

Grievance Procedure

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1. Introduction

At Strathclyde we recognise that colleagues may, on occasion, have issues relating to their work or working relationships that they may wish to address. We will always take your concerns seriously and will do our best to resolve these as quickly as possible.

In this procedure you will find more information on what is considered a grievance at work, how to raise a grievance and how your concerns will be dealt with either informally or formally.

2. Who is Covered by this Procedure?

This procedure applies to all University employees.

3. What is a Grievance?

A grievance at work is where an issue, concern or problem is raised by an employee (or group of employees) with their employer by way of an informal or formal complaint.

Examples of a grievance might include:

- Issues about pay or benefits.
- A breach of terms and conditions.
- Bullying, harassment, victimisation, or discrimination.
- Concerns around working conditions.

We recognise that in their areas of academic expertise, Academic Professional and Professorial staff will have a right to 'academic freedom'. This is freedom within the law both to question and test received wisdom and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without putting themselves at risk of losing their employment or being treated unfairly. However, this needs to be balanced by the need to use that freedom responsibly and professionally.

Issues that are not considered under the grievance procedure include:

- Complaints that are considered to be trivial or vexatious.

- Complaints that should be addressed under the disciplinary procedure. A grievance can't normally be raised at the end of the disciplinary appeal process. This will only be allowed if there are clear facts to suggest that a significant breach in the disciplinary appeals procedure has taken place, for example discrimination.
- Complaints that relate to regrading or promotion. These will be heard under the relevant appeal process.
- Complaints relating to flexible working applications. These should be resolved through the Flexible Working Policy.

Just so you know, it may be considered appropriate to hear your concerns under a different procedure during or after the grievance procedure has begun. If this is the case, we will make you aware as soon as possible.

4. Informal Grievance

If you are experiencing problems at work, it is important that you raise this with your line manager and try resolving the matter(s) informally. Your line manager should meet with you to discuss the situation, and if appropriate, meet with any other relevant colleagues with the aim of resolving the issues. If your grievance relates to your line manager, you should raise it informally with a more senior manager in your area. They should carry out the same steps to resolve the matter informally.

If you have experienced or witnessed unacceptable behaviour at work, for example bullying or harassment, our [Dignity & Respect policy](#) outlines the informal routes that you can take to resolve matters informally. You may also find our [Dignity & Respect Flowchart](#) helpful. Issues can also be raised, anonymously if preferred, on our online reporting facility, [Report and Support](#).

5. Formal Grievance

If your work concern is too serious to be resolved informally or you don't think the informal route has addressed the issue, you should raise a formal grievance.

5.1. Raising a formal grievance

To raise a formal grievance, you should put your grievance in writing and send it to your Head of Department or Professional Services Director. If the grievance is about this individual, you should send it to your Executive Dean or the relevant Senior Officer for your area.

In this written statement you should confirm that you wish the matter to be dealt with under the formal grievance procedure. It is also important to explain what your grievance is about and include any relevant facts, such as the names of any individuals involved or dates of any incidents. You should also be clear about the resolution you are looking for.

5.2. The grievance meeting

You will be invited to attend a formal grievance meeting to discuss your concerns, with a manager who has not previously been involved in the situation. A colleague from Human Resources will also attend, as appropriate. The role of the HR representative will be to support the manager with decision-making, provide professional advice and ensure that the grievance procedure is being applied fairly and consistently.

The meeting will normally take place within 10 working days of your grievance letter being received. You will be asked to discuss your grievance and explain how you think it might be resolved. If you wish, you can be accompanied by a work colleague or a Trade Union representative. You will be advised of this when you receive the invite to your meeting.

After your grievance meeting has taken place, an investigation may be required to look at the matters you have raised. This might involve meeting with other colleagues. It might also be necessary to meet with you again if there are any further questions that need to be asked. An investigation should normally be completed within four weeks. You will be made aware if there is a reason that the process will take longer.

A note will be taken at any formal meeting to summarise the key points. It will not be a verbatim record. A copy of these notes will be shared with you and there will be an opportunity for you to comment. If it is not possible to agree the accuracy of the notes, both views will be included and any point that is not agreed will be noted. All written records relating to your grievance will be kept in accordance with current data protection legislation.

At Strathclyde recording formal or informal meetings or conversations between colleagues without the permission of all those involved (known as covert recording) is not allowed. If we become aware that covert recording has taken place, the matter may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

5.3. Outcome

Once all the details of your grievance have been considered and any investigation has been completed, the manager who conducted your grievance meeting and the HR representative will decide the outcome. You, and any other relevant parties, will be notified in writing of the decision and the reasons for it. This will normally be within 10 working days of the meeting although this may be longer if an investigation was required.

You will be advised if your grievance has been upheld or dismissed, but you will not be advised of any actions which may or may not be taken against the person(s) you have raised a grievance about.

5.4. Appeal

Your outcome letter will confirm that you have a right to appeal the decision of your formal grievance which you may wish to do if you don't feel that your grievance has been dealt with satisfactorily. You should put your appeal in writing and send this to the Chief People Officer or Assistant Director, People Business Partnering within 10 working days from the date on your grievance outcome letter.

You will then be invited to attend a meeting to discuss your appeal and you can be accompanied by a work colleague or trade Union representative if you wish. This meeting will normally be held by another manager in your area who has had no previous involvement in your grievance and a colleague from HR.

You will be issued with an outcome of your appeal, normally within 10 days following the meeting. If there is going to be a delay, you will be made aware of this. There is no further appeal process after this stage.

6. Mediation

Mediation is an informal route to resolve issues of conflict. It is available as an alternative to using the formal grievance procedure or it might be recommended at the end of the formal grievance process to help repair colleagues working relationships.

Mediation is held by a trained, impartial mediator who supports two or more people to work through issues of conflict or disagreement, with the aim of improving their working relationship. It is not about judgment or blame. The University has a network of trained mediators although in some cases, it might be more appropriate for a mediator from an external organisation to be involved. If you are interested in exploring mediation, you should contact HR in the first instance.

Just so you know, mediation is a voluntary process, and you can choose if you wish to participate. If you do agree to mediation, it is important that you engage in the process in a positive and constructive manner with a view to achieving resolution.

7. Further Information and Support

If, throughout any stage of the grievance procedure, you need support or adjustments, due to being disabled, you should raise this with your line manager or a member of the HR team as early as possible. It is also important that you highlight any medical conditions that might be relevant to your grievance to ensure this is given full consideration.

Raising a grievance at work can be a difficult situation for all those involved. If you need further support, our free and independent Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provider can offer counselling and support. Visit our [Wellbeing Hub](#) for more information.

If you have any queries about this procedure, please talk to your manager or contact [Human Resources](#).

8. Review

This policy is reviewed by Human Resources on a regular basis. To see when the next review is due, please see our [Policy Review Schedule](#) (staff login required) on our People Hub.