

## 07 Grievance Policy

### 1. Overview

- 1.1. This policy helps the Company ensure that complaints, concerns, and problems to do with employment are dealt with fairly and consistently.
- 1.2. This policy applies to all employees, but does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend this policy at any time.
- 1.3. You should only use this procedure to raise a grievance connected with your employment.
- 1.4. If you have a serious concern or complaint that relates to your employment you must raise it without delay using either this policy, or if appropriate the harassment and bullying policy or the whistleblowing policy. If you fail to do this you may be taken to have waived your right to complain or raise concern.

### 2. Taking informal action

- 2.1. You should approach your manager before doing anything else, as we find most grievances can be resolved informally. If your grievance is about your manager — or you do not want to raise it with them for some other reason — you must instead notify [their line manager or] a Director.
- 2.2. If taking the informal approach does not resolve your problem, you should use the formal procedure set out below.

### 3. Taking formal action: First stage

- 3.1. You will need to set out the details of your complaint in writing. Include dates, names of individuals involved, and any other relevant facts, and tell us clearly that you want to lodge a formal grievance. It is helpful if you can set out any steps you have taken to resolve matters informally.
- 3.2. You must also explain clearly what you want the Company to do to resolve your grievance.
- 3.3. Send or hand your written grievance to your line manager or a Director.
- 3.4. You must co-operate with us to ensure our investigation is fair and thorough. How we investigate will depend on the nature of your grievance. We will look at relevant documents and may interview you and/or take a statement from you and from other people able to provide information.

### 4. Taking formal action: Second stage

- 4.1. We will invite you to a meeting, usually within around a week of you lodging your grievance. The meeting is your opportunity to explain your problem and how you think we should resolve it, and we ask that you make every effort to attend.
- 4.2. You can bring a companion with you to the meeting — this will typically be a work colleague or a trade union representative (see details below). You must let us know as soon as possible if either you or your companion is unable to attend the meeting and we will try to reschedule.

- 4.3. We may record the meeting, but we will not do so without telling you. You are also invited to record the meeting if you wish, but please tell us as we would consider it discourteous to the managers involved for you to make a covert recording.
- 4.4. After the meeting, we will take any investigative steps that we consider appropriate. Sometimes this will involve looking at documents, or interviewing other people. We will not normally allow you to participate in this part of the investigation (for example, you will not normally be allowed to question other people directly). Sometimes, we may ask you for more information or for another meeting.
- 4.5. Within a week of the final meeting we will tell you our decision and let you know if we plan to take any action to address your grievance.

## **5. Taking formal action: Third stage**

- 5.1. You can appeal in writing within a week of us giving you our decision. You must address this to whomever is named in the letter you received telling you of our decision, and you must explain clearly why you are appealing. You should also give us any new evidence you may have acquired since the initial investigation was completed.
- 5.2. We will invite you to a meeting, usually within two weeks of you lodging your appeal. Wherever possible, the appeal meeting will not be led by the manager who held the original grievance meeting. You may be accompanied by a trade union representative (see below).
- 5.3. The Company's final decision will be sent to you in writing. We try to do this within two weeks of the appeal hearing. You do not have any further right to appeal against our decision.

## **6. Your right to be accompanied**

- 6.1. You are entitled to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at any formal meeting called under this policy.
- 6.2. If you want to exercise this right, you should tell us as soon as possible who you want to accompany you. It is your responsibility to arrange for them to attend. If you choose a work colleague, we will not prevent them from attending, but we may rearrange the meeting if their absence from work causes operational problems.
- 6.3. Your colleague or union representative can, if this is your preference, explain the key points of your grievance to the meeting and can respond on your behalf. You can also confer with them during the meetings. They must not however answer questions put directly to you or try to prevent the Company asking questions or outlining its views.