

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Version: 11th August 2025

Grievance Policy	
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Division	Senior Management Team
For use by	All employees and volunteers of Age UK Norfolk
Purpose	To set out the policy and procedures of the Charity in managing grievances
Key related Documents	Disciplinary Policy, Harassment and Bullying Policy
Version	11 th August 2025
Approval Date	SMT 17 th September 2025
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DOCUMENT CONTROL			
DATE	EDITS	EDITOR / REVIEWER	CHANGE CONTROLLER / DOCUMENT OWNER
17 th March 2025	Reformatted, reviewed, and updated with links to ACAS and Gov.uk	Jasmine Toombs Head of Corporate Services	Jasmine Toombs Head of Corporate Services
18 th March 2025	Final review	Ann Donkin Chief Executive	Jasmine Toombs, Head of Corporate Services
5 th August 2025	Harassment & Bullying removed to separate policy; refreshed links to ACAS & Gov.uk	Jasmine Toombs Head of Corporate Services	David Evans Trustee
11 th August 2025	Signed off for SMT approval	Ann Donkin Chief Executive	Jasmine Toombs Head of Corporate Services

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1. Definition

- 1.1. The Oxford Dictionary describes a grievance as being “*something that you think is unfair and that you complain or protest about; a feeling that you have been badly treated*”.
- 1.2. A grievance is a complaint by a volunteer or employee (or group of employees), where there is a collective grievance, the case for the employees may be presented by one employee representing the group (they may be accompanied by another staff member or a trade union representative).
- 1.3. Anybody working in an organisation may at some time have problems or concerns about their work, working conditions or relationships with colleagues that they wish to talk about with management.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This procedure applies to all employees and volunteers of AUKN and is the mechanism to raise official grievances with the charity. It is available to volunteers through the *Volunteer Hub* and to staff via *TEAMS*.
- 2.2. All employees and volunteers have the legal right to have grievances addressed by AUKN. The legal requirement is to follow three key steps:
 - put it in writing
 - meet and discuss
 - appeal.
- 2.3. This procedure explains in more detail how grievances will be followed up for both staff and volunteers.

3. Procedure

- 3.1. Where an employee or volunteer feels they have either encountered instances of harassment or bullying, or wish to raise a concern, they should in the first instance discuss this with their line manager. Where this is not appropriate, an alternative line manager or Head of Department may be approached.
- 3.2. AUKN expects great efforts will have been made to resolve grievances at an informal level before using this procedure. Employees and volunteers should aim to settle most grievances informally with their line manager. This has advantages for all parties, particularly where there might be a close personal relationship between a manager and an employee. It also encourages problems to be settled quickly.

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- 3.3. If a grievance cannot be settled informally this procedure aims to ensure that any grievance is settled fairly, consistently and speedily, and as near to the point of origin as possible.
- 3.4. Any employee or volunteer approached by a colleague to accompany them on any grievance matter should be confident that AUKN welcomes their involvement and contribution. AUKN will ensure there is no unreasonable delay in following this procedure.

4. Raising a grievance

- 4.1. Employees and volunteers should normally raise a grievance with their line manager. However, if the complaint is against the line manager they can approach a more senior manager or the Chief Executive.
- 4.2. For managers who report directly to the Chief Executive and whose complaint is against the Chief Executive the matter must be referred to the Chair of the Trustees. In such cases at least two Trustees must not have any involvement in the initial proceedings but should remain impartial pending any later appeal.
- 4.3. A grievance must normally be raised within 21 Working days of the incident to which it refers, unless there is a good reason for not doing so.
- 4.4. Managers will deal with all formal grievances raised, even if the grievance is not presented in writing.
- 4.5. To raise a formal grievance, harassment or bullying complaint use **Appendix A** attached.

5. Grievance meetings

- 5.1. These meetings are not the same as a disciplinary hearing. A grievance meeting is where discussion and dialogue may produce a constructive outcome with, if appropriate, a shared action plan.
- 5.2. On receiving a written explanation of the grievance, the appropriate manager will invite the employee or volunteer to a meeting as soon as possible, usually within five working days. They will be advised about their right to be accompanied (by a work colleague of their choice, or a representative of the Trade Union to which they may belong).
- 5.3. The meeting will not take place unless the employee or volunteer has informed AUKN about the grievance and AUKN has had a reasonable time to consider the response to that information.
- 5.4. A time and place for the meeting will be agreed with the employee / volunteer.

