EBOR ACADEMY TRUST

Employee Guide to the Grievance Process

A straightforward guide to understanding how grievances are handled, what to expect, and your rights.

1. Scope & Key Principles

Ebor Academy Trust is committed to ensuring that all employees have access to a fair, transparent, and prompt procedure to resolve workplace concerns. This guide outlines your rights and what you should expect from your point of view.

- **Eligibility:** This policy applies to all directly employed staff, regardless of their length of service. It does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors.
- **Time Limits:** To be heard under this policy, a grievance must be raised within 3 months of the incident occurring. Exceptions require written CEO approval.
- **Confidentiality:** Grievances are handled with the utmost sensitivity. You and anyone accompanying you are expected to maintain strict confidentiality and must not discuss the case with uninvolved parties.
- **Recordings:** Electronic recordings of meetings are strictly prohibited unless prior consent is obtained from all participants.

2. The Grievance Process

Step 1: Informal Resolution

Most workplace concerns can be resolved quickly through open, informal discussion with your line manager. If your complaint directly concerns your manager, you should approach your Headteacher or another senior manager instead. Both parties are encouraged to explore informal resolution before escalating. Where appropriate, and if all parties agree, voluntary independent mediation may be arranged to facilitate a resolution.

Step 2: Raising a Formal Grievance

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you must put your grievance in writing to your line manager, clearly stating that it is a formal grievance. If your complaint is about your Headteacher or a Central Team Director, submit it directly to the Executive Head or the HR Business Partner.

What to include in your written grievance:

- A brief, factual description of the nature of your complaint (including dates, times, and names of those involved).
- Any relevant supporting information or evidence.
- Your desired outcome or a clear proposal of what you believe would resolve the situation.

Stage / Action	Normally Scheduled Within	Action Required / Expected Outcome
Informal Resolution (Step 1)	Immediate / Ongoing	Open discussion or voluntary independent mediation.
Formal Submission (Step 2)	Within 3 months of incident	Submit formal grievance in writing specifying your desired outcome.
Formal Grievance Meeting	10 working days of receipt	Opportunity to explain your case and discuss proposed resolutions.
Written Outcome Decision	10 working days of final meeting	A formal written decision detailing any further actions and appeal rights.

Step 3: What to Expect Next

Once your formal grievance is submitted, the Trust will designate an impartial manager to coordinate your case. The process consists of the following phases:

- **Investigations:** Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Trust may conduct an investigation. This can include taking witness statements, interviewing relevant staff, or reviewing documents. You are expected to co-operate fully and promptly with the investigator.
- **The Grievance Meeting:** You will be invited to a formal meeting (usually within 10 working days). The purpose of this meeting is to allow you to explain your grievance in detail and discuss potential resolutions.
- **Written Outcome:** Following the final meeting (and any subsequent investigation), the hearing officer will write to you within 10 working days to outline their decision, the reasons behind it, and any actions the Trust intends to take.

3. Your Right to Be Accompanied

You have a statutory right to be accompanied by a companion to any formal grievance or appeal meeting under this policy. Please note the following procedural rules regarding representation:

- **Who can accompany you:** Your companion must be either a recognised trade union representative or a workplace colleague. Companions who are not colleagues or union representatives (such as family members) are generally only permitted as a reasonable adjustment for a disability or language barrier.
- **Arranging representation:** You are responsible for contacting your chosen companion, making arrangements for them to attend, and providing them with any relevant paperwork.
- **Postponements:** If your companion is unavailable at the scheduled time, you can propose a reasonable alternative time. The Trust will postpone and reschedule the meeting. However, meetings will normally only be rearranged once to avoid excessive delays. If delays are unreasonable, the meeting may proceed in your absence.

The Role of Your Companion During the Hearing:
• **Your companion CAN:** Address the meeting, present or sum up your case, ask questions, and confer with you privately at any point (you may request a private adjournment).
• **Your companion CANNOT:** Answer questions on your behalf (you must explain your own case), or address the meeting if you do not wish them to do so.

4. How to Appeal the Decision

If you are unsatisfied with the grievance decision, you have the right to appeal using the Ebor Standard Appeal Process. The appeal will be heard by an independent panel consisting of at least two senior managers or Trustees who have had no prior involvement in your case.

- **Timeline:** You must submit your written appeal within 10 working days of receiving your written grievance outcome.
- **Recipient:** Your appeal must be sent in writing to the Director of People & Culture.
- **Details required:** Your written appeal must clearly identify the specific grounds of appeal (e.g. incorrect policy application, bias, or procedural unfairness) and the specific remedy you are seeking. Avoid excessive details that blur the clarity of your core grounds.

**This guide is non-contractual and represents a summary of Ebor Academy Trust's Grievance Policy. Please refer to Self Service HR for the full policy documents.*