



Grievance Policy & Procedure



STUDENTS' GUILD

Grievance Policy & Procedure

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1 Raising an Issue

Type of Concern	Relevant policy / procedure
Situations involving working relationships between Officers / Members / Staff	Student-Staff Protocol
Concerns about possible wrongdoing or malpractice within the organisation (e.g. illegal activity or a risk to health and safety)	'Speak Up' (Whistleblowing) Policy
Member complaint about the Guild and/or a member of staff	Complaints Procedure
Employee wishing to raise a concern regarding their employment, work, work environment, working relationships or unacceptable behaviour by colleagues.	Grievance Procedure

2 Purpose

- 2.1 This policy outlines the University of Exeter Students' Guild (the Guild)'s approach to ensuring that a fair and consistent grievance process is in place for all employees to resolve issues as quickly as possible within a compliant framework. It covers situations where employees have problems relating to their work, or where they feel that they have been treated unfairly at work and wish to raise a grievance. It describes the steps that should be taken in these circumstances.

3 Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all employees regardless of length of service. It does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors.
- 3.2 The policy does not form part of the contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

4 Principles

- 4.1 The Guild is committed to being supportive, helpful and inclusive in the way it operates. It is expected that any day-to-day problems, concerns, complaints or difficulties will be resolved in an open and informal way between an individual and their line manager.
- 4.2 At all stages of the formal grievance procedure, an individual will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague.
- 4.3 No employee will be disadvantaged in any way by raising a grievance.

5 Dignity at the Guild

- 5.1 The Guild aims to maintain a safe, welcoming, inclusive and diverse workforce which nurtures a culture of mutual respect, allowing all employees to thrive without fear of harassment, bullying, racial discrimination, sexual violence, abuse, coercive behaviour, sexual harassment or related misconduct
- 5.2 Examples of unacceptable behaviour including discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation are outlined in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.
- 5.3 Employees that believe they have been a victim of unacceptable behaviour should follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

6 What is a Grievance?

- 6.1 A Grievance at work is a concern, problem or complaint relating to:
 - Your work;
 - Your working environment, or;
 - Your working relationships.
- 6.2 Concerns about possible wrongdoing or malpractice within the organisation (e.g. illegal activity or a danger to health and safety) should be raised using the procedures outlined in the Whistleblowing policy.

7 Informal Resolution

- 7.1 Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion with your line manager. If the issue relates to your line manager, or you feel unable to talk to your line manager, you should speak to another manager or member of the Senior Management Team.
- 7.2 Your manager, or the manager you choose to speak with, should discuss the issue with you and make a confidential note about the discussion.
- 7.3 The manager should then try to agree with you a process for resolving the matter informally, which may include mediation.
- 7.4 If the grievance is about another employee, after discussing the issue with you, the manager will usually speak privately to the other individual to clarify the situation and encourage a resolution, where appropriate. This conversation should remain non-judgmental and the employee should be made aware that the discussion is not a disciplinary hearing.
- 7.5 If you and the manager are unable to resolve the matter informally, then you may follow the formal grievance procedure.
- 7.6 An informal resolution may not be possible in all circumstances and you may start the formal grievance procedure without engaging in an informal resolution first, however if this happens, the manager you speak with should explore why you do not wish to attempt to resolve the issue formally first.

8 Mediation

- 8.1 It may be appropriate for us to try and help you to resolve your grievance using mediation, depending on the circumstances. This involves the appointment of a third-party mediator (either somebody external, a manager or member of the HR Department), who will discuss the issues raised by your grievance with all of those involved and seek to facilitate a resolution. Mediation will be used only where all parties involved in the grievance agree with this approach.

