

## Age UK Kensington and Chelsea

<b>Title</b>	<b>Grievance Policy</b>	
<b>Policy author and owner</b>	<b>QPDHR</b>	
<b>Date created</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup> November 2021</b>	
<b>Date approved</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> November 2021</b>	
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<b>Planned review date</b>	November 2024	

## Age UK Kensington and Chelsea Policy - Grievance

Age UK Kensington and Chelsea (AUKC) acknowledges its responsibilities in encouraging and promoting good employee relations by resolving issues fairly, equitably and as quickly as possible.

We are committed to ensuring that any grievances are resolved efficiently and professionally, whilst maintaining the provision of high-quality services to clients.

When things go wrong, we are committed to having fair and transparent mechanisms in place for employees to raise complaints and to have them addressed before they escalate. Where possible, we encourage and expect that problems which arise on a day-to-day basis to be dealt with as they occur and resolved as quickly as is reasonably possible. Where appropriate, we will consider mediation as a way of resolving disputes at the earliest opportunity.

Informal resolution may not always be achievable and in such circumstances, this policy provides the formal method for an employee to raise a grievance, in line with the Advisory, Conciliatory and Arbitration Service (ACAS) Code of Practice 2015.

This policy is not intended to address allegations of harassment and bullying. Instead, these should be addressed under our Personal Harassment policy and procedures.

Disclosure of concerns in the public interest are addressed under the Whistleblowing policy.

### Principles

Our policy is based on the following principles:

1. Empowerment - supporting our staff to reach the standards of expected behaviour; and
2. Fairness - to treat people in a fair and consistent way; and
3. Resolution - actively seeking to find solutions; and
4. Transparency - being accountable by having clear procedures for our staff to follow; and

5. Dignity - treating our staff with respect throughout and not pre-judging issues; and
6. Confidentiality - not disclosing information to others throughout the application of Procedures.

### **Definition**

For the purposes of this policy, a grievance might include though is not limited to:

1. The way in which your manager communicates with you; and
2. The way you are treated by a colleague; and
3. Your working environment or conditions; and
4. A breach of your employment rights or contract; and
5. Opportunities for career development.

A grievance may not be raised in relation to a policy or procedure that has its own appeals process. We have dedicated provisions to deal with problems such as:

1. Unethical behaviour, malpractice, abuse, corruption, or fraud. If you suspect any of these, you should refer to the Whistleblowing policy and procedure; and
2. Unfair treatment, bullying, discrimination, or harassment for any reason; and
3. Disputes and negotiation about pay, redundancy or disciplinary action. We deal with these instances through the relevant policies and procedures for these areas.

### **Application**

This policy and procedure apply to all staff employed by AUKC, whether on substantive or fixed-term, permanent, bank or temporary contracts of employment.

### **Standards**

We will maintain six key standards in applying this policy, as follows:

1. We encourage our staff to attempt informal resolution of problems where possible and expect that an informal route is exhausted before referral is made to a formal grievance; and
2. We will maintain a formal Grievance procedure; and
3. When raising a formal grievance, the employee should outline steps taken to resolve the grievance informally; and

4. We will listen to concerns raised without preconception or judgement and as far as reasonable, seek to reach a fair resolution; and
5. We will provide support throughout each stage of the Grievance procedure and give access to a confidential free counselling service through our Employee Assistance Programme; and
6. The outcome of a formal Grievance procedure will be confirmed in writing.

### **Responsibilities**

The Executive team will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Grievance policy is robust and reviewing it periodically and when legislative changes are made.

Managers are responsible for dealing with issues raised swiftly and impartially, seeking to identify the root cause of the problem and reaching a suitable solution. They must keep the aggrieved person informed of steps being taken, timescales and when necessary, any delay.

Accurate records are expected to be kept of conversations held and actions taken. The complainant will be provided with a written outcome of any formal hearing. Any conflict of interest must be declared at the point that a grievance is first raised, and a suitably skilled and independent manager will be appointed to deal.

Employees are responsible for maintaining confidentiality during and after the application of this policy. They will comply with reasonably made requests to attend meetings under this policy. Failure to do so may result in meetings taking place in the absence. It is the responsibility of the employee to arrange for the attendance of a companion at any formal meeting.

### **Legislation**

This policy is based on UK legislation, as follows:

1. Employment Rights Act 1996; and
2. Human Rights Act 1998; and
3. Employment Relations Act 1999; and
4. Equality Act 2010; and
5. Data Protection Act 2018.

### **Representation**

Staff have the right to be accompanied at any formal meeting to discuss the grievance by their trade union or a workplace colleague, provided the companion is not acting in a legal capacity. It is the responsibility of the employee to arrange to be accompanied.

There is no duty on a fellow worker to accept a request to accompany an employee. In the event that an individual does not wish to act as companion or representative - no pressure will be brought to bear.

We reserve a right to appoint a third party to investigate a complaint or Chair hearing.

<b>Responsibility and review of this policy</b>
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Each policy will bear a front sheet summarising the date of approval, date(s) of any amendments and proposed date of review.

Responsibility for this policy rests with the Chief Executive (AUKC) and appointed Executive Lead. The policy was approved in November 2021. It is due for review in November 2024 or sooner if circumstances demand otherwise.