

Grievance Policy

Section 1 - Definitions

(1) For the purpose of this policy:

- a. Grievance:
 - i. a grievance is a complaint about any type of work-related problem that is causing distress. The grievance may arise from a decision, act or omission by any person or persons within the University, which is considered by the Complainant to be wrong, mistaken, unjust or discriminatory.
- b. Complainant:
 - i. the staff member(s) notifying a grievance or student(s) notifying a grievance relating to harassment, bullying or discrimination by a staff member.
- c. Respondent:
 - i. the staff member(s) against whom the complaint is made.

Section 2 - Policy Statement

Part A - Policy Declaration

(2) It is critical to the interests of the University and its employees that the substance of any grievance is dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner in accordance with this policy.

Part B - Policy Description

Objectives

(3) In keeping with the University's [Complaints Management Framework](#), the purpose of this Policy is to detail a process to be followed for resolving staff grievances so that work-related concerns and problems are managed fairly, sensitively and expeditiously.

Scope

(4) This policy applies to grievances arising from any type of work-related issue including, but not limited to, harassment, bullying and discrimination. It is also the policy to be used by students in the event of a grievance directed against a University staff member relating to harassment, bullying or discrimination.

(5) This Policy does not limit the right of any staff member to seek other forms of assistance for the resolution of the grievance. Should the grievance be formally referred to an external agency, the internal processes of the University may be suspended pending the outcome of the external review.

(6) The requirements of this Policy will not apply where there are other specific policies or procedures in place for dealing with the matter - e.g. appeal against unsatisfactory performance, misconduct, protected disclosures.

Part C - Content and Implementation

(7) As a general principle, any decision or action taken by an officer of the University that generates a grievance should be raised initially by the complainant(s) holding the grievance with the officer who made the decision, and, on those occasions when the grievance still remains unresolved, to subsequently raise the concern with the officer's supervisor.

(8) An effective grievance resolution process that facilitates early intervention as grievances arise is an important element in developing a productive and harmonious work environment. Grievances that are not addressed have the potential to grow into major problems that may cause tension, low morale and reduced productivity. Unresolved or poorly handled grievances may also lead to litigation.

(9) Grievance resolution is an integral part of managers and supervisors day-to-day responsibilities. Wherever possible, grievances should be resolved through an informal process of discussion and cooperation within the Work Unit in a way that minimises the potential for detriment to on-going work relationships.

Part D - Principles of Grievance Handling

(10) Grievances should be treated seriously, expeditiously, sensitively and as close as possible to their source having due regard to procedural fairness, confidentiality and potential for victimisation.

(11) Concerns should be raised as early as possible after the incident relating to the complaint has occurred.

(12) Complainants should not instigate grievances that are frivolous or malicious.

(13) The University aims to protect staff from any victimisation or repercussions for reporting issues in good faith.

(14) All parties are required to participate in the grievance resolution process in good faith.

(15) Grievances and information arising from the handling of any grievance must be treated confidentially.

(16) The principles of natural justice will be observed throughout. This means that before a decision is taken about them, staff members have the right to be informed about the nature and content of the grievance, have the right to be heard and have the right to have an unbiased decision maker.

Part E - Responsibilities for Grievance Handling

(17) The Vice Chancellor: Responsible for making the final decision in a grievance resolution process.

(18) The Supervisor: Grievance resolution is an integral part of their duties for line managers and supervisors. Their responsibilities include:

- a. identifying, preventing, responding to and redressing problems in the workplace;
- b. ensuring staff understand the process for grievance resolution;
- c. providing timely and confidential information to staff, including:
 - i. available options; and
 - ii. trying to resolve the issue at the local level through an informal procedure;
- d. advice on further action if a local resolution is not achieved;
- e. follow-up and monitoring when issues have been resolved; and
- f. ensuring the parties are not victimised.

(19) HR Services:

- a. responsibility for consulting on the management of the process where it is escalated beyond Step 1 of the procedure;
- b. co-ordinating the process, ensuring that all parties are informed of the process and that the process is completed within allocated time frames; and
- c. providing an annual report of grievances dealt with by HR Services to the Executive Director, Corporate Services.

(20) The Complainant is required to participate in the process in good faith and take prompt action in notifying a grievance.

(21) The Respondent is required to participate in the process in good faith.

(22) The Manager, Workplace Health and Safety is responsible for investigating grievances that relate to occupational health and safety matters.

(23) Head, Equity and Diversity is responsible for investigating grievances related to unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment in accordance with these procedures.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	13th August 2012
Review Date	13th April 2015
Approval Authority	Vice Chancellor
Approval Date	10th August 2012
Expiry Date	24th September 2012
Head of Work Unit	Kath Drew Director, Human Resources
Enquiries Contact	Kath Drew Director, Human Resources