



S^tPATRICK'S
Technical College



SACE ■ TRAINING ■ APPRENTICESHIPS

Policies & Procedures 1.10

Staff Grievances

Version 4: 25 February 2014
Ratified by Board of Directors: May 2014
Review Date: May 2017





POLICY

It is St Patrick's Technical College's intent and commitment to be fair and reasonable with all employees at all times. We strive to maintain this principle and practice not just in relation to the matters covered by anti-discrimination laws, but to all work, and all workplace matters.

Emanating from our commitment to fostering a fair, reasonable and harmonious workplace, it is St Patrick's Technical College's policy to provide a fair, effective and efficient mechanism to investigate, rectify and resolve problems wherever possible and eliminate dissatisfaction. The College believes the harmonious resolution of grievances in an equitable manner to be consistent with our sense of reconciliation and Christian values.

This policy establishes both informal and formal grievance resolution procedures, structured to promote a fair, sensitive, quick and confidential process. Employees are encouraged to use this policy to resolve job related disputes, problems or concerns. We trust employees to exercise good judgment and good faith in availing themselves of these rights. Employees are assured there will be no recrimination against them for availing themselves of the rights established under this policy.

This policy contributes to maintaining harmonious and constructive work relationships for the benefit of all.

GUIDELINES

1. This policy applies to all employees.
2. All job-related issues, problems, complaints, concerns, misunderstandings or disputes may be the subject of a complaint or grievance process. These may include employment discrimination in any form, working conditions, sexual harassment, intimidation or coercion, workplace safety, disciplinary action, interpretation of College policies, job assignments, or other issues.
3. This policy establishes both informal and formal procedures for grievance resolution. Employees may nominate to use either or both of these avenues.
4. To support grievance resolution procedures, there are designated contact officers who may provide advice or guidance. Contact officers are staff members who receive training in conflict resolution and are selected for their ability to handle difficult or stressful situations. The nominated contact officers are promoted throughout the College and their photograph/profile appear on College notice boards. Contact officers can be approached confidentially whether informal or formal procedures are used.
5. It is important that all grievances be dealt with as quickly as possible. It is the responsibility of all employees, supervisors, management or other related parties to minimise delay and to proceed through the grievance process in a timely and efficient manner. All involved have a further obligation to be absolutely diligent in maintaining confidentiality, and to remain fair, impartial and respectful of people and process.



We have established time frames to support quick progress of matters. An employee with a grievance must commence procedure (formal or informal) within seven working days of the issue arising. A resolution should be aimed for within 30 calendar days.

6. Everyone is reminded that in any grievance procedure, the aim is to ascertain the facts as fully as possible, investigate the facts, gather supporting evidence, and then endeavour to reach a fair and reasonable resolution after evaluating all information. Both sides will be given the opportunity to present their version of events and put forward supporting material.

7. Informal Grievance Procedure

- 7.1. St Patrick's Technical College promotes open communications, has a strong Christian based values framework and encourages employees to share their problems or concerns with supervisors on an informal basis. Employees are encouraged (but not obliged) to endeavour to resolve a problem or concern directly with the person involved. Alternatively, employees may raise a grievance with their line manager, or the contact officer, who shall ensure they are open and accessible to discussing matters and addressing issues.
- 7.2. Where informal procedure does not resolve the issue, an employee may follow the formal process set out below. An employee may opt to follow the formal procedure without first pursuing informal resolution if desired.

8. Formal Grievance Procedure

- 8.1. An employee wishing to embark on formal grievance procedures may raise a complaint with their line manager within seven working days of the issue arising. Employees are reminded the contact officer is available for advice or assistance at any time. An offer of impartial mediation may be made.
- 8.2. A manager shall meet with the employee as soon as practical, with every effort to meet within 24 hours. A written record of the grievance is to be taken, and is to be signed by the employee. The person (or persons) against whom the complaint is made shall be informed at the earliest opportunity, and given adequate time before any discussions regarding the matter are conducted. The full facts of the complaint are to be provided. A written record of reply is to be taken (and signed).
- 8.3. It is the responsibility of the manager to discuss the issue with the parties (together or separately), and others if involved, investigate issues, and gather information or evidence. Based on all the foregoing, an evaluation will be made. Three outcomes are possible. The grievance is substantiated (it occurred), the grievance is unsubstantiated (facts do not support the allegation), or the issue which is the subject of the grievance did not, in fact, occur. A written report of the evaluation, supported by recommendations, is to be filed and a copy provided to the complainant within two weeks of the complaint being lodged. Action which may be taken, depending on the nature and seriousness of the grievance and outcome of



proceedings, range from mediation, requiring a written apology, undertaking training or counselling to receiving a formal warning or dismissal. Access to a professional psychological help agency may be offered.

8.4. The decision made is to be regarded as a final one. An exception will apply where an employee believes that the processes set out in this policy were not followed, or were not followed properly. In that case, an employee may appeal in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. If of the view that the grievance was properly handled, no further action will be taken. If not, another investigation may be undertaken by a person other than the one who conducted the initial investigation.

8.5. The following written records will be made/kept as part of the formal grievance procedure:

- The written statement of the employee with the grievance
- The written statement of the person who has the grievance made against them
- Notes or reports of contact officers
- Notes or reports of those reviewing the grievance
- Any supporting documentation.

The records will be maintained in a confidential "grievances" file. They are not to be placed on individual personnel files.

All records of conversation must be signed by the interviewer and interviewee.

9. We trust employees to exercise good judgement and good faith in availing themselves of the rights under this policy. We would not expect an employee to abuse these privileges by making frivolous or vexatious complaints (e.g. the matter did not occur); to do so will result in counselling, the requirement to provide a written apology, or disciplinary action.

RELATED POLICIES

- *1.1 – Ethos & Charter*
- *1.4 – Staff Code of Conduct*
- *1.5 – Sexual Harassment*
- *1.6 – Equal Opportunity*
- *3.1 – Employee Relations*
- *3.2 – Ethical Business Practices*
- *3.9 – Staff Development*
- *3.11 – Disciplinary Procedures*
- *3.12 – Employment Termination*