9 Formal Grievance Procedure

- 9.1 You should submit a grievance in writing to the Chief Executive. If the matter involves the Chief Executive, you should submit your grievance to the Chair of the Board.
- 9.2 The Chief Executive / Chair of the Board will consider the nature of the complaint and decide who should conduct the grievance hearing.
- 9.3 Depending upon the seriousness of the complaint and the seniority of the staff involved, it may be necessary for a panel to be formed to conduct the hearing. The decision of whether to form a panel will be decided before a formal hearing is scheduled.
- 9.4 A panel will normally consist of a minimum of two members unless otherwise agreed. All members of the panel will be managers and/or members of the Trustee Board that have received the appropriate guidance and training and will not be otherwise involved in the grievance, e.g. as a witness.
- 9.5 In cases involving Sabbatical Officers, the matter will be referred to the Vice-Chair of the Board to ensure the correct procedures are applied.
- 9.6 Implicated employees (those whom the grievance is against) should be made aware of the allegation(s) raised against them.
- 9.7 You'll be invited, in writing, to attend a meeting to:
- Discuss the grievance in more detail;
 - Understand what you want to achieve from the grievance process, and;
 - Understand how you would like your grievance to be resolved.
- 9.8 The meeting should take place as soon as possible and without unreasonable delay, usually within 5 working days of receiving your grievance.
- 9.9 A notetaker should also be at the meeting and should accurately record what was said and by whom.
- 9.10 Before the meeting finishes, you should be told:
- About any further investigation required, and;
 - When you should expect to hear the outcome of your grievance.
- 9.11 The manager will then carry out a full investigation, and will inform you of the grievance outcome in writing within 10 working days, where possible. If this is not possible, the manager should explain that they will keep you up-to-date at agreed intervals. When you receive the outcome, it should inform you of your right to appeal the decision if you wish to.

10 Appeals

10.1 You have the right to appeal against the outcome of your grievance if you feel that:

- the outcome is unreasonable given all the circumstances and evidence considered;
- the correct procedure was not followed during the formal stage and this has had a significant effect on the outcome; or,
- you have new evidence to show which you were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process, and which would have had a significant effect on the outcome of the formal stage.

10.2 If you wish to appeal, you should outline the grounds for your appeal in writing to the Chief Executive (or Chair of the Board, if your complaint involves the Chief Executive) within 14 working days of receiving the written outcome of your grievance.

10.3 You will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss your appeal which will take place, wherever possible, within 5 working days of us receiving your appeal.

10.4 Appeals against the outcome of grievances heard at the formal stage of the grievance procedure will be heard by an appropriate manager or trustee who has not previously been involved in the case. The decision of the appeal manager will be final and there will be no further right of appeal.

10.5 The appeal manager will consider your grounds for appeal. They will decide:

- If the process followed at the grievance stage was fair and thorough;
- If the decision reached was fair, and whether there are any grounds to uphold your appeal.

10.6 Before the meeting finishes you should be told:

- About any further investigation that is required, and;
- When you should expect to hear the outcome of your appeal.

10.7 Following the meeting, the appeal manager will consider the facts and investigate further where appropriate.

10.8 Once the appeal manager has investigated the appeal, they will inform you of the outcome of your appeal in writing, usually within 5 working days and without unreasonable delay.

11 Right to be accompanied

11.1 You may bring a companion to any grievance or appeal meeting as part of this procedure. The companion may be either a colleague or trade union representative. You must inform the person holding the grievance meeting of your chosen companion in good time before the meeting.

12 Non-Attendance to meetings

12.1 If you or your companion are unable to attend a meeting and request for it to be postponed, we will do our best to accommodate this. If you still do not attend the meeting after we have made reasonable efforts to rearrange it, you will receive a written response to your grievance, including details of your right to appeal. The procedure will continue to be followed without the meeting, wherever possible. If a valid investigation cannot take place without a meeting, we will inform you in writing.

13 Confidentiality

- 13.1 At all times during investigations, confidentiality and discretion must be maintained by all those involved, regardless of the nature of the incident.
- 13.2 The employee who raised the grievance should be told if anyone else will be informed about the grievance outcome and the type of information they will be given.
- 13.3 In all cases, advice should be taken from a Senior Manager and/or the Chief Executive, on how actions should be communicated, if at all.

14 Malicious Grievances

- 14.1 Where an employee raises a grievance and there is reason to believe that this was done maliciously, this may be considered to be a disciplinary matter and investigated in line with the Disciplinary Procedure.

