



# IADT Grievance Procedures

<b>Document reference and version Number</b>	HR/ER1/Grievance
<b>Purpose</b>	The policy of the Institute to encourage employees and Heads of Function/HR Department to resolve problems and handle complaints informally and quickly, without recourse to formal disputes or Grievance Procedures.
<b>Commencement Date</b>	January 2009 (IoTI Sectoral Adoption)
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	
<b>Who needs to know about this document</b>	All IADT Staff and responsible individuals for supporting and implementing policy and actions herewith.
<b>Revision History</b>	Policy Amendments = None – This Version New Foreword, 2021
<b>Policy Author(s)</b>	Technological Higher Education Sector nationally agreed policy
<b>Policy Owner</b>	IADT HR Manager
<b>Approval by Executive</b>	Approved BY IADT Governing Body, 2009
<b>Signed by the President</b>	 



Dear Colleagues,

The grievance procedures captured in this policy document are published to support each of us in managing our separate but complementary roles and responsibilities as dedicated staff members of the Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dún Laoghaire (IADT).

As President, I have inherited this policy and set of procedures developed by our sectoral representatives through a national partnership process and adopted by our Governing Body in January 2009.

Despite the time that has lapsed, as of yet, no nationally agreed policy or set of revised procedures has superseded this agreement, and as such, the enclosed procedures continue to apply to all employees of IADT.

Our continued adherence to these established procedures emphasises a shared commitment to developing and maintaining a positive and professional working environment for us all, a place where dignity and respect in the workplace are paramount.

Experience indicates that this is best achieved by encouraging timely communication on intrapersonal and interpersonal matters; matters or concerns which may result in an irreparable breakdown in relationships if not proactively and constructively addressed.

For this reason, please take time to reflect on the content of these procedures and the processes to aid the management of cordial and respectful professional relationships.

If you have any queries, please direct them to your appropriate Line Supervisor/ Manager in the first instance before following up with our HR manager.

Ultimately, as President, I want us to work and co-exist in a professional environment where formal disputes and grievances are the exceptions — a rare occurrence due to the dedication and commitment of all staff to maintain the highest level of professional behaviour and respect for our peers. This may be an unachievable goal, and as such I am committed to ensuring that the enclosed procedures are managed and operated in good faith. Our shared goal is to embed a culture of procedural fairness in managing employment grievances across the Institute and in addressing any issues that may arise from these complaints from time to time.

In support of our commitment to continuous improvement all supervisory, Executive and Management roles receive training in the procedures and in the management and operation of the procedures. Staff Training and Development workshops will also remain available to all so as to maintain and develop the necessary commitment to realising our shared goal.

Sincerely



David Smith,  
President, September 2023

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1** This Grievance Procedure for all employees of the Institute of Technology sector was developed and agreed following discussions in a partnership manner between Management representatives from Institutes of Technology Ireland (representing all Institutes other than Dublin Institute of Technology), Dublin Institute of Technology and the Trade Unions SIPTU, IMPACT, UNITE and TUI representing employees in the Institute sector. The procedure was prepared taking account of the Labour Relations Commission's Code of Practice on Grievance Procedures and was formally agreed between the parties at national level on 21 November 2008. This Grievance Procedure supersedes all existing local procedures.

**1.2** The Institute is committed to the development and maintenance of a positive working environment for all employees; to the encouragement of communication between unions and management on all issues of concern to the unions; and to ensuring there is a rapid management response to issues raised by a union. It is recognised by management that there must be consultation with the union(s) on matters relating to the conditions of service of employees.

## **2. PURPOSE**

**2.1** It is the policy of the Institute to encourage employees and Heads of Function/HR Department to resolve problems and handle complaints informally and quickly, without recourse to formal disputes or Grievance Procedures. The Institute endeavours to foster a working environment and working relationships in which the informal resolution of differences is the norm.

**2.2** It is recognised, however, that from time to time issues may arise which need more formal arrangements to ensure a satisfactory and effective solution. In such cases, the following Grievance Procedures will be utilised.

