

Leeds Area Quaker Meeting Trustees

Registered Charity 1134542

Grievance Policy

Applicability

For these purposes, a grievance is any concerns, problems or complaints that an employee raises with their employer.

This procedure does not form a part of your contract of employment and may be changed from time to time. Nothing in this procedure can reduce your rights under employment legislation or as explicitly stated in your contract. This procedure applies to employees and not to volunteers, service providers or short-term contractors. The policy does not apply to redundancy dismissals or the non-renewal of fixed-term contracts on their expiry.

Dealing with grievances informally

If you have a grievance or complaint to do with your work or the people you work with you should, wherever possible, start by talking it over with your manager. Most matters can be resolved informally and swiftly in this way.

Formal Grievance Procedure

If the matter is serious and/or you wish to raise the matter formally, you may follow the formal grievance procedure outlined below.

Principles

- Meetings under this procedure will be held without unreasonable delay.
- All parties should make every effort to attend a grievance meeting.
- You will be allowed to explain your grievance and how you think it should be resolved.
- The meeting may be adjourned for any investigation that may be necessary
- Confidentiality will be respected as much as is possible, during every stage of the procedure.

Putting your grievance in writing

You should set out the grievance in writing to your manager. You should stick to the facts and avoid language that is insulting or abusive.

Where your grievance is against your manager and you feel unable to approach him or her you should put your grievance in writing to Employment Steward Trustee (if the Employment Steward Trustee is a party to your grievance, directly involved in your employment or has another conflict

of interest, then you should address your grievance to another Area Meeting Trustee who will ensure that the matter is handled by an appropriate person).

Grievance Policy and Bullying and Harassment Policy

As employees are frequently also members or attenders of a local meeting in the Area Meeting, your grievance may be dealt with under the Area Meeting's Bullying and Harassment Policy where your line manager (or appropriate Trustee where the grievance concerns your line manager) determines that it does not relate to your status as an employee. You will be informed in writing within 14 days if this is the case.

Grievance meeting

Your manager will call you to a meeting, where possible within 14 days, to hear your grievance. The manager will normally be accompanied by an office holder in the local meeting (such as Clerk, convenor of a finance and property committee, elder or overseer), to support him /her with decision-making.

If your grievance is against your manager, an independent panel of two or three members including at least one Trustee and one office holder in the local meeting (such as Clerk, convenor of a finance and property committee, elder or overseer) will conduct the meeting. No member of the panel should normally be specifically named in the grievance.

You have the right to be accompanied by a friend, colleague or trade union representative at this meeting.

After the meeting the individual(s) will give you a decision in writing, without unreasonable delay. Where appropriate, they will set out what action will be taken to resolve the grievance. You will be informed that you can appeal if you are not content with the action taken to resolve your grievance. You will be told to whom you should address any appeal, which should be a named person from a panel of Area Meeting elders /overseers or trustees who have not previously been involved in the case.

Appeal meeting

If you are unhappy with the decision from the grievance meeting, you should make an appeal in writing within 5 working days of receipt of the decision. Your written appeal should contain your grounds for appeal.

You will be invited to an appeal meeting which will be held without unreasonable delay. Your appeal will be dealt with impartially and by a panel Area Meeting elders /overseers or trustees who have not previously been involved in the case. An appeal panel will include at least one Area Meeting Trustee.

You have the right to be accompanied by a friend, colleague or trade union representative at this meeting.

After the meeting you will be given a decision, without unreasonable delay. Where appropriate, the decision will set out what action will be taken to resolve the grievance. This decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

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HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY 28/2/2020

As Quakers, we believe that everyone is equal, regardless of wealth, status or power. We value the diversity of all people and we work towards being inclusive in our language and actions.

POLICY

This policy is to

It is the policy of the Area Meeting to provide a dignified and respectful environment in which relationships between Friends. It encompasses all Friends, Members and Attenders of Leeds Area Quaker Meeting.

We reserve the right to amend this policy at any time.

This policy explains how we will ensure that instances of harassment and bullying are minimised, including unreasonable and vexatious complainants, and how we will deal with such instances if they occur.

Where the policy applies

This policy applies in relation to all activities related to Local and Area meeting.

Any Friend taking part in any of the following behaviour may be subject to disciplinary action under our disciplinary policy, up to and including dismissal for misconduct or gross misconduct. The services of volunteers and workers may be terminated.

