

## Quality Assurance

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| Procedure Title:     | Lakes College - Grievance Procedure for Staff |
| Procedure Ref:       | HR/PRO/020                                    |
| Approved By:         | Karen Wilson                                  |
| Responsible Person:  | Neil Anderson (Staff)                         |
| Date last reviewed:  | 31/07/2026                                    |
| Date of next review: | 05/11/2027                                    |
| Approval date:       | 31/07/2026                                    |

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### 1. PURPOSE

The procedure aims to help to resolve individual grievances in a manner which is as fair and expeditious as possible. It is the college's policy to find a solution to individual grievances as early in the procedure as possible and to ensure consistent and fair treatment for everyone.

### 2. SCOPE

This procedure shall apply to all employees other than senior post holders as defined in the college's articles of governance.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITY

Line managers are responsible to ensure that they comply with the procedure and that staff are aware of the procedure.

The Head of HR is responsible for providing advice and guidance to managers or staff on this procedure.

It is the responsibility of the Head of HR to ensure that the procedure is kept up to date and relevant

### 4. PROCEDURE

#### 4.1 General

- 4.1.1 An employee's grievance relating to a disciplinary offence will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure (Reference - OP/4HRD/0210).
- 4.1.2 This procedure is not intended to be applied to collective disputes or to grievances relating to matters for which specific redress is otherwise available.
- 4.1.3 At every level at which the grievance is heard, the matter should be dealt with properly, professionally and with probity. The parties involved in the grievance should normally receive a written reply within 7 days, unless there are special circumstances which justify a longer period.
- 4.1.4 Consideration of the grievance by the line manager will involve undertaking an investigation as is judged appropriate in the circumstances, which should include interviewing the aggrieved party and may involve interviewing other employees, including those against whom the grievance has been raised. Such interviews may be conducted separately or together as is thought to be appropriate.
- 4.1.5 Employees who have a grievance or those against whom a grievance is raised have the right to be accompanied and represented by a fellow worker, a trade union representative or official employed by a trade union. A trade union representative who is not an employed official must have been confirmed by their union as being competent to accompany a worker. Every effort will be made to resolve the grievance at the informal stage.
- 4.1.6 If the grievance is against the immediate line manager, then the person to whom the grievance should be sent should be senior to the line manager or a manager within the college who has not been involved in the grievance previously.
- 4.1.7 The fact that the post-holder has invoked the grievance procedure will not (in the absence of exceptional circumstances) preclude the corporation from instituting, continuing with or concluding disciplinary proceedings.
- 4.1.8 An independent or third party mediator from within or external to the College may sometimes be asked to help resolve a grievance. Mediation is a voluntary process where the mediator helps two or more people in a dispute to attempt to reach an agreement. Any agreement should come from those with a dispute and not the mediator.

## 5. INFORMAL PROCEDURE

- 5.1 A flow chart for handling grievances is outlined in [Appendix 1](#).
- 5.2 If an employee has a grievance relating to his/her employment, the matter should be raised initially with their line manager. The grievance should be raised orally in the first instance. In the event that the grievance relates to the line manager who would normally deal with a grievance at this stage, the grievance should be referred to the line manager's immediate supervisor.
- 5.3 The line manager will attempt to resolve the complaint informally. He/she shall enquire into the grievance as appropriate and will discuss it with the employee.
- 5.4 Many potential grievance issues can be resolved informally. However, where an issue cannot be resolved informally, then it may be pursued formally.
- 5.5 If the matter is very serious, or in other circumstances where the employee wishes for the matter to be dealt with by way of a grievance hearing, the employee may proceed straight to the formal stage of the procedure.

## 6. FORMAL PROCEDURE

- 6.1 If it is not possible to resolve a grievance informally, or in circumstances set out in Section 5.5 above, employees should raise the matter formally and without unreasonable delay with a manager who is not the subject of the grievance. This should be done in writing, and should set out the nature of the grievance.
- 6.2 Where the grievance is against the line manager, the employee should approach the line manager's supervisor. If the line manager's supervisor has also been involved then an alternative college manager will be appointed to hear the grievance if they have not been involved previously.
- 6.3 The line manager or line manager's supervisor will within 7 days of receipt of the letter arrange a formal grievance hearing. The employee may be accompanied at the meeting by a fellow worker, a trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union. A trade union representative who is not an employed official must have been certified by their union as being competent to accompany a worker.
- 6.4 If the grievance involves another member of staff, the college may require the attendance of such a member of staff to provide relevant information.

- 6.5 The employee bringing the grievance or his/her representative will be given the opportunity to explain the nature of the grievance, submit verbal/written evidence and call appropriate witnesses.
- 6.6 The line manager or line manager's supervisor or college manager will have the right to ask questions of the parties in attendance.
- 6.7 The companion should be allowed to address the hearing to put and sum up the employee's case, respond on behalf of the employee to any views expressed at the meeting and confer with the employee during the hearing. The companion does not however, have the right to answer questions on the employee's behalf, address the hearing if the employee does not wish it or prevent the employer from explaining their case.
- 6.8 The line manager's supervisor or college manager will consider all of the matters raised at the meeting and will issue a written decision within 7 days. Copies of the decision will be sent to all of the parties, and where appropriate should set out what action the line manager intends to take to resolve the grievance. The employee should be informed that they can appeal if they are not content with the action taken.
- 6.9 If it is not possible for a decision to be reached within this period, the manager will write to the employee with an explanation for the delay and when the decision can be expected. Any other parties involved in the grievance will also be appropriately informed of the outcome.

