

Grievance Policy: Lecturing Staff

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National Grievance Policy for Lecturing Staff

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1. Introduction

This policy recognises that on occasions, you may wish to raise concerns relating to your employment or working relationships on an individual or collective basis and is designed to ensure that you feel supported in this, working in a positive and supportive working environment that encourages open and honest communication.

This policy aims to ensure equitable and fair treatment for all lecturing staff (both promoted and unpromoted lecturers) in colleges by providing a framework to ensure that grievances can be resolved in a fair and reasonable way, minimise potential damage to professional relationships within colleges, and promote constructive employment relations.

The policy will be applied consistently and fairly to you, based on the circumstances of your case. This should allow you to feel confident to have open and frank conversations with your line manager if you have a concern.

You should read this policy in conjunction with the model Grievance Procedure, to fully understand the whole grievance process that provides a framework and minimum standards for the colleges to follow.

This policy was developed in partnership and agreement with the College Employers Scotland representatives and recognised trade unions. The policy and model procedure will be reviewed one year from launch date and thereafter, every three years, or earlier if required under legislative changes.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all lecturing staff (both promoted and unpromoted lecturers), including those on a temporary, fixed term or non-permanent contracts.

This policy provides a framework and transparent approach to enable employees to raise issues and a process for colleges to deal with and respond to these concerns as speedily as possible.

Consideration should be given as to which policy would be most relevant to the circumstances of the case and the outcome sought. It is for the person raising the complaint to decide which policy to use regarding the application of the Grievance policy, Dignity at Work policy, Whistleblowing policy or equivalent local policy.

3. Key Principles

The following key principles will be applied in each situation and will be reflected in college procedures and practices:

- a) The college will ensure managers have the appropriate training to undertake the roles described in this policy and confirm this when inviting you to any formal grievance meeting(s).
- b) When selecting a trained manager to undertake the role, the college must consider the potential for any conflict of interest (as detailed in the Grievance Procedure) and ensure their suitability and availability.
- c) A recognition that differences and disagreements do arise in the workplace from time to time. Therefore, grievance cases must be dealt with promptly without unreasonable delay, sensitively and respect the privacy of those involved.
- d) At all stages of the grievance, those involved must be aware of the need for confidentiality to preserve the integrity of the process. This does not prevent you from discussing the matter with a companion (definition set out in i below), representative or with the Employee Counselling Service.
- e) Many potential grievances can be resolved informally with appropriate, suitable discussion or mediation to resolve issues. Managers are encouraged to try to resolve issues at the earliest stage possible, but it is for the person raising the complaint to agree if that resolution is suitable.
- f) Where an issue cannot be resolved informally, or it is not appropriate to do so, the grievance process must be followed. A formal process is sometimes required to enable all parties to work together to find a mutually acceptable resolution.
- g) If you raised an informal grievance verbally and subsequently decided to move this forward as a formal grievance, your grievance must be raised (remembering to include details of the early resolution stage), as set out in the Grievance Procedure.
- h) On occasion, the early resolution stage may still require an investigation. No decisions on the outcome of your formal grievance will be made before the matter has been fully investigated.
- i) At all stages you have the right to be accompanied by: (1) an accredited local representative of a trade union; (2) a work colleague; or (3) an official of a trade union. All the above will be referred to in the policy and accompanying procedure as the 'companion'.

- j) If you are dissatisfied with the outcome or remedy proposed, you will have a right of appeal.
- k) You may choose, at any stage, to withdraw from the grievance process by giving formal written notice.
- l) Information relating to grievances will be destroyed in line with colleges data retention schedule, subject to related legal requirements.
- m) If you raised a grievance during a disciplinary process, the disciplinary process may be suspended to allow the grievance to be heard. Where the grievance and disciplinary cases are related, it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently. This should be in consultation, with a view to reach agreement with all parties. Each case will be considered on its own merits.

3.1 Reasonable Adjustments

Colleges will ensure throughout the grievance that they do not discriminate against anyone because of a protected characteristic. For example, adapting procedures to accommodate if required, or making reasonable adjustments to procedures to ensure that they do not put anyone with a protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage. This might mean someone else attending the disciplinary process meetings in addition to the companion. For example, a British Sign Language signer, a translator, a support worker or someone with knowledge of the employee's specific needs.

3.2 Collective Grievance

If you are part of a group of employees who want to raise a grievance about the same issue, the group should submit one grievance letter containing the names and signatures of each employee raising the grievance. If some, or all of the employees are trade union members, they may choose to be accompanied by a trade union representative. A spokesperson may be nominated to represent the group.

