



# **Grievance Procedure in relation to employees of London West Area Meeting**

## **1. Introduction**

Grievances are defined by Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) as 'concerns, problems, or complaints that employees raise with their employers'. London West Area Meeting Trustees (LWAMT) will use this policy to cover grievances between employees, or by an employee against a trustee or member of the Premises Committee. LWAMT will also use this procedure to resolve complaints by a Quaker or a volunteer about the behaviour of an employee. LWAMT are committed to resolving grievances as quickly as possible, to avoid the escalation of issues, which risks affecting morale and relationships.

## **2. Policy objective**

This policy aims to outline: the procedures for raising a grievance by or about an employee of LWAMT; and the appeals process. LWAMT aim to resolve all grievances fairly and impartially.

## **3. Policy statement**

LWAMT encourage employees – or others concerned about the behaviour of an employee - to raise any issues promptly with the line manager in the belief that most situations can be resolved through open communication and mutual understanding. If employees/others do not feel able to raise concerns informally with the line manager, they are encouraged to raise it informally with the Clerk to the Trustees or any other trustee of LWAMT.

LWAMT will seek to resolve matters informally but if the employee – or person concerned about the behaviour of an employee - does not feel that their concerns have been addressed or does not feel able to raise the matter informally then they may use the formal grievance procedure.

This policy applies to all current permanent and fixed-term employees, whether full-time or part-time. If an employee leaves LWAMT employment then raises a grievance, LWAMT will consider the concerns and provide a response, usually in writing, but LWAMT will not usually follow the full procedure.

Responsibilities: To help resolve concerns quickly and effectively, please:

Managers	Employees
<b>Be approachable</b>	Raise concerns at the earliest opportunity
<b>Take time to fully understand any individual concerns and try to resolve them quickly</b>	Try to resolve matters informally
<b>Be clear about any action that may be possible to resolve the concerns</b>	Co-operate in attempting to resolve concerns
<b>Follow through any commitments that you give to resolve concerns</b>	Be clear about the nature of your grievance and what action you want taken
<b>Try to find a compromise if you cannot fully resolve concerns</b>	Offer your own resolutions
<b>Be open and honest when it is not possible to take certain action and explain why not</b>	Consider a compromise
<b>Involve staff in workplace changes where possible</b>	Accept that it may not be possible for your manager to change something that you are not happy about
<b>Treat staff fairly</b>	Continue to work normally whilst the Grievance Procedure is being followed
<b>Encourage staff to show respect for each other</b>	

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Any complaint that an employee may have about any disciplinary action taken against them should be dealt with as an appeal under the disciplinary procedure, rather than through this policy.

Grievances raised while an employee is subject to disciplinary proceedings will usually be heard only when the disciplinary process has been completed.

## **4. Implementation and procedures**

To raise a formal grievance, you should write to the line manager. If the grievance is against the line manager, you should contact the Clerk to the Trustees, clearly stating the reason for your grievance, the steps you have taken to resolve the matter informally, and any supporting evidence.

A response to acknowledge a formal grievance will normally be made within five working days.

The clerk of trustees will appoint one or two trustees or other appropriate people to investigate the grievance.

An investigation meeting will be held with the employee/person raising a grievance. They may be accompanied at that meeting by a friend (though not a legal professional). The meeting is an opportunity for the person who raised the grievance to explain it, to show any evidence they have, to respond to any questions, and to discuss how it might be resolved. Notes will be taken at that meeting and sent to the person raising the grievance to ensure that they are accurate.

If appropriate, an investigation will be conducted to understand the situation and get feedback from any other involved parties. Those interviewed may be accompanied by a friend (though not a legal professional) at the interview. Notes will be taken during any interviews and the notes will be agreed with the person interviewed.

The employee – or person against whom the employee is raising a grievance - will be given an opportunity to give their own evidence as part of the investigation. Where confidentiality is necessary, this will be explained to the employee/other.

Following the investigation, the same or a different trustee(s)/other(s) will be appointed to hear the grievance. They will invite the aggrieved employee/other person to a grievance hearing and send the employee/other person the grievance investigation report and/or any supporting documentation in advance of the hearing. During the hearing, the employee/other person will have the opportunity to raise any questions in relation to the grievance investigation report/documentation. Following the grievance hearing, the Grievance Hearing Chair will write a letter to the employee/other person making the grievance, to inform them whether or not they uphold the grievance and will also set out any recommended further action. They will also write to the employee/other person against whom the grievance was raised to inform them of the decision.

Depending on the outcome of the grievance, it is possible that disciplinary action will be taken as the result of a grievance and this will follow procedures set out in the disciplinary policy.

Footnotes approved by Trustees 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023

### **Grievance policy footnotes**

#### **Section 4. Implementation and procedures**

LWAMT might wish to take the following suggestions into consideration:

1. In the situation in which, following a grievance being made, a counter grievance is lodged against the party making the initial grievance, it needs to be made clear to both parties that the counter grievance cannot be heard until the initial grievance hearing has been completed.
2. In the situation in which the party against whom the grievance has been lodged has left the employment of LWAMT it needs to be clearly explained that the grievance falls and cannot be heard as there are no actions or consequences that can be taken by LWAMT once the party involved has left their employment.
3. LWAMT needs to set clear and appropriate deadlines for each stage of the process.
4. LWAMT might consider involving Trustees or other Friends from Local Meetings other than the LM directly involved in the grievance from an early stage, on the grounds of furthering fairness and impartiality.

## **5. Appeal**

If the employee/other person raising the grievance is unhappy with the decision they can appeal in writing to the Clerk of the Trustees, clearly stating the grounds for appeal within ten working days of receipt of the decision. A response to acknowledge their appeal will normally be made within five working days.

An appeal hearing will be held as soon as practicable, carried out by a trustee(s)/other(s) appointed by trustees to hear the appeal who is/are unconnected with the original complaint. They will consider the grounds that the employee has put forward and assess whether or not the conclusion reached in the original grievance hearing was reasonable. The employee/other making the appeal may be accompanied, should they wish. Notes will be taken at the hearing and will be checked with the person interviewed.

The trustee(s)/other(s) appointed to hear the appeal will inform the employee/person making the appeal of their decision in writing.

This will be the last stage of the grievance procedure and the outcome of the appeal will be final.

Approved by LWAM trustees 20 June 2022

Revisions approved 9 January 2023

Footnotes on Section 4 approved 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023