



Grievance Policy

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Contents

1. Definitions	3
2. Application of this Policy	3
3. Relationship with DEMAT Values	3
4. Associated Policies and Documents	4
5. Version control	4
6. Purpose and Scope	5
6.1. Scheme of Delegation	4
7. Policy Statement	5
8. Procedures	6
8.1. Stages of the Grievance Procedure	6
8.1.1 Raising Grievances Informally	6
8.1.2 Formal Grievances	7
8.1.3 Right to Appeal	8
9. Appendices	9

1. Definitions

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

Headteacher means leader of an Academy.

Line Manager means any manager in an Academy or central team with line management responsibilities.

Employee refers to any member of staff, permanent or temporary 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.

Appeal Panel will consist of an Appeal Chair and a support person as defined by the Scheme of the Delegation.

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

Policy type	DEMAT Trust Policy	
Author	Helen Fisher, HR	
Reviewed by	Helen Rothwell, Head of HR	
Approved by	Adrian Ball, CEO	Date: February 2026
Release date	February 2026	
Review	ANNUAL Policies will be reviewed in line with DEMAT's internal policy schedule and/or updated when new legislation comes into force.	
Description of changes	The policy has been reviewed in line with legislation and best practice to provide clarity, greater consistency and support for staff. For further information regarding the specific changes please contact the HR Team at hrteam@demat.org.uk	

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 staff can raise concerns and the approach that will be taken to reach a resolution.

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 policy, for example pay or probation, then the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant procedure.

The chair of the grievance hearing and any subsequent appeal will be determined by the Scheme of Delegation.

7. Policy Statement

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 approached fairly and in a timely manner. Furthermore, they should be first dealt with as close to the source as possible and utilising informal approaches to support positive outcomes.

This policy operates based upon the general principles outlined below:

- Grievances should be raised by the employee without unreasonable delay and normally within 3 months of the incident(s) occurring unless there are exceptional circumstances/ reasons for the delay in raising a complaint.
- 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 working together to come up with a positive resolution. It is recognised that sometimes a more formal approach is more appropriate for the circumstances.
- 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 policy may not be used to complain about dismissal or disciplinary action. An employee who is dissatisfied with any formal warning issued under the disciplinary policy should submit an appeal in accordance with the disciplinary 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, 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.
- Raising malicious or untrue grievances will be investigated under the disciplinary policy.
- The Grievance Manager may decide not to hear a formal grievance in exceptional circumstances such as:
 - If they believe the 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.

- The Trust recognises it is important to develop and promote policies and systems to ensure that our pupils, staff and anyone associated with our Trust are not unlawfully discriminated against and we encourage a commitment to equality, diversity and fair treatment of all. We therefore consider the impact of people policies, on those individuals with a protected characteristic(s).

8. Sexual Harassment

Openness and the ability to speak up is an important part of our culture across the Trust. Sexual harassment is unacceptable, and complaints of sexual harassment will be dealt with promptly and sensitively. Employees who feel they have been sexually harassed are encouraged to speak to their Line Manager or the HR Team in the first instance. The Trust has a separate Bullying and Harassment policy which should be referred to for further guidance and support.

9. Informal Procedure

Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion. If an employee feels unable to speak to the person causing the grievance, the employee should speak informally to their immediate line manager. If the employee's grievance is against the line manager, the employee should raise their concerns with their line manager's superior, to allow opportunity for the matter to be resolved. If the issue remains unresolved, the employee should follow the formal procedure set out below.

10. Formal Procedure – Stage 1

10.1 Raising the grievance

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 (Academy staff) or, their line manager (Central Team staff). If the matter relates to the Headteacher or Line Manager the matter should be raised with the Line Managers superior.

Should a Headteacher have a grievance, they should direct this to the HR Team at: hrteam@demat.org.uk and mark it for the attention of the CEO and Director of People.

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.

10.2 The grievance meeting

The Grievance Manager will meet the employee to hear the grievance. The Grievance Manager will normally be accompanied by a member of the Trust HR Team at the meeting.

The employee may be accompanied by a Trade Union Official or Work Colleague at the meeting. The employee should tell the Grievance Manager who their chosen representative is, at least 3 working days prior to the meeting. The representative may make representations and ask questions but must not answer questions on behalf of the employee.

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.

10.3 Investigation

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 and Physical evidence.

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 these cases, the grievance meeting may be held with the employee after the investigation has commenced but 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.

In other cases, a grievance meeting may be held before deciding what investigation (if any) to carry out.

10.4 Outcome

Following the grievance meeting and where necessary investigation, the Grievance Manager will write to the employee, to inform the employee of the outcome of the grievance and any further action that will be taken to resolve it, normally within 5 working days of the meeting taking place. If further investigation is required and the Grievance Manager is unable to provide a full response within 5 working days, the employee will be advised and kept informed of progress.

Once the investigation has concluded, the Grievance Manager may also make recommendations to the employee, and Trust, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Recommendations for retraining
- A facilitated meeting between colleagues (including informal or formal mediation)
- That a disciplinary investigation takes place, if an allegation of misconduct has been identified.

11 Appeal – Stage 2

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 (grievance outcome). 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 employee may be accompanied by a Trade Union Official or Work Colleague at the appeal hearing. A member of the HR team may be present in an advisory capacity to the panel. Notes will be taken of 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.

12. 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 the Director of People.

Should a Headteacher have a grievance, please direct this to the HR Team at: hrteam@demat.org.uk and mark it for the attention of the CEO and Director of People.

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 contained in this form 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?
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:	