The grievance will then be managed as detailed in the Grievance Procedure, and the group will be invited to attend a grievance meeting and be informed of the outcome.

If a recognised trade union raises a collective grievance on behalf of their members, it will follow the Dispute process. Collective grievances may be settled with trade unions as a Local Agreement where appropriate.

If a manager receives a collective grievance, they must contact Human Resources (HR), for advice.

3.3 Grievance from an ex-employee

If you raise a grievance after leaving the college, it will still be investigated fully, but there won't always be a grievance meeting. The Grievance Procedure has more information about how this will be managed. All parties will be informed of the outcome.

3.4 False or misleading grievance

If you raise a complaint or grievance and it is found to be deliberately false or vexatious, it will be considered as misconduct. This may result in disciplinary action against you and managed by the Disciplinary Policy ([link](#)).

3.5 What happens when you formally raise a grievance

Where there is no Local Agreement covering the subject of the grievance, and until all stages of the grievance have been exhausted, the previous existing state of affairs to your terms and conditions of employment and working practices, before the subject of the grievance, will be maintained. This is referred to as the 'status quo ante'.

This means that the terms and conditions and working practices that existed before the subject of your grievance should be maintained until the grievance process is completed, unless the grievance relates to a health and safety issue or working relationships (e.g. in relation to material impact to health or wellbeing, potential bullying, harassment or conflicts of interest), where it is not practicable to continue.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 You should:

- Consider seeking advice and support from your companion at any point of the grievance process.
- Treat any information shared with you as part of a grievance process as confidential, except for discussing matters with your companion.

4.2 Managers should:

- Ensure that they and their staff are fully conversant with the grievance policy and procedure in place.

- Make full use of the early resolution stage, when possible, to prevent minor issues from escalating unnecessarily.
- Always act promptly to deal with any issues raised by employees. If employees remain dissatisfied after a formal hearing, the right to appeal information will be included in the outcome letter.
- Ensure that they undertake appropriate training relevant to their role in the grievance process.
- Seek advice from HR if they are unclear on a potential grievance issue.

4.3 HR Representatives should:

- Provide advice and support to managers and employees on the application of this Policy and on all stages of the Grievance Procedure.
- Monitor formal grievance activity across the college.
- Inform the College Leadership/Management Team if there are areas of concern in relation to the application of this Policy and Procedure.

4.4 Trade Union Representative/Companion should:

- Provide their members with advice and support throughout the grievance process.

5. Links to Other Policies/Documents

UHI Inverness publicly available documents can be accessed here: [About us - Publications](#). UHI Inverness Staff and Board members can access all internal UHI Inverness documents via the Quality SharePoint site.

Legislative framework/related policies:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Equality Act 2010
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Employment Rights Act 2025
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Working time Regulations 1998
- General Teaching Council Scotland Code of Professionalism and Conduct

- UHI Inverness Promoting Attendance Policy & Procedure
- UHI Inverness Staff Code of Conduct Policy & Procedure
- UHI Inverness Dignity in the Workplace Policy and Procedure
- UHI Inverness Staff Mediation Guidance
- UHI Inverness Supporting Probation Policy & Procedure
- UHI Inverness Professional Development Policy & Procedure
- UHI Inverness Financial Regulations
- UHI Inverness Protection Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG) for Staff Procedure
- UHI Inverness Public Interest Disclosure (Whistle Blowing) Policy & Procedure
- UHI Inverness Data Protection Policy & Procedure
- UHI Inverness Health and Safety Policy & Procedure
- UHI Inverness Information Security Policy & Procedure
- UHI Partnership Information Security Acceptable Use Policy
- UHI Inverness Use of College Equipment and Network Access Outwith the UK Policy
- UHI Inverness Professional Review and Development Policy & Procedure
- UHI Inverness Staff Disciplinary Policy & Procedure
- UHI Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy & Procedure
- UHI Safeguarding Policy & Procedure
- UHI Inverness Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
- UHI Higher Education Academic Standards and Quality Regulations
- UHI Inverness Further Education Academic Standards and Quality Regulations
- Staff Contract of Employment
- ACAS Code of Conduct

6. Further Sources of Information

6.1 You can access counselling if needed via:

- [Employee Assistance Programme](#)
- [Able Futures](#)

6.2 You can find further relevant information here:

- [Acas Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures | Acas](#)
- [Dealing with problems at work | TUC](#)