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- 5.5. If their representative cannot attend on a proposed date, they can suggest another date. This date must suite everybody involved. The new date must not be more than five days after the date originally proposed by AUKN.
- 5.6. At the Grievance Meeting, the employee or volunteer will state their case and reason for the complaint. They will be asked to consider what a satisfactory outcome would be. The Manager hearing the grievance will need to manage the expectations being sought.
- 5.7. They may call witnesses to support their claim. Witnesses may be questioned by those conducting the interview.
- 5.8. Both the complainant and their representative have the right to speak at the meeting.
- 5.9. After the presentation of the grievance, the manager conducting the interview may put questions in order to clarify any outstanding issues. The manager hearing the grievance will then set out their response. If the manager reaches a point where they are not sure how to deal with the grievant, the meeting may be adjourned in order to obtain advice.
- 5.10. If either party has reasonable grounds for thinking that they are at serious risk of violence or intimidating behaviour, the full grievance procedure does not have to be followed. This exemption to the grievance procedure will only apply if the manager hearing the grievance or the individuals believe that they will come to some serious physical or mental harm, that their property or some third party is threatened or that the other party has subjected them to harassment. In this situation, a request can be made to have the grievance heard by an appeals panel.
- 5.11. AUKN will respond in writing to the individual's grievance within a reasonable time, usually within five working days. The letter will include a summary of the key points discussed an action plan. When areas of dispute remain, the letter will identify any outstanding points where agreement was not reached. The notification will also include a reminder of the right to and how to appeal as outlined at section 5.0 below. A review meeting may be necessary at a future appropriate date., to confirm if the actions agreed have been satisfactorily undertaken.

6. Appeals

- 6.1. If an employee or volunteer says they are unhappy with the decision after a grievance hearing, this must be confirmed in writing to their line manager or the Chief Executive except as in 4.2 above. Where an employee or volunteer requests an appeal, they are required to be specific and state their case for appeal.
- 6.2. If the employee is a manager who reports to the Chief Executive and whose grievance

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has been heard by a Trustee, an appeal will be made in writing to another named Trustee.

- 6.3. The appeal should normally take place within 5 working days of the request. AUKN will arrange an appeal panel consisting of the Chairman of the Board plus two Trustees who have not been previously involved with the grievance.
- 6.4. At the same time as inviting the individual to attend the appeal, AUKN will remind them of their right to be accompanied/represented at the appeal hearing. As with the first hearing, AUKN will write to the employee or volunteer with a decision on their grievance as soon as possible. They will also be informed that the appeal hearing is the final stage of the grievance procedure.

7. Keeping records

- 7.1. Records kept will include details:
 - nature of the grievance raised
 - AUKN's response
 - action taken
 - reasons for action taken; and
 - whether there was an appeal and, if so, the outcome.
- 7.2. Records will be treated as confidential and kept in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2003, which gives individuals the right to request and have access to certain data.
- 7.3. Copies of meeting records will be given to the employee or volunteer, although in certain circumstances (for example to protect a witness) AUKN might withhold some information.

Further information can be found:

www.gov.uk/raise-grievance-at-work
www.gov.uk/solve-workplace-dispute/formal-procedures
www.acas.org.uk/grievance-procedure-step-by-step
www.acas.org.uk/discipline-and-grievance
www.acas.org.uk/bullying-at-work
www.acas.org.uk/discrimination-and-the-law/harassment
www.gov.uk/workplace-bullying-and-harassment

YOU SHOULD USE THIS FORM TO SUBMIT A FORMAL GRIEVANCE

Make sure you read and understand the procedures within this policy before you complete this form.

ABOUT YOU	
Your name	
Your job title	
Preferred contact details:	

YOUR GRIEVANCE	
Please briefly summarise the grievance you wish to raise:	
Please provide a detailed summary, including where relevant: dates, times, locations, people involved. <i>Attach further sheets if required.</i>	

Desired outcome

What needs to happen to resolve this issue? What outcome are you hoping to achieve?

Attempts to resolve the issue

Tell us what you have done so far to try to resolve the matter, and who has been involved?

Authorisation

Once completed, this form needs to be sent to your line manager or a member of the Senior Management Team.

By signing this form, you are confirming that the information provided is factual, and that you have read and understood the Grievance, and Harassment & Bullying Policies and the procedures contained therein.

Signature

Date