative date for the appeal meeting to be held without delay and usually within five working days of the date originally proposed.
- 5.4 Where possible, the manager who made the original grievance decision will not be involved in the decision-making process of the appeal. The appeal meeting will be heard by an appropriate member of senior management. Every effort will be made to ensure that the appeal will be heard and concluded quickly.
- 5.5 After the appeal meeting, you will be informed of the Company's decision. The Company will endeavour to communicate the decision to you within 10 working days of the appeal hearing.
- 5.6 There will be no further right to appeal.

## 6. **Overlapping grievance and disciplinary issues**

- 6.1 If you raise a grievance whilst being subject to the Company's disciplinary procedure, the Company may suspend the disciplinary process in order to deal with your grievance if the issues are unrelated.
- 6.2 Where your grievance and disciplinary issues are related, the Company may deal with both at the same time.

## 7. **Timetable**

Each step and action under the grievance procedure will be taken without unreasonable delay.

## 8. **Role of companions**

- 8.1 Your companion may be a trade union representative or work colleague.
- 8.2 The right to be accompanied applies to all stages of the grievance process. However, it does not apply to investigation meetings.
- 8.3 Your companion may make representations on your behalf and respond on your behalf to any view expressed at any meeting, provided you expressly authorise this at the beginning of the relevant meeting (so that all members of the decision-making body know who may make representations on your behalf). However, your companion will not be able to answer questions put to you during the course of any meeting.

## 9. **Meetings**

- 9.1 The timing and location of meetings will be reasonable. Meetings may be held remotely using video conferencing software.
- 9.2 Meetings will be conducted in a manner that enables you to explain your grievance fully.
- 9.3 Where possible, the timing and location of the meeting should be agreed between the Company and you. The Company will endeavour to ensure that the meeting is in a private location and that there are no interruptions.

9.4 You and anyone accompanying you (including witnesses), are prohibited from making any audio or video recordings of meetings or hearings; any such recording will be considered gross misconduct and will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure. Written notes may be taken by you or your companion.

## 10. **Investigations**

10.1 In some cases it may be necessary for the Company to carry out an investigation into your grievance. The amount of any investigation required will depend on the nature of the grievance and will vary from case to case.

10.2 Investigations may involve interviewing and taking statements from you and any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents.

10.3 You must co-operate fully and promptly in any investigation. This may include informing the Company of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents to the Company and attending interviews.

10.4 The Company may initiate an investigation before holding a grievance meeting where the Company considers this to be appropriate. In other cases the Company may hold a grievance meeting before deciding what investigation (if any) to carry out.

## 11. **Mediation**

11.1 In some circumstances, where appropriate, the Company may offer mediation as means of resolving the issue that your grievance relates to. This involves someone (usually a Company employee) who has not been involved in the grievance situation seeking to facilitate discussion and to find a compromise or solution to the problem. Mediation will only be suggested where you are comfortable with it and so is any other person involved.

11.2 Please see the Company's Mediation Policy for more details.

## 12. **Records**

12.1 During the grievance process and for an appropriate period of time following it, the Company will keep written records which may include:

12.1.1 the nature of the grievance raised;

12.1.2 a copy of the written grievance;

12.1.3 the grievance outcome;

12.1.4 details of any action taken;

12.1.5 reasons for the action taken;

12.1.6 whether there was an appeal and if so the outcome; and

12.1.7 subsequent developments.

12.2 Such records will be kept confidential and will be processed in accordance with our Privacy Notice.