**2.3** The Grievance Procedure provides effective and fair processes by which employees can seek redress of grievance.

## **3. PRINCIPLES**

**3.1** The Grievance Procedure provides a comprehensive method for the resolution of grievances in the interests of the avoidance of conflict. Issues raised under it will be processed in accordance with the principles of full consultation during the process and in accordance with the general principles of natural justice and fair procedures which include that:

- The employee concerned has the right to a fair and impartial determination of the issues concerned, taking into account any relevant or appropriate evidence, factors or circumstances.
- The employee concerned is given the opportunity to avail of the right to be represented during the procedure<sup>1</sup>
- An employee/s will not be penalised in any way for making a complaint in good faith regardless of whether or not the complaint is upheld.
- Every effort will be made to adhere to the time limits prescribed in the procedure. The time limits laid down for Stages 2, 3 and 4 *under the Formal Procedure* may be extended only by mutual agreement of the parties concerned.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this procedure "representative" includes a colleague of the employee's choice or a recognised trade union which holds the negotiating rights for the grade of the employee but not any other person/body unconnected with the enterprise.

- All relevant documentation concerning the grievance will be made available at each of the meetings at each of the stages of the procedure.
- An employee may withdraw a complaint at any stage of the procedure.
- Union representatives will be granted such reasonable time off with substitution provided (where required) to facilitate their attendance at meetings convened under the Grievance Procedure.

#### **4. SCOPE**

- 4.1** This procedure shall apply to all employees of the Institute who wish to raise a grievance, either individually or collectively.
- 4.2** Individual grievances should be dealt with through the Individual Grievance Procedures. The Collective Procedure will apply where the issue involves more than one employee or is on behalf of the union as a whole.
- 4.3** The Collective Grievance Procedure may be invoked on the staff side only by the appropriate recognised trade union. The Individual Grievance Procedure may be invoked by an individual employee or by the representative union on behalf of the employee. The procedure is for the purpose of discussing and resolving matters, which are not subject to the terms of the relevant Central Negotiation Forum. Matters appropriate to that Forum may only be dealt with at the Forum.

#### **Matters outside of the scope of the Grievance Procedure**

- 4.4** Individual cases of bullying and harassment should be dealt with through the Institute's bullying and harassment/dignity at work policy where such has been put in place in accordance with relevant legislative requirements, otherwise the Grievance Procedure can be utilised.
- 4.5** Employees aggrieved by an action or decision taken in relation to the recruitment and selection process must use the agreed review process set up under the recruitment and selection procedures of the Institute where such exists, otherwise the Grievance Procedure can be utilised.

#### **Industrial Relations procedure**

- 4.6** Any employee aggrieved by a legitimate work instruction, given by a Head of Function should carry out such instruction under protest and refer it for processing through the appropriate channels i.e. Individual Grievance Procedure. In this context, a legitimate work instruction is one which is within the context of current agreements and which is not at variance with accepted custom and practice.
- 4.7** Matters concerning the introduction of change and new developments are provided for in *Towards 2016* (Sections 28 and 31). Notification of change and new developments will be given in advance and in sufficient time to allow discussions with the union(s) concerned to take place (due regard being given to situations of emergency). Any local grievance in respect of such matters forms part of those local discussions as envisaged under Section 28.13 of that agreement. Where the collective grievance procedure is invoked, and in respect of Stages 1 to 3, the "status quo" ante shall prevail in such matters, subject to those stages concluding in time to allow the changes to be introduced by the proposed implementation date. Subject to this, it is accepted that management have the right to implement changes in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement.

**4.8** In respect of other referrals to the grievance procedures, the 'status quo' ante shall prevail, except in respect of issues covered by the *Protocol on Essential Services* (see Appendix 1). No industrial action or disciplinary action of any form will be taken by either side during the course of the procedure in respect of any issue which is the subject of the procedure.

## **5. INFORMAL RESOLUTION OF GRIEVANCES**

**5.1** Management and employee opinions may be at variance on occasion but most routine complaints are capable of being resolved on an informal basis without recourse to the formal grievance procedure. Where a complaint arises, the parties concerned are encouraged to strive to understand the other party's position and should seek, as far as possible, a mutually acceptable solution through informal means.

