Grievance Policy Guidance – Line Manager

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Action	Supporting information
Receiving a Grievance form	Employees should submit their grievance form to you if you are their manager or if the complaint is about their manager who reports to you. Alternatively, you may be contacted by an HR Case Manager if an employee makes a report through the Report + Support online reporting tool and decides to raise a grievance. You must contact the HR Helpline for advice on how to progress with the grievance. Please attach the Grievance Form to the Service Request. This is to ensure the grievance meets the eligibility criteria and to decide how to proceed. It might still be possible to find an informal solution. If an informal solution is not possible, you will be assigned an HR Case Manager. If you and the HR Case Manager think the grievance may be **vexatious or trivial** you must discuss it with the **Head of HR – Advisory and Case Management.**
Review Grievance Form	You and the HR Partner- Advisory or the HR Case Manager must review it to consider: • Has it been submitted within 3 month time frame • Has a desired outcome been specified • Can the issue be resolved informally • Does it appear to be vexatious, trivial or malicious • Is it a third party complaint with no personal detriment? If the form does not contain the **outcome** being sought it should be returned to the employee. If the concern relates to **bullying or harassment,** it will normally be considered regardless of timeframe. If the concern appears vexatious, trivial or malicious it must be considered by you and the **Head of HR – Advisory and Case Management** (see below). It may be possible to ask the complainant to consider an **informal** solution if the concern can be easily rectified e.g. there has been a mistake in payment, work environment issue that can be altered.

Vexatious and trivial complaints	**You and the Head of HR – Advisory and Case Management** must agree if the complaint appears vexatious or trivial. Do not make assumptions, even if previous grievances have been raised by the individual. Consider each grievance submission on its own merits. Even if ill founded, if the grievance has been raised in **good faith** it should be looked in to. **Consider:** • Is it primarily looking to annoy, harass or punish another person • Is it frivolous or repetitive • Is there any evidence to back up the concern • Is it about an issue that has already been dealt with or is essentially the same as an issue already dealt with • Is it based on rumours or gossip? If you and the Head of HR – Advisory and Case Management believe it is a vexatious or trivial complaint you do not need to proceed. Liaise with the Head of HR – Advisory and Case Management about **writing to the employee** explaining your decision and giving reasons e.g. the complaint has already been dealt with. If you believe the complaint is malicious you should consider if disciplinary proceedings are appropriate.
Investigating Officer	In some cases, you will be appointed to investigate the grievance. If so please refer to the **Investigating Officer (IO) section** of this guidance. If the grievance relates to a sensitive issue or would benefit from particular expertise another manager may be appointed as the Investigating Officer.
Attend an **investigation interview**	If you are not appointed as the Investigating Officer another manager will take that role. Depending on the nature of the grievance the IO may wish to interview you to gain your perspective on the case. You will normally have at least two working days' notice of any meeting. Notes will be taken at your meeting and you will have the opportunity to review them to ensure they reflect what you said accurately. You would not normally be required to attend any hearings.

Be aware of **Data protection** and **Subject Access Request requirements**	Information relating to a grievance case should be held in line with the University's Retention Schedule. This includes any email correspondence and not just letters about the outcome of the grievance. Remember that an employee may make a subject access request to see data about their case which will include any emails between you and HR and anyone else you correspond with about the individual or the case. Therefore, you must be prepared that any of your correspondence may be seen by the employee.

Letters:

(The following templates are available from your HR Case Manager)

15. Grievance considered vexatious or trivial