



UNIVERSITY OF
LINCOLN

Grievance (Bullying and Harassment) Policy and Procedure

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1. Purpose

This policy is designed to ensure employees have access to a clear and systematic procedure by which they may raise concerns, problems or complaints relating to their own employment. The aim is to ensure prompt, consistent and fair treatment for all employees and to help both the employee and the University to be clear about their expectations of the process.

At the same time, the University and the recognised Trade Unions agree that this policy should not be used as a substitute for promoting and maintaining good informal relationships throughout the University.

2. Scope

This policy applies equally to all employees, of all levels of seniority, without exception. It does not apply to collective disputes. It provides detailed guidance about University and employee responsibilities and is designed to deal with any grievances connected with employment issues and / or bullying and harassment complaints.

3. Principles

3.1 The University aims to create and maintain a working environment where employees feel able to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity and reduce the need for employees to initiate formal procedures. Wherever possible, problems should be resolved informally. Where it is not possible for a problem to be resolved informally, or the nature of the grievance warrants it, the formal procedure detailed below will be followed.

3.2 Any employee who has a grievance relating to employment has a right to express it, receive a response and be certain that they will not be victimised for using the Grievance procedure.

3.3 The University will not victimise or permit the victimisation of any employee who represents or accompanies a colleague who has invoked the Grievance procedure or acts as a witness for a colleague.

3.4 The policy and procedure are in line with ACAS requirements on bullying and harassment at work.

4. Responsibilities under this Policy

Employee Responsibilities

The University expects all employees to take responsibility for conducting themselves in a professional, consistent and respectful manner. Employees should raise and deal with issues promptly. An employee can raise a grievance about an

employment issue affecting the employee or about the conduct of another employee towards them. The employee raising a grievance will be referred to as the complainant for the purpose of this policy. If the grievance is about another employee, that employee will be referred to as the subject of the grievance for the purpose of this policy.

Management Responsibilities

All Managers are responsible for addressing grievance issues, including those related to bullying and harassment without undue delay and for taking appropriate action. Employee grievances should, wherever possible be resolved by Line Managers informally; the formal process should only be instigated when informal resolution has been unsuccessful. All Managers should seek and receive appropriate training and professional support.

Responsibilities of the Human Resources Department (HR)

HR is responsible for providing advice and guidance to Managers and has a specific role in providing professional support during the formal stages of the Grievance procedure. HR will also be responsible for monitoring and reporting to the Executive Board the number of formal cases per year.

Responsibilities of the Investigation Officer (IO)

An independent IO (a University Manager) is appointed by the complainant's Line Manager and HR (or the next tier Line Manager, if the Line Manager is the subject of the grievance). It is the IO's role to determine the outcome of the grievance. The IO will consider the initial information about the grievance submitted by the complainant. The IO will consider the level and scope of their investigative actions, dependent on the nature, seriousness and sensitivities of the grievance, to ensure that they are able to respond to the grievance in a fair, proportionate and efficient manner.

In some instances, where the initial information submitted by the complainant is unclear, the IO may need to talk directly with the complainant to gain clarity; this is in order to ensure that the IO is able to respond to the grievance effectively and in a fair, proportionate and efficient manner. It is important that the grievance is dealt with timeously; therefore the IO must complete the investigation report within the timescale agreed with the Line Manager and HR.

Responsibilities of the Witness

Reasonable requests made by an IO of an employee to attend a fact finding meeting and / or provide a statement (See Appendix 5) to assist the investigation of a case, should be met, unless there are reasonable grounds for not meeting with such a request. These reasons must be given to the IO without undue delay. Witness evidence must be provided in good faith. If such evidence is found to be malicious

or vexatious, it may be necessary to take disciplinary action. Anonymous statements will not be accepted for the purpose of this policy.

Responsibilities of the Trade Union Representative

The Trade Union (TU) Representative's role in the process is to support their member (See Appendix 6). On occasions the TU Representative may intervene in order to seek clarification, advise the member about particular questions, or request an adjournment. The TU Representative may submit questions to be put to witnesses.

5. Interaction with the Disciplinary Policy

If a case against the employee who is the subject of the grievance has been upheld, it may be necessary to take disciplinary action under the University's Disciplinary Policy.

