



Grievance Policy

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1. Definitions

Grievance Manager refers to the individual who, in line with the Trust's Scheme of Delegation, will hear a Stage 2 formal grievance.

Headteacher means a Headteacher where appropriate.

Senior Manager refers to any Senior Manager within DEMAT. This may be either a Director/Senior Manager from the central team or within a constituent academy.

Employee refers to any member of staff, namely teaching, support and central team staff employed to work within DEMAT.

Representative refers to a person chosen by the employee to accompany him/her, who shall be a trade union representative or a workplace colleague.

Adviser refers to any DEMAT Officer duly appointed to the role by the CEO.

Appeal Panel refers to the group of people that may be convened to hear an appeal against a written warning or dismissal.

2. Application of this Policy

This policy applies to all employees of DEMAT based either in schools or within the central team.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time following consultation with recognised unions.

3. Relationship with DEMAT Values

The application of this policy must be applied at all times in a way that reflects the values of DEMAT and our Christian Ethos:

Love – We engender love and tolerance between and for our staff, pupils and others to foster an inspiring atmosphere of mutual support.

Community – We are committed to ensuring our schools are a living part of the community and contribute positively to its needs.

Respect – We do everything to provide a caring, safe and secure place for our staff and pupils to be happy and respected in our schools so they may achieve their potential.

Trust – We acknowledge accountability and responsibility for our actions and ensure that we encourage each other to make brave decisions and then learn from any mistakes.

Ambition – We are determined that our schools offer a place for the joy of learning, enabling those of all abilities to thrive and go on to lead rewarding lives

4. Associated Policies and Documents

This Policy/Procedure should be read in conjunction with the following DEMAT Policies/Procedures:

- Disciplinary Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

DEMAT HR policies can be accessed via our website at: <https://demat.org.uk/policies>

5. Version control

No.	Status of document/changes	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date of approval	Review Date
1.	Baseline Policy introduced	HR Team		Personnel Committee	Sept-18	Annual
2.	Sundry updates		HR Team	Personnel Committee	March 22	
3.	Policy incorporated within new template and scheme of delegation updates.		HR Team	Personnel Committee	Sept-22	Annual
4	Amendments	H Fisher	HR Team & Unions	Personnel Committee	Sept 23	Annual

This document will be reviewed on annual basis.

For all questions in relation to this policy please contact the HR team on hrteam@demat.org.uk.

6. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to outline how concerns that staff have may be resolved in an effective manner and timely manner to support those who work across the Trust.

Please note that concerns regarding suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work should be raised through the process outlined within our Whistleblowing Policy.

Where the grievance relates to a matter covered by another procedure, for example pay or probation, then the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant procedure.

Scheme of Delegation

For all formal grievances, the following delegation model shall apply. If in doubt, please contact your HR advisor for advice.

	<i>Chair of Hearing</i>	<i>Hearing Support</i>	<i>Chair of Appeal</i>
Senior Leadership (Central Team)	CEO	Trustee	Chair of Audit & Risk Committee
Headteacher	Hub Director	Trustee	Chair of Audit & Risk Committee
Academy Leadership Positions (Deputy/ Assistant Headteacher)	Headteacher	Chair of Governance	Head of Governance
All other Academy Positions	Headteacher	LGB member	Hub Director*
All other Central Team Positions	'Head of' or Directorate Lead	Central Team Manager	Central Team Director*

** Must not be from the same Academy or Directorate, or have direct oversight responsible for the Academy/Function*

All Grievance Hearings and Appeal hearings will require a member of HR on the panel.

7. Policy Statement

Within our Trust, we believe that we can resolve concerns by working together to come up with a positive solution. However, sometimes a more formal approach may be needed to resolve a particular situation.

This policy aims to help resolve work-related concerns through two-way communication, respect, and good working relationships, and if necessary, use of the formal grievance process. Grievances should be settled fairly and in a timely manner. Furthermore, they should be first dealt with as close to the source as possible utilising informal approaches to support positive outcomes.

This policy operates based upon the general principles outlined below:

- Those responsible for dealing with employees' grievances will treat them seriously and attempt to resolve them promptly and in a timely manner. There should be no attempt to block an employee's wish to raise the grievance at a higher level.
- Employees are encouraged to raise issues informally with their immediate line manager before seeking to raise the matter formally.
- It is recognised that staff may wish to access support when raising a grievance. Advice may be sought from a relevant union and or the DEMAT HR Team. In addition to this DEMAT's Employee Assistance Programme is readily available.
- This grievance procedure may not be used to complain about dismissal or disciplinary action. An employee who is dissatisfied with any formal warning should submit an appeal under the appropriate procedure.
- Where an employee raises a grievance during any existing process or procedure that process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. However, where the grievance and the existing process are related, it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.
- Employees should recognise that an investigation may be necessary, which may extend the process to a degree, however every effort will be made to ensure timescales within this policy are adhered to. Should an investigation be required, employees will be kept up to date with regards to the progress of the investigation throughout its duration.
- At any stage of the procedure the Grievance Manager may refer to an adviser external to the school for guidance to bring about a resolution of the grievance acceptable to both sides outside the formal procedure. Such conciliation is without prejudice to the position of both parties in the procedure.
- Third parties cannot raise grievances on an employee's behalf.
- The raising of malicious or untrue grievances will be investigated under the disciplinary policy.
- For Stage 2, formal grievances, the Grievance Manager can decide not to hear a grievance in exceptional circumstances such as:
 - If they believe issues are not serious enough, are not of genuine substance and can be resolved informally (therefore there is no benefit to following a formal process).
 - If a colleague has already exhausted the grievance and appeals process regarding the same issues and they have already been investigated and concluded.

