



Gateshead Primary SCITT

Grievance & Complaints Policy & Procedure

2021/22

Grievance & Complaints Policy Statement

1. The Aim of the Policy

1.1. The aim of this policy is to ensure that questions and problems arising in the course of training can be raised and resolved quickly, in a fair and reasonable manner, at the lowest level possible within the SCITT.

2. Definition of Grievance

2.1. A trainee may at some time have problems or concerns with their work, working conditions or relationships with colleagues that they wish to raise with their Professional Tutor, Programme Leader or the management committee. They want the grievance to be addressed, and if possible, resolved. It is also clearly in the SCITT's interest to resolve problems before they can develop into major difficulties.

3. Who this Policy applies to

3.1. This policy applies to all trainees of Gateshead Primary SCITT where it has been adapted by the Management committee.

4. Commitments

4.1. Grievances are best dealt with at an early stage, informally, with an immediate line manager. However, adopting this policy will ensure the SCITT has a formal procedure to handle cases left unresolved. Pursuing the formal route should be a last resort rather than the first option.

4.2. All problems or concerns raised will be carried out in the strictest confidence, unless otherwise agreed with the parties involved, and will not prejudice the aggrieved trainees current placement or future career prospects.

5. Additional Information

5.1. This applies to grievances raised in relation to the following:

- Terms and conditions of training
- Health and safety
- Changes to working practices
- Organisational changes
- Fair treatment and relationships at work
- Discrimination

Grievance Procedure

1. Informal Procedure

- 1.1. Problems in the workplace can best be resolved through discussions between a trainee and their 'line manager' who would be their school based tutor during placement. It is in everyone's best interest to ensure that trainee grievances are dealt with quickly and fairly and at the most immediate and lowest level at which the matter can be resolved.
- 1.2. If a trainee has a grievance in connection with their work they must, in the first instance, discuss it with their School Based Tutor or Headteacher in the school in which they are training. If this is unsuccessful they should contact the Programme Leader and attempt to resolve it informally. If a trainee does not wish to approach their manager themselves, they may ask their trade union or workplace representative/Professional Tutor to speak to their manager informally on their behalf. Dealing with grievances in this way can often lead to a speedy and sustainable resolution of problems enabling effective working relationships to be maintained.
- 1.3. Both HR Advice and the Trade Unions jointly agree that all necessary steps should be taken to resolve grievances before they reach the formal procedure.
- 1.4. If the matter is not resolved the formal grievance procedure may be used.

2. Formal Procedure

(Where the Programme Leader is not the subject of the grievance)

- 2.1. The parties referred to may on occasions, and by mutual agreement, modify the time limits referred to in this grievance procedure. Any other amendments to the procedure should be discussed and agreed with the trainee concerned or their representative.
- 2.2. Trainees who want to ensure their grievance moves to the formal procedure must complete section 1 of the grievance form and forward it to the Programme Leader unless the Programme Leader is subject of the grievance. Failure to complete this form will result in the grievance not being considered. On receipt of the necessary paperwork the Programme Leader should contact HR Advice to consult on the nature of the grievance.
- 2.3. The Programme Leader should invite the trainee to attend a meeting to discuss the grievance within 5 working days of receiving the form. The trainee may be accompanied by their trade union representative or a colleague. The Headteacher of the Lead School will attend this meeting.
- 2.4. The trainee should be invited, in the meeting, to restate and expand upon their grievance including how they would like to see it resolved. Consideration should be given to adjourning the meeting for any investigation into the grievance that may be necessary. This should be undertaken without unreasonable delay and the trainee should be informed when they might reasonably expect a response. Once this is done the meeting can be reconvened.
- 2.5. The Programme Leader should respond in writing to the grievance, whether or not they support it, within 2 working days of the last meeting. They must also complete section 2 of the grievance form. They should retain a copy of the form and return the original to the trainee.

- 2.6. Depending upon the circumstances and if it assists the process and brings resolution to the grievance another person nominated who has no knowledge of the issue/s could carry out an independent investigation. In these circumstances the nominated person will be put forward by the Management Committee. Any objection by the trainee to the nomination should be given due consideration by the Management Committee if the trainees objections can be justified.
- 2.7. The trainee raising the grievance may request copies of any formal minutes taken at meetings. Under certain circumstances the independent investigator may decide, if requested, to blank out names or some other identifying information (e.g. to protect identity of a witness).
- 2.8. The SCITT recognises a witness may want to remain anonymous. However, it may not be possible to keep the witness' identity confidential and they may need to come forward as a witness at an appropriate time. If it becomes necessary to reveal the witness' identity the SCITT will discuss this with the witness prior to any revelation. The witness will at this point have the option to continue or not.
- 2.9. The SCITT encourages witnesses to put their names forward. Statements made anonymously are less powerful but they may be considered at the discretion of the SCITT. In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account would include:
- the seriousness of the issues raised;
 - the credibility of the concern; and
 - the likelihood of confirming from other named sources.