Where, after investigation by an IO, a grievance is found to be malicious or vexatious (i.e. a complaint with no basis or deliberately exaggerated and made with the intention of causing harm, annoyance or disruption) then disciplinary action may be taken against a complainant. This does not include ill-founded allegations which were nonetheless made in good faith.

6. Bullying and Harassment Grievances

The University has a duty of care to safeguard the health and wellbeing of its employees, and aims to support a working and learning environment and culture free from all forms of discrimination, bullying, harassment and intimidation. For the purposes of this policy, acts of this nature will be referred to as unacceptable behaviours. Allegations about unacceptable behaviours will be taken seriously and treated confidentially wherever possible. Unacceptable behaviours may lead to disciplinary action and, in serious cases, may lead to summary dismissal.

In certain circumstances, depending on the nature of the complaint, the Line Manager, in consultation with HR, may need to consider a precautionary separation of the complainant and the alleged bully / harasser, or suspension with pay of the alleged bully / harasser. In cases where the alleged bully / harasser has a different Line Manager to the complainant, they will also be involved in the decision. There is no implication of guilt or wrongdoing in any suspension from work.

In certain circumstances, where the alleged bully / harasser is in receipt of external funding, the University *may* need to notify any external funder of a research project of the ongoing investigation or disciplinary action, in line with their terms and conditions. Any such disclosures will also be in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy and Employee Privacy Notice.

6.1 Responsibilities for Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment

Employee Responsibilities

All employees of the University are personally responsible for their behaviour towards others, at work and at work-related events / activities, whether or not these take place on University premises or in work time. They are expected, through their behaviour, to demonstrate active commitment to this policy and its aims and to take appropriate action should unacceptable behaviour arise.

Management Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for:

- Setting acceptable standards of behaviour
- Communicating these requirements to any employee for whom they have responsibility
- Maintaining an environment which is free from unacceptable behaviours
- Ensuring that any allegation of unacceptable behaviour is dealt with promptly, consistently and transparently
- Ensuring that all parties are dealt with fairly and receive the appropriate support

University of Lincoln Concern Line

The University of Lincoln's Concern Line can be accessed by staff to anonymously report incidences of discrimination, harassment or any inappropriate behaviour, as well as discuss the incident and receive tailored support.

The Concern Line can be accessed by phoning 0333 2128056 and is available 365 days of the year. Staff can choose to log a report anonymously or can disclose their name and gain advice from trained counsellors. Witnesses to instances of harassment, discrimination, or violence can also use the service to make a report or seek advice and support.

Responsibility for Visitors

When visitors are officially invited to the University, it is the responsibility of their host to ensure that they do not suffer any form of unacceptable behaviour wherever possible, whilst at the University and to make visitors aware that they are not to engage in any form of unacceptable behaviour towards University employees.

6.2 Definition of Unacceptable Behaviours

Bullying

There are many definitions of bullying and harassment. ACAS characterises Bullying as:

Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

Bullying is a psychological form of persecution and may occur persistently, often without witnesses, over a period of time or may be confined to a single incident. Whilst many cases of bullying occur with the intention of undermining, humiliating, degrading or injuring the recipient, it is also possible for an individual to create these effects on another person or group unintentionally. This may need to be taken into account in an investigation and the consideration of sanctions.

Unlawful Harassment

Bullying takes on a discriminatory aspect and becomes unlawful harassment when the behaviour is directed at a person or group because of the protected characteristics of age, gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, religion or beliefs, or sexual orientation, and the behaviour is unwanted by the recipient(s). In these circumstances the recipient(s) of such behaviour is protected under anti-discrimination legislation (The Equality Act 2010).

Harassment as defined in the Equality Act 2010 is

Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Such harassment can involve:

- Unwanted conduct affecting the recipient's dignity
- Unwanted conduct related to age, gender, race, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment; or
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment

Conduct which constitutes harassment may be persistent or may arise from a single incident. A key test of whether behaviour constitutes harassment is whether it is viewed as demeaning and unacceptable by the person to whom it is directed and whether a reasonable person would think the conduct amounted to harassment. It is not necessary to prove that there was an intention to harass. (ref: The Equality Act 2010)

Examples of unacceptable behaviours are listed in Appendix 2. This list is not exhaustive.

Criminal Offences

Criminal offences may involve a report to the police. However, a formal complaint should be lodged in order that an investigation may be undertaken by the University. Where there is an allegation of a serious criminal offence, the employee involved will normally be suspended on pay.