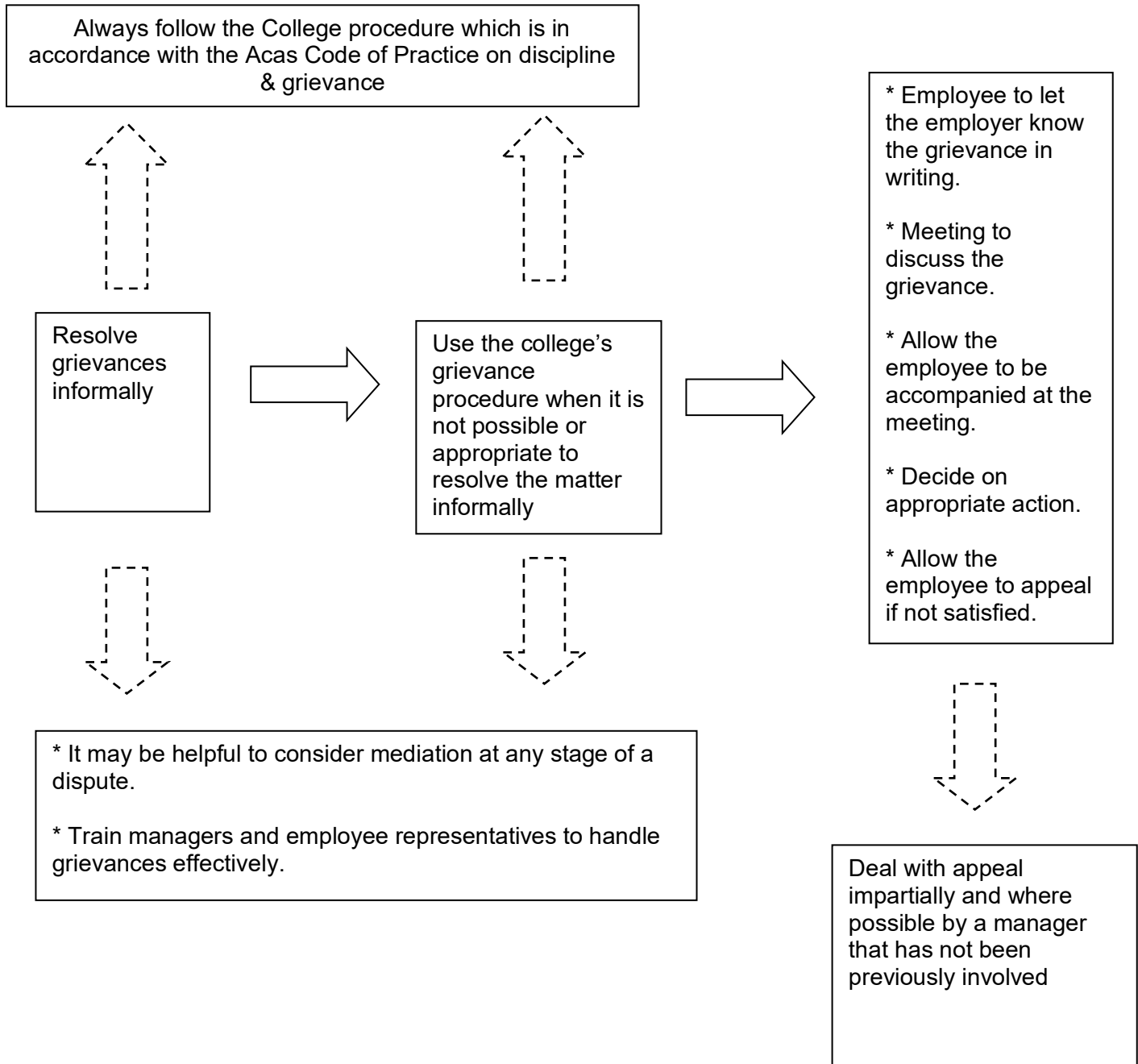
## **7. APPEAL**

- 7.1 If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the employee, an appeal may be submitted, in writing setting out the full grounds for the appeal, to the Head of HR within 7 days of receipt of the decision reached in the formal procedure.
- 7.2 The appeal meeting will be held as soon as reasonably practicable after the notice to appeal has been received. The employee will be given at least five days' notice of the meeting date to allow him or her to prepare for the meeting.
- 7.3 The appropriate member of the executive or nominated deputy who has not been involved previously will conduct an appeal hearing as soon as reasonably practicable after the notice to appeal has been received.
- 7.4 At the appeal hearing, the employee will be given an opportunity to state his or her case and will be entitled to be accompanied and represented by a fellow worker, a trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union. A trade union representative who is not an employed official must have been certified by their union as being competent to accompany a worker.