- harassing or bullying anyone else (as defined below)
- threatening anyone who raises a harassment or bullying complaint
- retaliating against anyone who raises a harassment or bullying complaint
- making allegations maliciously or in bad faith
- giving false or intentionally misleading information during any investigation.

It should be noted that harassment and bullying can occur in person, in writing or via electronic means including emails, texts, online messaging services or social media.

What is harassment?

We define harassment as behaviour connected to what is termed a 'protected characteristic'. The protected characteristics are: age; race (including colour and ethnic/national origin); disability; religion or belief; gender; gender reassignment; pregnancy or maternity; sexual orientation; and marital or civil partner status.

We define as harassment any situation where a worker is subject to uninvited conduct that — as an intended or unintended consequence — violates their dignity in connection with a protected characteristic.

We also define as harassment behaviour that creates a hostile, humiliating, degrading or similarly offensive environment in relation to a protected characteristic. Name calling, lewd comments, excluding colleagues, making insensitive jokes, and displaying pornographic material are all examples of harassment.

Physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct can all amount to harassment, and this policy covers isolated or ongoing incidents of offensive behaviour. When someone treats another person less favourably because they either submit to such behaviour or refuse to do so, that can also be interpreted as harassment.

In all cases, it is the impact on the victim that matters — whether or not the perpetrator intends to harass their victim is irrelevant.

What is bullying?

We define as bullying any behaviour that leaves the victim feeling threatened, intimidated, humiliated, vulnerable or otherwise upset. There is no need to demonstrate a connection with a protected characteristic to establish a bullying allegation.

As with harassment, physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct can all amount to bullying. It can take various forms, from extreme behaviour involving violence and intimidation through to subtle actions such as deliberate exclusion, eg 'sending someone to Coventry'.

If your supervisor or manager or others give you constructive criticism about your behaviour or performance, this does not amount to bullying. It is part of normal employment and management routine and should not be interpreted as anything different.

Raising a complaint

We treat all complaints very seriously. You should never be victimised or treated less favourably if you raise a harassment or bullying complaint, and you should inform your manager as soon as possible if you believe you have been subjected to this type of treatment.

You should note that the Area Meeting has a duty to protect all workers. That means that if you change your mind after complaining — even informally or in confidence — we may choose to investigate anyway, particularly if your allegation is serious. We will however not do so without talking to you first.

Action If You Feel Harassed or Bullied

1. Many issues can be resolved informally, and you should attempt to do this first if you believe you are being bullied or harassed. Start by speaking with whomever you feel is harassing or bullying you and explain that their behaviour is unwelcome, inappropriate, or it upsets you.
2. If this does not resolve it you should talk to your manager or supervisor informally and in confidence. Should the issue be with your manager/ supervisor — or there's another reason you would prefer not to discuss it with them — you should instead speak with an AM Trustee or other member of your employment support group or committee. In the case of a volunteer you may choose to approach a Friend with Eldership or Oversight responsibility.
3. If resolving the issue proves impossible, you will need to follow our grievance / complaints procedure. If you are a volunteer or worker, the grievance procedure is not relevant but we will still treat your complaint seriously and investigate it. The Area Meeting Complaints Procedure will be followed.

Managing Your Complaint

The steps we take with the person who is alleged to have displayed bullying or harassing behaviour will be confidential. You have the right for the behaviour to stop, but not to know about the management action that may be taken against another individual.

Should we decide that your complaint cannot be substantiated, we will explain why. Either way, we will look at ways of addressing your relationship with the person whose behaviour you are concerned about, for example by mediation where appropriate.

Protecting confidentiality

Harassment and bullying allegations can raise strong feelings and are always serious, which is why both the Area Meeting, the complainant and the person complained about

have an obligation to maintain confidentiality as far as possible. This applies at every stage, including the investigation and the result.

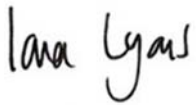
If you make a harassment or bullying complaint and fail to maintain proper confidentiality at any time during the process, or you are interviewed in connection with someone else's complaint and likewise fail to maintain confidentiality, you may face action under our disciplinary procedure if you are an employee; this could lead to dismissal for misconduct or even gross misconduct. If you are a volunteer or a worker, this could lead to the termination of your services.

Approved by Trustees on:

15th July 2020

Accepted by Area Meeting on:

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Iona Lyons". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'I' and 'L'.

Iona Lyons

Clerk to Trustees