Bullying and / or harassment complaints will be dealt with under the procedure outlined below. (ref: ACAS guidelines Nov 2009).

Gender Based Violence (GBV)

Please refer to the policy on Gender Based Violence for specific definition and guidance.

University Staff / Students Relationships Policy

Please refer to the policy on Staff / Student Personal Relationships for specific definition and guidance.

7. Informal Resolution

An employee's grievance should, wherever possible, be resolved by the Line Manager informally. If an employee does not have one person who supervises their work or if the grievance concerns their Line Manager, they should contact HR or a trade union representative who will advise on the most appropriate person to contact for support.

If the grievance is against another employee, the Line Manager should generally start by talking privately to them about the concerns of the complainant, and discuss ways in which the matter can be resolved. The Line Manager should also discuss how the complainant can obtain further support if required

It is advisable that all concerned parties to the grievance should keep a short confidential note recording the details of any approach or discussion. Such records may help if the problem recurs, and the complainant chooses to make a formal complaint at a later stage. The formal process should only be instigated where the informal approach has been unsuccessful.

8. Submitting a Formal Grievance

If the employee feels that informal discussion has not resolved the matter, they should complete and submit the Grievance Form at Appendix 3 to both the Line Manager and HR. Where the immediate Line Manager is the subject of the grievance, the complainant should submit it to the next tier of Management as explained at Appendix 3.

This form will help the complainant set out clearly the grievance issue, so that the case can be responded to effectively. A key focus of this grievance policy is resolution; therefore it is important that the complainant states how they would like the grievance resolved.

9. The Formal Grievance

9.1 Invitation to the Fact Finding Meeting(s)

9.1.1 Once the grievance form (Appendix 3) has been received by HR, an independent Investigation Officer (IO), will be appointed by HR and the Line Manager (or the next tier Line Manager, if the Line Manager is the subject of the grievance) of the complainant, to lead the next stage of the process.

9.1.2 HR reserves the right to intervene in the process, to appoint an external investigator in cases where it deems this is necessary. This will only be done in exceptional circumstance, and consult directly with the Senior Management Team regarding the role of the Line Manager in the process.

9.1.3 The IO's preparatory work will be to consider the details provided on the grievance form (Appendix 3) by the complainant, and as detailed in section 4 above, this may necessitate further conversation with the complainant. Dependent on the nature of the grievance i.e. the seriousness and sensitivities of the grievance, the IO will decide the scope of their investigation, where relevant witnesses need to be interviewed and / or statements requested, and advise HR accordingly.

9.1.4 Letters along with a copy of this policy will then be sent by HR on behalf of the IO to:

- a) The complainant – see 9.1.5 below
- b) The employee who is the subject of the complaint - see 9.1.6 below
- c) The Line Manager of the complainant where the grievance is not against another employee– see 9.1.7 below
- d) Where applicable, any witnesses deemed relevant by the IO to be interviewed (or alternatively requesting a statement from the witness) – see 9.1.8 below

9.1.5 The letter to the complainant may inform them of the need to hold a Fact Finding Meeting. A copy will also be sent to the complainant's Line Manager. The letter will include:

- The date, time, location and purpose of the meeting
- The right to be accompanied by a companion and the need to notify HR of the name of the companion in advance of the meeting (See Appendix 6)
- The name of the IO and HR representative present at the meeting, and their roles

- The name(s) of the employee(s) who is / are the subject of the grievance
- Or the employment issue that is the subject of the grievance
- Confirmation that the employee who is the subject of the grievance will be sent copies of the grievance form and potentially other information received by the IO

9.1.6 The letter to the employee who is subject of the grievance (if the grievance is about another employee) may inform them of the need to hold a Fact Finding Meeting. A copy will also be sent to their Line Manager. The letter will include:

- The date, time, location and purpose of the meeting
- The right to be accompanied by a companion and the need to notify HR of the name of the companion in advance of the meeting (See Appendix 6)
- The name of the IO and HR representative present at the meeting, and their roles
- The name of the complainant who has raised the grievance and an outline of the grievance
- The right to provide their own material evidence or named witnesses to the IO to support the investigation
- Confirmation that the complainant may be sent copies of witness statements and other information received by the IO