**5.2** Without prejudice to his/her right to invoke immediately the *Formal Grievance Procedure*, an employee who believes s/he has been treated unjustly or unfairly is encouraged to raise his/her grievance with his/her immediate supervisor as a matter of first instance, or to raise his/her grievance through an informal approach by his/her union representative.

## **6. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES STAGES**

**6.1** The stages set out are for use if there is a possibility of the issue in question being resolved at that stage. Should it be clear that this is not possible the stage(s) in question may be omitted with the process moving to the next appropriate stage. In certain circumstances, the parties may agree to proceed immediately to stage 4 of this procedure if agreement cannot be reached at stage 1.

## **7. COLLECTIVE PROCEDURE**

### **Prior to invoking the Collective Grievance Procedure**

**7.1** An issue, giving rise to a dispute relating to conditions of service or on a matter relevant to members' employment will normally be raised by the local union representative with the immediate superior and an attempt should be made to resolve the matter in this manner.

**7.2** The Grievance Procedure may be formally invoked by the Union where such informal process fails to resolve the issue or where such a process is not appropriate.

**Note:** For all stages in the formal process, management will write to the union outlining its position, normally within ten working days following the meeting.

### **7.3 Stage 1**

- In invoking the formal Grievance Procedure, the Union will do so in writing and will formally set out in writing for the Institute the nature of the grievance and specify that the grievance is collective.
- A meeting will normally be held within ten working days of the Grievance Procedure having been invoked.
- The meeting will be between representatives of the Union and appropriate member(s) of the Institute's Management. Management will ensure that their representatives include at least one member who is fully familiar with the issue(s) concerned

- If the matter is not resolved at the meeting or fails to be resolved or progressed to the satisfaction of the party invoking the procedure the matter may be referred to a Stage 2 meeting by the Union. In the event that the matter is to be referred to Stage 2, the Union will do so in writing to the HR department within ten working days following management's response or the Union may formally invoke Stage 2 immediately and confirm that in writing.

#### **7.4 Stage 2**

- A meeting will be held between the appropriate representatives of the Union and the appropriate representatives of the Institute's management, normally the Senior Line Manager (or his or her management nominee acting with his/her authority), a HR representative and such other members of management as the President/Director<sup>2</sup> considers appropriate. Management will ensure that their representatives include at least one member who is fully familiar with the issue(s) concerned.
- Such a meeting should normally be held within ten working days of the date of referral to Stage 2.
- If the matter is not resolved at the meeting or fails to be resolved or progressed to the satisfaction of the party invoking the procedure the matter may be referred to Stage 3 or in agreement with management, directly to Stage 4 meeting by the Union. In the event that the matter is to be referred on, the Union will do so in writing to the HR department within ten working days following management's response or the Union may formally invoke Stage 3/4 immediately and confirm that in writing.

#### **7.5 Stage 3**

- In the event that the matter has not been referred to an agreed third party, the matter may be referred to a meeting between appropriate representatives of the Union and the representatives of the Institute concerned.
- The Institute representative group shall consist of the President/Director (or a Senior Manager acting with the authority of the President/Director) as well as such other members of senior management as the President/Director considers appropriate. Management will ensure that their representatives include at least one member who is fully familiar with the issue(s) concerned
- This meeting shall normally take place within ten working days of the referral of the matter to Stage 3.
- If the matter is not resolved at the meeting or fails to be resolved or progressed to the satisfaction of the party invoking the procedure the matter may be referred directly to an agreed third party i.e. Stage 4. In this event, the Union will make the referral in writing where possible within ten working days following management's response or the Union may formally invoke Stage 4 immediately and confirm that in writing. Otherwise, the Union shall, except in circumstances agreed as exceptional, indicate its position within one month following management's response thereby concluding the internal stage of the procedure.

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<sup>2</sup> References to "President/Director" throughout this document refer to the Director of the Institute as defined in Section 9 of the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992, as amended or the President of the Institute as defined in Section 9 of the Dublin Institute of Technology Act, 1992, as amended, as appropriate.