Throughout the procedure, mediation may be recommended as an option and where possible, all parties are encouraged to consider this as a valuable way to resolve issues.

8. Procedures

8.1. Stages of the Grievance Procedure

8.1.1. Stage 1: Raising Grievances Informally

Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion. If an employee feels unable to speak to the person causing the grievance, then the employee should speak informally to

their immediate line manager. If this does not resolve the issue, the employee should follow the formal procedure below.

If the employee's grievance is against the line manager personally, the employee should raise their concerns with their line manager's superior, to allow opportunity for the matter to be resolved. If this does not resolve the issue, the employee should follow the formal procedure below.

8.1.2. Stage 2: Formal Grievances

If the employee is not satisfied their concerns have been addressed informally, the employee should submit the grievance in writing, indicating that it is a formal grievance, to the Headteacher or for Central Team staff, their line manager.

Should a Headteacher have a grievance, they should direct this to the HR Team on: hrteam@demat.org.uk and mark it for the attention of Adrian Ball, CEO and Helen Rothwell, Head of HR.

The employee should use the Notification of Grievance Form (Appendix A) to state the grounds of their grievance and the remedy that is being sought.

The Grievance Manager (in most cases this will be either Headteacher or Senior Manager, dependent on the Trust's Scheme of Delegation) will normally meet the employee to hear the grievance and reply as soon as possible, normally within 5 working days, even if it is only an interim reply pending further investigation.

At the meeting the Grievance Manager may be accompanied by another manager who is independent, or a member of the Trust HR Team and notes will be taken of the meeting.

An employee may bring a representative (see terms of reference) to any formal grievance meeting. An employee should tell the Grievance Manager holding the meeting who their chosen representative is, at least 3 working days prior to the meeting.

At any grievance meeting or appeal meeting, an employee's representative may make representations and ask questions, but should not answer questions on the employee's behalf.

If an employee's chosen representative is unavailable at the time a meeting is scheduled and will not be available for more than five working days afterwards, the employee will normally be required to find an alternative representative.

It may be necessary to carry out an investigation into the grievance. The amount of any investigation required will depend on the nature of the complaint and will vary from case to case. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from the employee, any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents.

The employee is encouraged to co-operate fully and promptly during any investigation. This may include informing those handling the investigation of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents, and attending interviews.

An investigation may be started before a grievance meeting is held where this is considered appropriate. In other cases, a grievance meeting may be held before deciding what investigation (if any) to carry out.

If appropriate and/or necessary, in those cases a further grievance meeting may be held with the employee after the investigation and before a decision is reached. This approach may sometimes be deemed appropriate if the Notification of Grievance Form has identified significant detail which can be reviewed in advance of the meeting. This may also be the appropriate approach on occasions where there is a potential delay (e.g. due to school closure periods) and commencing an initial investigation will ensure the matter is dealt with in a timely manner, minimising delays.

The Grievance Manager will write to the employee, following the grievance meeting, to inform the employee of the outcome of the grievance and any further action that will be taken to resolve it. The Grievance Manager may also make recommendations to either the employee, the school, or the Central Team, as a result of the grievance, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Recommendations for retraining
- A facilitated meeting between colleagues
- That a disciplinary investigation takes place, if an allegation of misconduct has been identified.
- If the employee raising the grievance is not satisfied with the outcome, then the employee may appeal in accordance with section 8.1.3 below.

8.1.3. Stage 2: Right of Appeal

If the grievance has not been resolved to the employee's satisfaction they may appeal in writing, setting out the grounds of their appeal, within 5 working days of receiving the written confirmation of the original decision. Details of who to direct appeals to will be included in the grievance outcome letter. The employee must detail how they consider the grievance procedure has not been correctly applied, and/or how the outcome was not reasonable or proportionate.

The appeals panel will be convened in line with the Trust's Scheme of Delegation and, in normal circumstances, within 20 working days after receipt of the appeal. Employees will be invited to an appeal hearing via written notification.

The Appeal Panel may have an HR Advisor or member of the Trust HR Team attend the meeting who may also be involved in its private deliberations but whom will be involved in an advisory capacity only. Notes will be taken at the meeting.

The outcome will be confirmed in writing as soon as possible and usually within 5 working days of the hearing. The panel's decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

9. Appendices

Appendix A - Employee Notification of Grievance

This form should be used to submit a grievance in accordance with Stage 2 of the formal Grievance Procedure.

Please send the completed Employee's Notification of Grievance Form (Appendix A) to your Line Manager. If your grievance relates to your Line Manager, please send it to their Line Manager (in some instances this may be the Headteacher). If your grievance relates to your Headteacher, a Governor or the Chair of Governors, then please send it to the HR Team on: hrteam@demat.org.uk for the attention of Helen Rothwell, Head of HR. Please be aware that to enable resolutions to be made, where possible, you should be willing to disclose your identity and the concerns you detail below with the person(s) you have a grievance against.

You are advised to keep a copy for your records.

Please be aware that the information will, in normal circumstances, be shared with any person(s) complained about.

Name:	
Post Held:	

Please describe briefly:

The nature of your grievance. Please include all relevant evidence including facts, dates, times and names of people involved and any witnesses. (Continue on a separate page if necessary)
When did you first raise your grievance, and with whom?



What action has been taken on your grievance at the informal stage (Stage 1)?
What steps or action do you want to be taken as a remedy for your grievance?

If you are member, have you informed your trade union or professional association representative?	YES/NO
If yes: do you wish the representative to receive correspondence?	YES/NO
If yes: please identify the representative and provide email and postal addresses and telephone number	YES/NO

Print Name:	
Signed:	
Date:	