9.1.7 If an employment issue is the cause of the grievance, and does not involve a complaint against another employee, the letter will be sent to the Line Manager of the complainant informing them of the need to hold a Fact Finding Meeting. The letter will include:

- The date, time, location and purpose of the meeting
- The right to be accompanied by a companion and the need to notify HR of the name of the companion in advance of the meeting (See Appendix 6)
- The name of the IO and HR representative present at the meeting, and their roles
- The name of the complainant who has raised the grievance and the issue relating to the grievance

9.1.8 The letter to a relevant named witness, where applicable, will inform them of the need to hold a Fact Finding Meeting. The letter will include:

- The date, time, location and purpose of the meeting i.e. Fact Finding
- A request, where applicable, to complete the Witness Statement Form (see Appendix 5)
- The right to be accompanied by a companion and the need to notify HR of the name of the companion in advance of the meeting (See Appendix 6)
- The name of the IO and HR representative present at the meeting, and their roles

- The name of the complainant who has raised the grievance and the issue relating to the grievance
- Confirmation that the employee who is the subject of the grievance as well as the complainant may be sent copies of witness statement forms received by the IO

9.2 The Fact Finding Meeting

Purpose: For the IO to listen to the complainant's concerns, consider the facts of the case, whether the grievance is valid and what action may be taken to resolve the issue/s

9.2.1 Any meeting with the complainant will be held by the IO without undue delay. HR will be present in an advisory capacity.

9.2.2 At any Fact Finding Meeting, the complainant and the person against whom the grievance has been raised (if the grievance is against another employee) will be given the opportunity to present their case separately, in a calm, fair and objective manner and state how they would like it resolved.

9.2.3 The subject of the grievance will be given the opportunity to present their questions relating to any witness statements, and all reasonable effort will be made by the IO to obtain responses before the conclusion of the investigation.

9.2.4 The IO, advised by HR will consider the facts of the case, decide if the grievance is well-founded and what actions should be taken. The factors to be taken into consideration when making such a decision are:

- What, if anything, actually occurred?
- The gravity of the case
- Any precedents
- Any mitigating circumstances
- What resolution or remedies are being sought and whether this is possible

9.2.5 The IO may wish to, at any point during this fact finding process, reconvene any meeting if new facts have arisen and further time or information is required to consider the grievance. This will be done without undue delay and for good cause.

9.3 After the Fact Finding Meeting

9.3.1 After the fact finding meeting, the IO will, without undue delay, write a report on the outcome of the findings, including any recommended actions, and send it to the Line Manager(s) of the complainant and the subject of the grievance and HR.

9.3.2 The complainant and the subject of the grievance will be notified of the outcome, in writing by HR. The letter will also inform the complainant of the right to appeal.

9.3.3 The Line Manager(s) and HR will meet with the complainant or both parties (where the grievance is against another employee) separately to discuss the outcome and actions. It is the Line Manager's responsibility to ensure that any actions agreed are followed through and reviewed at a later date.

9.3.4 HR will keep a record of the meeting, the decision reached and any action taken.

9.4 The Appeal Process

9.4.1 An appeal, which is the final stage of this process, can be submitted in writing using the Form at Appendix 4 to HR. This must be done within 10 working days from receipt of the decision by the complainant as detailed at 9.3.2 above.

8.4.2 An appeal will be heard without undue delay by a Manager who has not been previously involved in the matter.

8.4.3 The purpose of the appeal meeting is not to rehear the case but to ensure that the original decision was reached in a procedurally correct way, the action taken was reasonable, and to consider the proportionality of any penalty to the offence.

8.4.4 HR will write to all concerned notifying them of the time and date of the hearing. The Appeal Process will be the same as that detailed in the Disciplinary procedure.

