

GRIEVANCE POLICY

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The University of Limerick is committed to the development and maintenance of a positive working environment, which encourages open communication between all management and staff. However, it is recognised that from time to time employee grievances will occur and that open discussion can facilitate an early resolution.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 To whom does the policy apply?

This Policy applies to all employees of the University of Limerick.

1.2.2 In what situations does the policy apply?

1.2.2.1 The type of issues which are appropriate for referral under this policy include:

- Allocation of work
- Assignment of duties
- Rostering arrangements
- Granting of all forms of leave, i.e. annual leave, compassionate leave, study leave
- Granting of overtime
- Access to courses
- Health and safety issues
- Acting-up/deputising arrangements
- Relationships at work
- Organisational change/working conditions/new working practices

Note: This list is not exhaustive.

1.2.2.2 Complaints alleging bullying and harassment at work will be dealt with under the *Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedures for Students and Employees*.

1.2.2.3 Complaints in respect of recruitment/promotion competitions and grading of posts will be dealt with under the appropriate University of Limerick's recruitment and promotion policies and/or procedures.

1.2.3 Who is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented and monitored?

1.2.3.1 The Human Resources Division is responsible for implementation of this Policy.

1.3 Definitions

1.3.1 A grievance may be defined as a complaint which an employee(s) has concerning their terms and conditions of employment, working environment or working relationships.

2 Policy Statements

2.1 It is the policy of the University of Limerick that employees, in the first instance, make reasonable efforts to resolve grievances informally through discussion between the employee and their immediate supervisor/line manager.

2.2 Upon receipt of a grievance, the supervisor/line manager should establish the facts. An agreed record should be made of the issues raised and discussed.

2.3 All grievances should be dealt with promptly by the employee's immediate supervisor/line manager. Where the immediate supervisor/line manager is the subject of the grievance the matter will be dealt with by the next appropriate level of management.

2.4 All efforts should be made to reach agreement in the early stages of this policy.

2.5 An employee may be accompanied at all grievance interviews by a colleague, or trade union representative.

2.6 The University will take all reasonable steps to protect the parties involved in this policy from intimidation, victimisation or discrimination resulting from raising a grievance under this policy.

2.7 All stages of the grievance policy must be exhausted before any other action is taken by an employee.

2.8 Panels convened to hear the grievance at Stage 4 should reflect an appropriate gender balance (minimum 40%).

2.9 Nothing in this policy affects employees' legal rights.

3 Procedures

3.1 Stage 1 – Informal Stage

3.1.1 Where an employee has a grievance, the matter should, in the first instance, be discussed with their immediate supervisor/line manager with a view to resolving the matter informally.

3.2 Stage 2

3.2.1 If the matter cannot be resolved informally (or, where an employee wishes to by-pass the informal stage) the employee should outline the grievance in writing to their immediate supervisor/line manager or, where the immediate supervisor/line manager is the subject of the grievance, to the next appropriate level of management indicating;

i. That they are invoking the Grievance Policy, and

ii. Details of the grievance.

3.2.2 The supervisor/line manager will acknowledge receipt of the grievance, in writing, where practicable, within five (5) working days of being notified of the grievance. Upon receipt of a grievance, the supervisor/line manager should establish the facts. The supervisor/line manager will meet with the employee concerned. The employee may be accompanied to this meeting by a colleague or trade union representative. The

supervisor/line manager will document a clear written record of the issues raised and discussed and will agree the record of the issues raised by the employee with the employee. The supervisor/line manager may also meet with any other person whom they consider relevant to the complaint or grievance and request and consider any and all documentation and information relating to the grievance.

3.2.3 The supervisor/line manager may consult a member of the Human Resources Division who may attend meeting(s) if appropriate.

3.2.4 The supervisor/line manager will notify the employee in writing of their reasoned decision not more than twenty (20) working days from the date on which the meeting to discuss the grievance took place.

3.2.5 In the event that the supervisor/line manager upholds the grievance, they will state in their written decision the action to be taken to resolve the grievance and/or if appropriate, refer to the matter to the relevant authority within the University. If the grievance is not resolved at this stage, an accurate record of the matters still in dispute should be made for the next stage.

3.3 Stage 3

3.3.1 If the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, they may, within ten (10) working days of being notified of the decision at Stage 2, raise the matter in writing with the Dean or Divisional Director, as appropriate (or next appropriate level of management if the Dean or Divisional Director is the subject of the grievance). The recipient of the written grievance will be acknowledgedin writing, where practicable, within five (5) working days of being notified of the grievance.

3.3.2 Having been notified of the grievance in writing, the Dean or Divisional Director will meet with the employee concerned. The employee may be accompanied to this meeting by a colleague or trade union representative. The Dean or Divisional Director will document a clear written record of the issues raised and discussed. The Dean or Divisional Director may also meet with any other person whom they consider relevant to the complaint or grievance and request and consider any and all documentation and information relating to the grievance.

3.3.3 The Dean or Divisional Director may consult a member of the Human Resources Division who may attend meeting(s) if appropriate.

3.3.4 The Dean/Divisional Director will notify the employee in writing of their reasoned decision not more than twenty (20) working days from the date on which the meeting to discuss the grievance took place.

3.3.5 In the event that the Dean or Divisional Director upholds the grievance, they will state in their decision the action to be taken to resolve the grievance and/or if appropriate, refer the matter to the relevant authority within the University. If the grievance is not resolved at this stage, an accurate record of the matters still in dispute should be made for the next stage.

3.4 Stage 4

3.4.1 If the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 3, they may appeal within ten (10) working days of being notified of the decision at Stage 3, by referring the matter to the Director of Human Resources who will acknowledge receipt of the grievance, where practicable, within five (5) working days of being notified of the grievance.

3.4.2 Having been notified of the grievance in writing the Director of Human Resources or a nominee, will convene a panel (to include at least one person external to the University) to meet with the employee concerned. The employee may be accompanied to this meeting by a colleague or trade union representative. The Panel may also meet with any other person whom it considers relevant to the complaint or grievance and request and consider any and all documentation and information relating to the grievance.

3.4.3 The reasoned decision of the panel will be notified to the employee in writing normally within twenty (20) working days from the date on which the meeting to discuss the grievance took place.

3.4.4 In the event that the Panel upholds the grievance, the Panel will state in its decision the action to be taken to resolve the grievance and/or, if appropriate, refer the matter to the relevant authority within the University. The decision of the panel will be final.

3.4.5 There will be no further consideration of the grievance within the University. Should the employee be dissatisfied with this final decision and wish to pursue the matter further, they may refer the issue to an appropriate external forum.

4 Document Control

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