15 Grievances raised by ex-employees

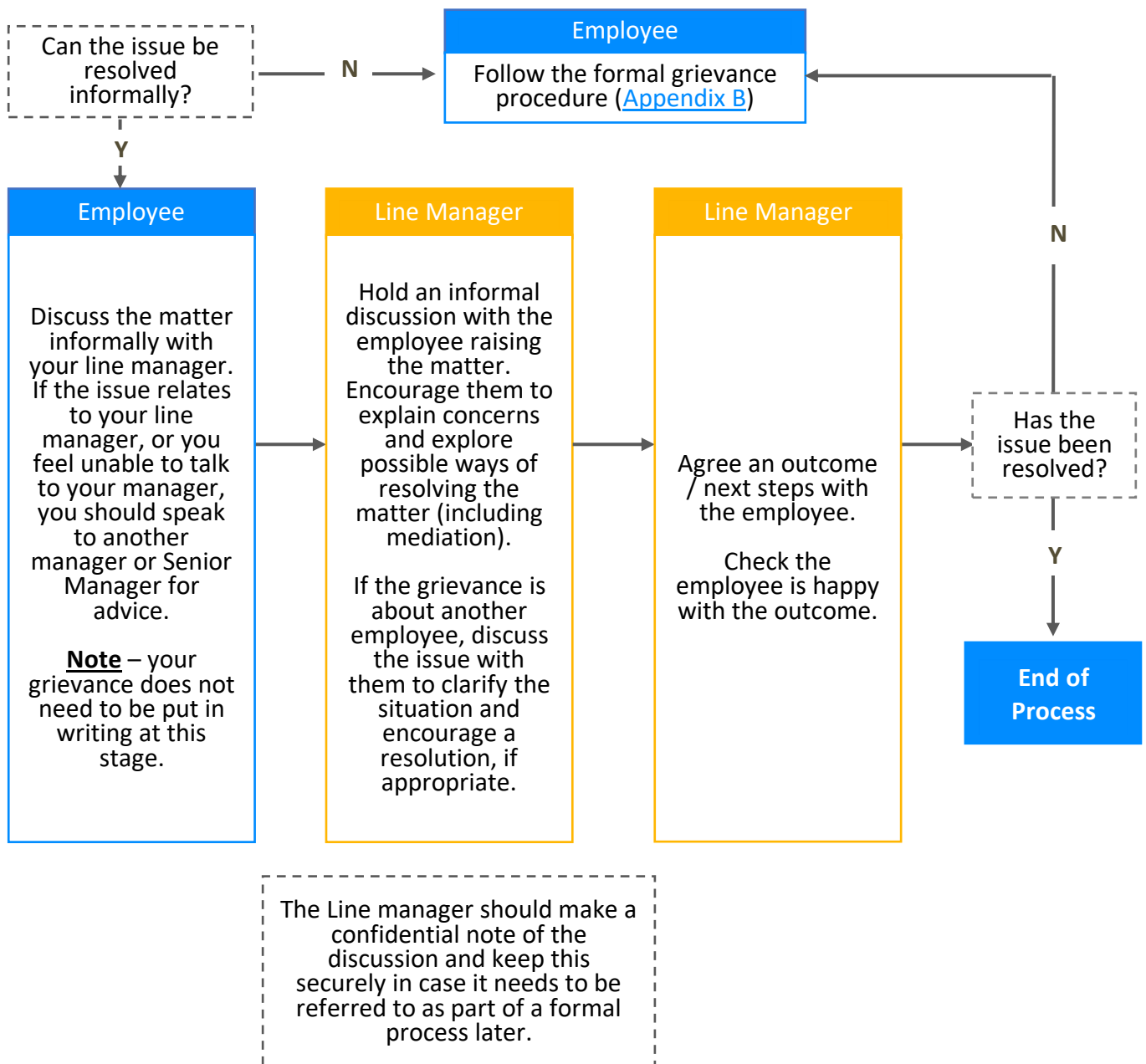
- 15.1 If an employee raises a grievance within 6 months of having left the organisation, an investigation will normally be considered in line with the steps outlined in this policy.
- 15.2 If a grievance is raised more than 6 months after the employee left, it may still be appropriate for us to investigate the grievance if it relates to a current employee, or if it could have a detrimental effect on the Guild and/or our employees in the future.
- 15.3 In both instances, the Chief Executive will review the issues raised and decide whether a full investigation is necessary.