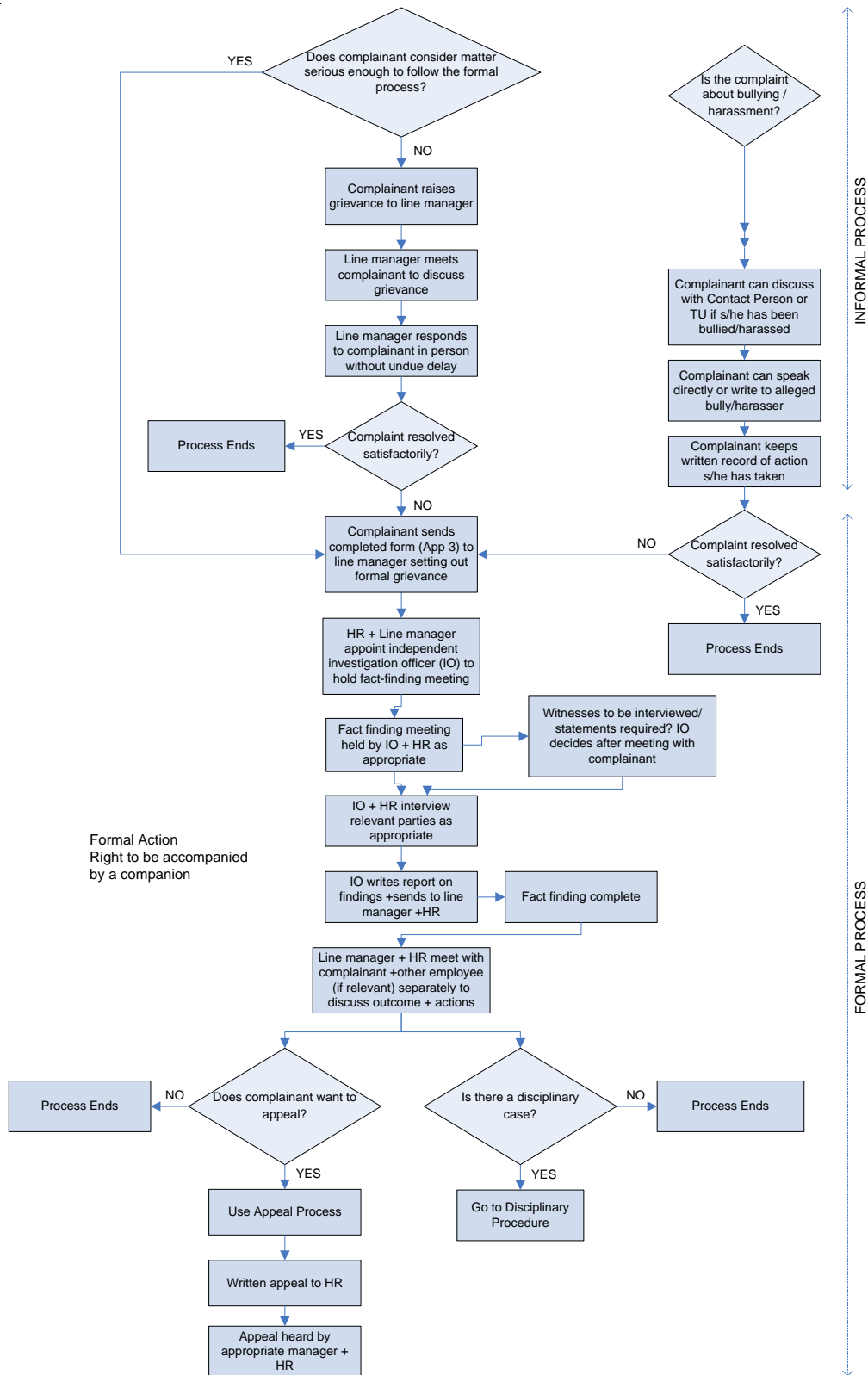
8.4.5 The outcome of the appeal will be communicated in writing by HR, without undue delay to the employee and their Line Manager.

8.4.6 There are no further stages to the Grievance procedure.

10. Appendix 1

Best practice – try to resolve informally in all cases except where formal policy has been invoked.

Grievance Procedure



11. Appendix 2

Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour

One *minor* incident may be viewed as bullying or harassment by the victim. If the employee concerned did not intend to harass or bully, and was unaware that they were causing offence they need to be made aware that their actions and / or behaviour is unacceptable. Where someone has expressed a dislike of such actions or behaviour and has asked for it to stop, further proven incidents of this nature will be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

Where an employee knew or should know of the implications of their actions and / or behaviour then one proven minor incident would be sufficient for the University's disciplinary procedure to be invoked.

Threatened or actual violence, threats of dismissal or promises of special treatment in return for sexual favours, are further examples of where one proven incident would be sufficient for the University's disciplinary procedure to be invoked.

The following list provides a range of examples of unacceptable behaviour but is not exhaustive.