If a trainee who is a witness makes malicious or vexatious allegations, disciplinary action including dismissal may be taken.

3. Formal Procedure

(Where the Programme Leader is the subject of the grievance)

- 3.1. Since the Programme Leader is the subject of the grievance then the Chair of the Management Committee, a suitable alternative Management Committee Member to the Chair or an independent person will conduct all meetings and carry out any necessary investigation before responding in writing to the grievance stating whether it is supported or not.
- 3.2. The procedure will follow the same stages as Section 2. In points 2.1 to 2.5 the Programme Leader, who is the subject of the grievance, will be replaced by the Management Committee, member of the Management Committee or suitable independent person appointed by the Management Committee.

4. Appeal to Management Committee

- 4.1. If the trainee feels the grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, they may appeal to the Management Committee Appeals Committee of the SCITT. To do this they must complete section 3 of the grievance form stating clearly the reason or reasons for the appeal and submit it to the Chair of the Appeals Committee within 5 working days upon receipt of the completed section 2 of the grievance form. The Chair of the Management Committee should consult with HR Advice before responding to the appeal.
- 4.2. The Chair of the Committee and elected committee members should arrange a meeting with the trainee within 5 days of receiving the grievance. A representative from HR Advice will attend to advise the Appeals Committee. The trainee may be accompanied

by a trade union representative or colleague. At the meeting the trainee should be invited to state why they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of their grievance.

4.3. The Chair of the Appeals Committee or appropriate committee of the Management Committee should confirm the decision in writing, whether or not they support the grievance, by completing section 4 of the grievance form. This should be done as soon as possible and in any case, no later than two working days after the meeting. They should retain a copy of the form and return the original to the trainee.

4.4. Where the Programme Leader is the subject of the grievance the appeal will be to the Appeals committee of the Management Committee. The Chair of the Management Committee or any other Governor involved in the original grievance cannot be part of deciding the outcome of the appeal. The appeal will only be heard once stages 2.7 and 2.8 have been completed.

4.5. At all stages it is advised to seek guidance from HR Advice on how to proceed.

5. Where the Management Committee is the subject of the grievance

5.1. Where the individual raising the grievance is training in a SCITT Consortium/Associate School they may write to the Director of Education, Learning and Children clearly stating the reasons for the grievance.

5.2. Where the individual raising the grievance is training in a SCITT Consortium/Associate they may write to the NCTL clearly stating the reasons for the grievance.

6. Post training grievance procedure

6.1. This procedure applies where a trainee has ceased to train at SCITT and, before they left:

- The Programme Leader was not aware of the grievance, or
- The Programme Leader was aware of the grievance but the formal procedure had not commenced.

6.2. The former trainee should put their grievance in writing to a Programme Leader/Chair of Management Committee who is not the subject of the grievance. The Programme Leader/Chair of Management Committee must then respond in writing within 5 working days of receiving the grievance or as soon as possible depending on the issue.

6.3. The grievance should be fully investigated and the formal procedure above must be followed, however the appeal to Management Committee constitutes the final forum within the SCITT for consideration of post training grievance issues.

Grievance & Complaints Form

SECTION 1 : Trainee Details of Grievance/Complaint

Surname:		First Name:	
School:			

What resolution do you expect to your Grievance/Complaint

Signature:	
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Date:			
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SECTION 2 : Grievance/Complaint Response

From: The Chair of the Management Committee/Management Committee Representative

Signature:	
Print Name:	

Date:			
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SECTION 3 : Appeal

Who: To the Management Committee:

Signature:	
Print Name:	

Date:			
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SECTION 4 : Appeal Response

From: The Management Committee:

Signature:	
Print Name:	

Date:			
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Agenda

Grievance/Complaints Appeal Meeting

The following agenda is recommended for use by the Chair of the Management Committee when it is considering grievance appeal matters

1. The Chair of the Management Committee will introduce the Members present, explaining the role of each (that is decision maker or adviser).
2. The Chair of the Management Committee will explain the procedure to be followed for the meeting (that is the Stages below).
3. The trainee and/or their representatives will present the grounds of their appeal
4. The Programme Leader/Investigating Officer will be allowed to question the trainee and/or their representative
5. The members of the Management Committee and their advisers will be allowed to question the employee and/or their representative.
6. The Programme Leader/Investigating Officer will present the reasons for the decision made regarding the grievance
7. The trainee and/or their representative will be allowed to question the Chair Management Committee
8. The members of the Management Committee and their advisers will be allowed to question the Programme Leader/Investigating Officer
9. The trainee and/or their representative shall summarise their appeal
10. The Programme Leader/Investigating Officer shall summarise their original decision
11. All parties and their representatives will leave the room.
12. The Management Committee shall determine whether the grievance appeal has been substantiated or not and if necessary, the appropriate resolution
13. Both parties shall return to the room to be advised verbally of the Management Committees decision.
14. The Chair of the Management Committee will confirm the decision in writing to all concerned.