16 Relevant legislation / guidance

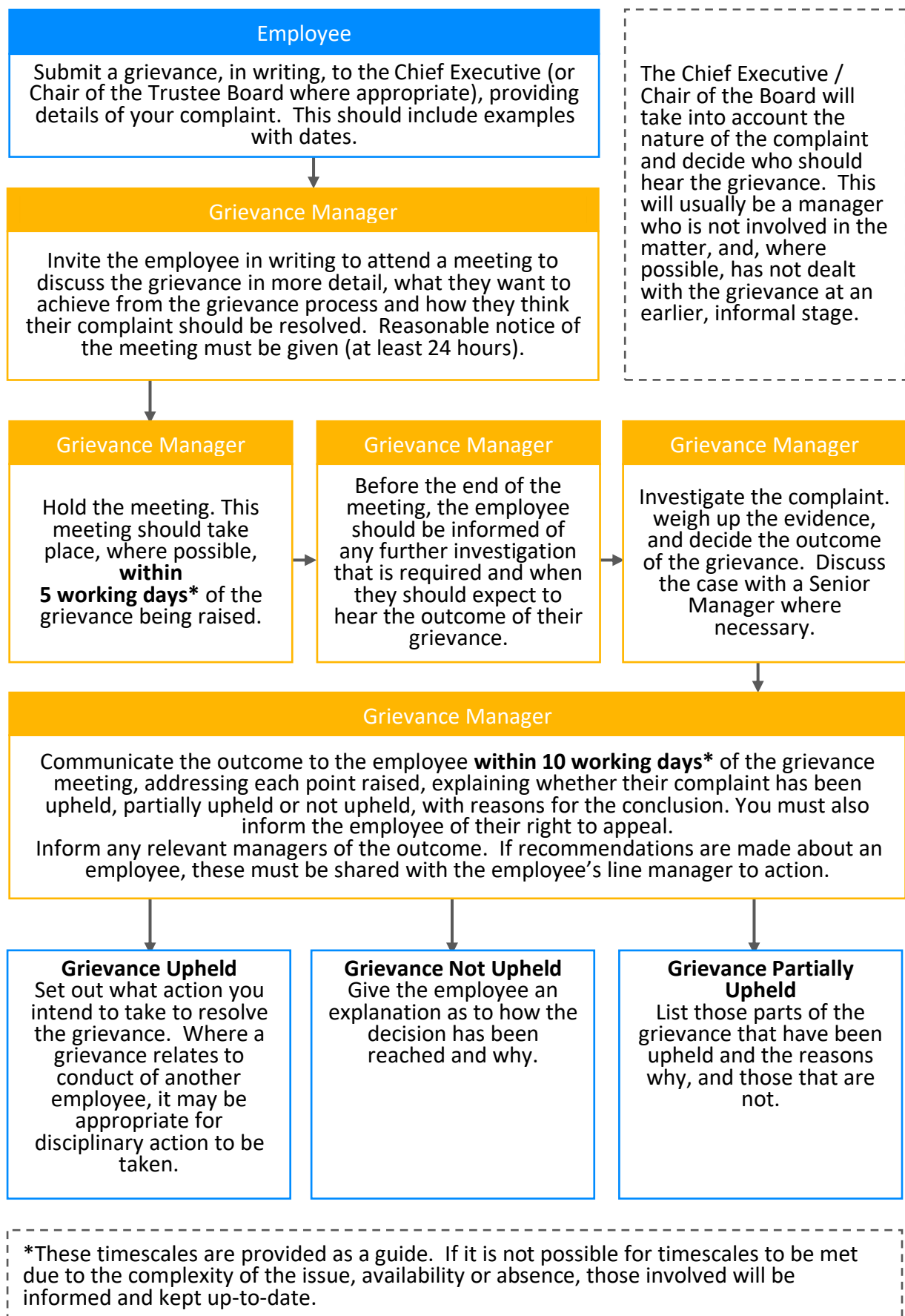
[ACAS Code of Practice – Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures](#)

Appendix A: Informal Resolution

You can choose to start the formal grievance process without first attempting an informal resolution, if you wish. If this is the case, your manager will try and explore the reason why you do not wish to attempt informal resolution first, before raising the matter formally (where appropriate).



Appendix B: Formal Grievance Procedure



Appendix C: Appeal Procedure