- Discriminating against or harassing someone for a reason relating for example to race, gender, disability, age, religion / belief or sexual orientation
- Discriminating against or harassing someone on the grounds of trade union activity
- Unlawful violence such as physical blows
- Unnecessary and unwanted physical contact ranging from touching to serious assault
- Indecent or sexual assault
- Intrusion by pestering, spying, following, stalking, staring or leering
- Unwelcome advances, attention, invitations or propositions; sexual innuendo
- Coercion, including promises of rewards in exchange for sexual or other favours
- Public humiliation, derogatory or belittling remarks concerning job performance or personal attributes, shouting and / or sarcasm, personal insults or name-calling
- Constant unfounded criticism of the performance of work tasks
- Unwelcome or lewd references to a person's physical features, figure or dress
- Unwelcome discussion of the effects of a disability on an individual's personal life
- Verbal and written harassment (e.g. offensive letters, text messages, telephone or e-mail) through jokes, racist remarks, taunts, offensive language, gossip and slander, threats; derogatory name calling or ridicule for physical or

cultural difference, physical impairment, or religious belief; electronic transmission of pornographic, racist, degrading, offensive or indecent material

- Suggestive and unwelcome comments or attitudes, insulting behaviour or obscene or offensive gestures
- Removing areas of responsibility without good operational reason, punishing with trivial tasks, setting an individual up for failure with impossible workloads and deadlines
- Persistently ignoring or patronising a person, isolation or non-co-operation at work, exclusion from social activities
- Deliberate inappropriate action directed against an individual or group, e.g. exclusion or isolation of an individual(s)

12. Appendix 3

University of Lincoln Grievance Form

To be completed by the employee and copies sent to Line Manager and Human Resources.* Please read this Grievance Policy and Procedure and detailed Grievance Policy - Guidelines available on the HR portal under A-Z listing before completing this form. You can also use this form to raise a grievance about bullying or harassment.

Employee's Name:	College / Directorate:
Please indicate whether your grievance is related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An issue concerning your employment Yes / No• Bullying or harassment Yes / No	
Section 1 – Description of Grievance: Please answer the questions as outlined below as this will help us to deal with your grievance more effectively: A description of what has actually occurred to make you raise this grievance: Please provide the date(s) when the incident(s) occurred: Please provide the time(s) on the date(s) the incident(s) occurred: Please explain what action, if any, you took in response to the incident(s): Please explain what steps, if any, you have taken to resolve the incident(s) informally: Please explain what steps, if any, have been taken by your Line Manager to resolve the incident informally: Please provide the names of any witnesses to the specific incident(s) and why you consider them to be material to your grievance:	
Witness Name	Why they are a relevant witness
1.	
2.	

Please provide a list of any materials you would like to submit as evidence in support of your grievance i.e. emails, contract clauses etc. and why you consider it relevant.

Item	Why it is relevant to the grievance
1.	
2.	

*If your Line Manager is the subject of your grievance, send it to the next tier of your line management and your HR Representative. Please keep a copy for your records.

Notes to employees

- (i) Whilst the grievance is being considered, at whatever stage, you will be required to continue working normally wherever possible. If you feel you cannot do so, please discuss this with your Line Manager or their Line Manager
- (ii) Raise questions which are only related to your employment
- (iii) Your Trade Union representative or work colleague can support you
- (iv) Disciplinary action will be taken against a complainant where, after investigation, a grievance is found to be malicious or vexatious (i.e. a complaint with no basis or deliberately exaggerated and made with the intention of causing harm, annoyance or disruption)

13. Appendix 4

University of Lincoln Appeal Form

To be completed by the employee and copies sent to Line Manager and Human Resources.* Please read this Grievance Policy and Procedure and detailed Grievance Policy - Guidelines available on the HR portal under A-Z listing before completing this form. You can also use this form to lodge an appeal about bullying or harassment.

Employee's Name:	College / Directorate:
Please indicate whether your grievance is related to:	
• An issue concerning your employment	Yes / No
• Bullying or harassment	Yes / No
**Section 2 – Grounds for Appeal: The time for lodging an appeal is 10 working days from the date of the letter of the decision about the grievance.	
An appeal can be made if you are disputing any of the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Original decision was reached in a procedurally correct way• The action taken was reasonable• The proportionality of the penalty to the offence	
On which of these three points are you appealing?	
How and why is it relevant to your appeal? Please provide a detailed explanation here on the basis of your appeal:	

*If your Line Manager is the subject of your grievance, send it to the next tier of your line management and your HR Representative. Please keep a copy for your records.