- 7.5 However, if the employee's representative is unavailable on the date of the initial appeal, the employee may delay the date of the appeal once up to 5 working days to enable the chosen representative to attend.
- 7.6 The Principal (or designated senior post holder) will consider the appeal and will be supplied with all of the documentation submitted in relation to the earlier stages of the procedure. If the grievance involves another member of staff, the Principal (or designated senior post holder) may require the attendance of such member of staff at the appeal hearing, or any other members of staff who may be able to provide relevant information.
- 7.7 The Principal's (or designated senior post holder) decision will be provided in writing within 7 days of the appeal hearing. Any other parties involved in the grievance will also be appropriately informed of the appeal decision. Such decision will be final.

## APPENDIX 1

### AN OVERVIEW TO HANDLING GRIEVANCES



## **References**

ACAS Code of Practice – March 15

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>

Disciplinary Procedure

## **12 Initial Screening for Equality Impact Assessment (including Safeguarding)**

To be completed prior to a Policy or Procedure being introduced and at each review.

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| Name of Policy/Procedure: Programme Business Case Form                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Is this a new or existing policy/procedure? <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p>1. To ensure that the policy / procedure complies with the Equality Act 2010, which of the listed categories could be impacted by the policy / procedure?</p> <p>(The categories follow the College Single Equality Policy, and the impact could be positive or negative.)</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Age         <input type="checkbox"/> Compliance with Children &amp; Families Act 2014         <input type="checkbox"/> Disability         <input type="checkbox"/> Gender         <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity         <input type="checkbox"/> Gender Re-Assignment         <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage/Civil Partnership         <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy/Maternity         <input type="checkbox"/> Socio-Economic         <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation         <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Belief         <input type="checkbox"/> All of the above         <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above expected       </p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p>2. What are the risks of introducing this policy / procedure change to any of the above groups?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Failure to apply the procedure consistently could result in individuals being disadvantaged or experiencing unequal treatment.           <input type="checkbox"/> Staff with disabilities, language barriers, or other protected characteristics may face barriers in accessing or participating in the grievance process if reasonable adjustments are not implemented.           <input type="checkbox"/> Employees may feel reluctant to raise concerns if they perceive a lack of confidentiality, impartiality, or protection from victimisation.           <input type="checkbox"/> Delays in managing grievances could have a disproportionate impact on wellbeing, engagement, and workplace relationships.         </p> |
| <p>3. What are the expected benefits of introducing this policy / change to any of the above groups?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a fair, transparent, and consistent process for resolving workplace concerns.           <input type="checkbox"/> Supports equality, diversity, inclusion, and dignity at work by ensuring concerns are investigated objectively.           <input type="checkbox"/> Encourages staff to raise concerns in a safe environment without fear of retaliation.         </p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Promotes positive employee relations, wellbeing, and engagement.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Ensures reasonable adjustments can be made for individuals who require additional support throughout the process.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Supports compliance with employment legislation and the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 4. Are there any areas or issues that could impact on the safety of staff or learners?                                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace grievances involving bullying, harassment, discrimination, safeguarding concerns, or breakdowns in professional relationships may impact staff wellbeing and psychological safety.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Where grievances involve allegations affecting learners, safeguarding procedures may need to operate alongside the grievance process.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate risk assessments, safeguarding referrals, and support mechanisms should be implemented where concerns are identified.                                                                                      |
| 5. What evidence do you have for your responses to questions 2, 3 and 4?<br>(e.g. evidence could be provided to counteract identified risks and, therefore, a full screening would not be required) | <input type="checkbox"/> Equality Act 2010 requirements and associated employment legislation.<br><input type="checkbox"/> College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies and procedures.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Existing grievance case outcomes and organisational learning from previous cases.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Trade union and employee representative consultation.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Staff survey, wellbeing, and employee relations data.<br><input type="checkbox"/> ACAS Code of Practice and employment best practice guidance.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Safeguarding policies and procedures. |
| 6. What is the level of risk for the policy / procedure?                                                                                                                                            | <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 7. Is a Full Screening Impact Assessment required?                                                                                                                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (complete the box below)<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| What are the recommendations from Equality Impact Assessment?                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

- ☐ Ensure managers receive regular training on the Grievance Procedure, equality legislation, unconscious bias, and reasonable adjustments.
- ☐ Monitor grievance cases for trends relating to protected characteristics to identify any disproportionate impacts.
- ☐ Maintain confidentiality and ensure timely management of grievances.
- ☐ Ensure accessibility of the procedure and provide reasonable adjustments where required.
- ☐ Continue consultation with recognised trade unions and employee representatives when reviewing the procedure.
- ☐ Ensure safeguarding concerns identified through grievances are referred and managed in accordance with the College Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

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| Date of Review:       | 06/10/2026                                |
| Reviewer's Name:      | Neil Anderson                             |
| Reviewer's Job title: | Director of People, Culture & Development |