## **7.6 Stage 4**

In the event of disagreement at Stage 2 or Stage 3 the matter shall normally be referred to the Labour Relations Commission and onto the Labour Court or alternatively, an agreed 3<sup>rd</sup> Party as appropriate, within ten working days of management's response.

## **8. INDIVIDUAL PROCEDURE**

### **Prior to invoking the Individual Grievance Procedure**

**8.1** A grievance may be defined as a complaint which an employee has concerning his/her terms and conditions, working environment or working relationships. Such issue will normally be raised by the member with the immediate superior and an attempt should be made to resolve the matter in this manner.

**8.2** The Grievance Procedure may be formally invoked by an individual employee or by the Union on his/her behalf where such informal process fails to resolve the issue or where such a process is not appropriate.

***Note:** In certain circumstances where both parties are agreeable, the matter may be referred to mediation.*

**8.3** In the Individual Grievance Procedure the aggrieved employee may be accompanied or represented at each stage by a Union representative/s<sup>3</sup> or a work colleague who may make representations on his/her behalf.

**8.4** For all stages in the formal process, management will write to the union outlining its position, normally within six working days following the meeting.

**8.5** Where it becomes clear at any time during the process that the matter is more appropriate to the Collective Grievance Procedure, it shall be referred to the appropriate stage under that procedure subject to the agreement of the relevant recognised trade union.

## **8.6 Stage 1**

- The Grievance Procedure must be formally invoked. The individual employee or the union, on behalf of the employee, will formally do so in writing setting out for the Institute the nature of the grievance.
- A meeting will normally be held within six working days of the Grievance Procedure having been invoked.
- The meeting will normally be between the complainant, the representatives of the union or a colleague and the Line Manager who may be accompanied by an appropriate member(s) of the Institute's Management.
- If the matter is not resolved at the meeting or fails to be resolved or progressed to the satisfaction of the individual employee the matter may be referred to a Stage 2 meeting by the employee or the union on behalf of the employee within six working days of management's response or Stage 2 may be formally invoked immediately and subsequently confirmed in writing.

## **8.7 Stage 2**

- A meeting will be held involving the employee, the Union representative/s or work colleague and appropriate Senior Manager, a representative from HR and the individual's Line Manager as

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<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this procedure "representative" includes a colleague of the employee's choice or a recognised trade union which holds the negotiating rights for the grade of the employee but not any other person/body unconnected with the enterprise.

appropriate. Management will ensure that their representatives include at least one member who is fully familiar with the issue(s) concerned

- Such a meeting should normally be held within six working days following the date of referral to Stage 2.
- If the matter is not resolved at the meeting or fails to be resolved or progressed to the satisfaction of the employee the matter may be referred to a Stage 3 meeting by the employee or the Union on behalf of the employee within six working days following management's response or the Stage 3 may be formally invoked immediately and subsequently confirmed in writing.

### **8.8 Stage 3**

- This stage will take place involving the employee, Union representative or work colleague and with the appropriate Senior Management as nominated by the President/Director and a representative from HR. The President/Director or his/her nominee will ensure that their team or their representatives contain at least one member who is fully familiar with the issue(s) concerned.
- This meeting shall take place within six working days of the referral of the matter to it.
- If the matter is not resolved at the meeting or fails to be resolved or progressed to the satisfaction of the employee, the matter may be referred to a Stage 4 meeting by the employee or the Union on behalf of the employee where possible within six working days following management's response or Stage 4 may be invoked immediately and subsequently confirmed in writing. Otherwise, the employee or the Union on behalf of the employee shall, except in circumstances agreed as exceptional, indicate its position within twelve working days following management's response thereby concluding the internal stage of the procedure.

### **8.9 Stage 4**

- If the matter remains unresolved to the satisfaction of the party invoking the procedure, the employee or the Union on behalf of the employee will have the option of referring the matter to the Labour Relations Commission/Rights Commissioner Service/Conciliation service of the Labour Relations Commission or an alternative agreed third party as soon as practicable.

## **9. REVIEW**

- 9.1** This procedure will be subject to review within two years of its implementation and periodically thereafter as requested by any party. All parties to the discussions as set out in paragraph 1.1 will be invited to participate in any review. The review process will take account of any relevant changes in future national agreements.