

Staff Grievance Policy

WHC reserves the right to amend this policy at its discretion. The most up-to-date version can be downloaded from our website.



University of the
Highlands and Islands
West Highland College

Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd
agus nan Eilean
Colaiste na Gàidhealtachd an Iar

Staff Grievance Policy

ELT manager	Principal & Chief Executive
Responsible officer	HR Manager
Date first approved by BoM	11 June 2012
Date review approved by BoM	27 June 2018
Next Review Date	June 2021
Equality impact assessment	Yes
Further information (where relevant)	

Reviewer	Date	Review Action/Impact	BoM
V Ferguson	May 2018	Additional information added to clauses 3 & 4	

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1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy statement and the related procedure is to:

- provide a framework within which grievance issues can be resolved in a way which is designed to promote fairness and maintain good employee relations in order to have a motivated and professional workforce able to deliver the operational objectives of the College;
- ensure that grievances are resolved promptly, fairly and consistently;
- identify staff responsible for contributing to the resolution of grievance issues; and
- ensure that the possibility of damage to sound professional relationships within the College is minimised.

2 Scope

This policy outlines the basis on which informal and formal grievances and collective disputes will be handled and resolved for all staff employed by the Board of Management. Where a collective grievance is being raised, the group of staff will nominate one colleague to represent the group at all stages within the policy. Anonymous complainants or complaints on behalf of someone else will not be considered.

The grievance policy has been agreed following discussion with staff representatives and will not be amended without further consultation taking place. This procedure document is a statement of intent and is not intended to be contractually binding.

3 Policy

3.1 Grievance Issues

A grievance issue may arise where a member of staff has a problem or concern about their work, working conditions, or relationship with a colleague or manager. The following list gives an indication of the kind of issues which can give rise to a grievance, but is not exhaustive:

Terms and conditions of employment;
Health and safety;
Work relations;
Working practices;
Working environment;
Organisational change;
Discrimination.

Issues resulting from a complaint regarding the behaviour, conduct, or work performance of a member of staff are not usually considered to be grievance issues and would normally be considered under the terms of the Staff Discipline Policy.

Where, after investigation, a grievance is found to be vexatious or malicious, or where there is a continued pattern of unfounded complaints by the same employee, the complainant may be subject to investigation under the College's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and subject to disciplinary action.

3.2 Informal Consideration

Whenever possible, a grievance should be raised and dealt with informally by the member of staff's line manager. Where the informal process fails, or is inappropriate, the formal procedure may be invoked.

3.3 Mediation

It may be appropriate for the matter to be dealt with by way of mediation, depending on the nature of the grievance. Mediation will be used only where all parties involved in the grievance agree and it is not a compulsory part of the grievance process.

3.4 Formal Consideration

Where the informal process has not resolved an issue, or where the aggrieved employee wishes to follow a more formal process, the grievance should be submitted in writing to the Human Resources Department. HR will appoint a more senior manager who will hear the grievance, where possible, within 5 working days of receipt of the formal grievance. A member of the Human Resources Department will also attend to minute the meeting and ensure the proceedings are conducted fairly.

3.5 Grievances Raised by Former Staff

Where a grievance or complaint is made by any person who is no longer in College employment, this will be dealt with under the terms of the Complaints procedure. In these circumstances the issue will be fully investigated and the complainant will receive written notification of the outcome of their complaint.

4 General Rights

4.1 Staff Representation

At any and all stages of the formal procedure and/or of the appeal procedure, the member of staff will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague, Trade Union representative or employee representative.

4.2 Notes

Notes of formal meetings will be taken and it will not be a verbatim record. The member of staff and his/her nominated representative will receive copies of all written statements or evidence which will be presented at the hearing and will be required to make available copies of any written evidence which they intend to refer to at the hearing.

4.3 Right of Appeal

There will be a right of appeal against the outcome of a formal grievance hearing.

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4.4 Confidentiality

At all stages of a grievance, those involved in the investigation must bear in mind the need for confidentiality in order to preserve the integrity of the process and out of respect for those involved.

5 Linked Discipline and Grievance Issues

Where a grievance is raised by a member of staff in relation to disciplinary issues under investigation these may be considered through a joint disciplinary/grievance hearing process. In these circumstances the discipline and grievance procedures to be followed will be that considered most appropriate within the circumstances to allow a full and open hearing of all relevant points.

6 Responsibilities

The Board of Management is responsible for approving this policy and for overseeing compliance with its principles.

The HR Manager is responsible for the implementation of this policy

All staff are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy

7 Linked Policies

Staff Grievance Procedure and Appendices.

Statutory and legal provision governing staff grievance issues.

Information and advice regarding statutory and legal grievance requirements applicable to employment matters may be sought by contacting the Human Resources Department.

Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedures.

Complaints Handling Procedure

ACAS Code of Practice on Discipline and Grievance Procedures

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or whenever circumstances change any part of it.