Notes to employees

- (i) Whilst the appeal is being considered, at whatever stage, you will be required to continue working normally wherever possible. If you feel you cannot do so, please discuss this with your Line Manager or their Line Manager
- (ii) Raise questions which are only related to your employment
- (iii) Your Trade Union representative or work colleague can support you
- (iv) Disciplinary action will be taken against a complainant where, after investigation, an appeal is found to be malicious or vexatious (i.e. a complaint with no basis or deliberately exaggerated and made with the intention of causing harm, annoyance or disruption)

14. Appendix 5

University of Lincoln Witness Statement Form

To be completed by the witness and sent to Human Resources. Please read this Grievance Policy and Procedure and detailed Grievance Policy - Guidelines available on the HR portal under A-Z listing before completing this form.

Witness' Name:	College / Directorate:
You have been named as a witness in a grievance case raised by: (name of complainant to be completed by HR)	
Section 1 – Description of Grievance (HR will provide an outline or details of the complaint if available): Please answer the questions as outlined below as this will help the grievance to be dealt with more effectively: A description of what you saw or heard, or how you are involved with this grievance: Please provide the date(s) when the incident(s) occurred: Please provide the time(s) on the date(s) the incident(s) occurred: Please explain what action, if any, you took in response to the incident(s): Please provide evidence, where applicable, in support of your statement:	
I provide this information in good faith, and am aware that it will be discussed to relevant people connected to this grievance. Signature: Date:	

15. Appendix 6

The role of the companion under this policy

Under the formal procedure for dealing with grievances the companion may be a Trade Union representative or work colleague. The complainant must notify HR of the name of the chosen companion in advance of the first meeting. It is not reasonable for the complainant to insist on being accompanied by a colleague whose presence would prejudice the meeting or who might have a conflict of interest.

The role of the companion is to assist and support the complainant by acting as a friend and advisor. The companion may put the complainant's case or summarise it at the end. They may also ask questions to clarify understanding of the situation, and ask to confer with the complainant outside the room with the complainant's agreement about any pertinent matters.

However, a companion cannot answer questions on behalf of the employee where questions are directed at the employee. They cannot address the hearing if the employee does not want them to, or prevent the employer from explaining their case, nor can they prevent any other person at the hearing from making a contribution.

Colleagues who do not wish to accept an invitation to act as a companion are not obliged to do so.

Companions may attend meetings during working hours without loss of pay and will be given reasonable time to familiarise themselves with the matter and confer with the employee both before and after meetings.

Employees are responsible for ensuring their companions are willing to support them and attend meetings / hearings.

Employees may not appoint a legal representative or anyone external to the University, other than a recognised TU official, to act as a companion.

Where a companion is a witness (or is otherwise involved, or is potentially involved) in the investigation, the employee should be advised of the need to select a different companion in order to avoid any suggestion of collusion or conflict of interest.

16. Appendix 7

Inability to attend a Fact Finding or Grievance Appeal Meeting

The University is committed to completing the grievance process promptly and without undue delay, so that employees are confident that issues will be dealt with in a timely manner. It expects all employees involved in the process to abide by this principle. The University therefore accepts that attendance at a fact finding or grievance appeal meeting should normally take precedence over other commitments.

An employee who cannot attend a meeting should inform their Line Manager (or relevant Manager), in advance whenever possible, and another date will be set. Pre-arranged annual leave periods will be respected in this process.

If an employee cannot attend a re-arranged grievance meeting / appeal hearing within a reasonable period of time, and with reasonable justification, the meeting will be held in their absence. Where they have chosen to be accompanied the companion will be invited to attend on their behalf and / or the employee may wish to send a written submission.

If an employee's companion cannot attend on a proposed date, the complainant can suggest another date so long as it is reasonable and is not more than 5 working days after the date originally proposed. In exceptional cases or due to the complexity of the case, this 5-day time limit may be extended by agreement with the University.

A decision may be taken in the employee's absence if they fail to attend the re-arranged meeting and causes undue delay, without reasonable justification.

Grievance (Bullying and Harassment) Policy and Procedure

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