



Grievance Policy

Updated: 3 April 25

Aim

We want FEAST With Us (hereby known as FEAST) to be a happy, fulfilling and respectful place to work but we also recognise that, as with any workplace, challenges may arise from time-to-time where help is needed to reach a resolution. FEAST is absolutely committed to dealing with employee grievances fairly, consistently and without unreasonable delay. This policy sets out the way in which an employee should make any complaints they have about work-related matters and the way in which FWU will deal with these complaints.

Policy Scope

- Permanent employees
- Employees on fixed-term/rolling contracts
- May be extended, in certain cases, to regular contractors and other parties at the discretion of the Operations Manager / CEO

General Principles

1. All complaints and grievances will be heard with kindness and in the hope to find a swift and mutually acceptable solution.
2. Grievances will be handled with confidentiality, so far as is reasonably possible, and all Employees must keep information learnt during this process confidential.

3. Employees will not be subjected to detriment for raising a grievance in good faith, even if the grievance is not upheld. However, if someone deliberately gives false information, is dishonest or makes a false complaint during the grievance process, this may lead to more formal action.
-

The Grievance Procedure

Informal Discussion

In most cases and where appropriate, FEAST will encourage the employee to resolve the grievance informally through discussing it with their manager to try to agree a solution. A member of the Senior Leadership Team (i.e. CEO, Operations Manager, Fundraising Manager) could be present if this would aid in mediation. However, if the grievance is too serious, if the employee or manager thinks it is not appropriate in the circumstances to deal with the grievance informally, or if discussing the grievance informally does not work, the employee's grievance will be dealt with formally.

If the employee's grievance involves their manager, but the employee would like to resolve it informally, they should contact the Operations Manager or CEO.

In the case of the formal grievance process being invoked, the following steps will be followed:

Step 1 - Formal Statement of Grievance

- a. To raise the matter formally, the employee should write to their immediate supervisor/manager setting out the facts of the grievance, trying to give specific examples of the complaint, copies of any documents, names of witnesses, and dates where possible.
- b. Where an employee's grievance involves their immediate supervisor, the employee should write to the Operations Manager or a member of the Senior Leadership Team who is not the subject of the grievance.
- c. Employees should also state in this communication that they are raising a formal statement of grievance.

Step 2 - Investigation of Grievance

If needed, the individual managing the grievance (the 'grievance chair') may ask the employee to attend an investigatory interview prior to a formal grievance meeting. They may also take statements from the employee or witnesses and may review documents. No decision will be taken until after a grievance hearing has been held. An employee does not normally have the right to bring a companion to an investigative interview, however the grievance chair will normally allow the employee to bring a companion. This companion should be a colleague, a trade union official or a trade union representative.

Step 3 - Formal Grievance Meeting

The purpose of a grievance or appeal meeting is for the employee to explain their grievance and how they think that it should be resolved, using evidence available to make representations, allowing the chair to come to a decision. Grievance meetings will always be held with the utmost respect and kindness towards all parties involved.

- a. Within five (5) working days of receiving the grievance, the grievance chair will respond, in writing, to the employee's written grievance, inviting the employee to attend a meeting where the grievance can be discussed.
- b. At least 3 working days' notice of the meeting will usually be provided to the employee and they will be informed of their right to be accompanied by a colleague, a trade union official or a trade union representative (which if not an employed official, must be certified by their union as competent to accompany a worker). The employee should advise the employer of the identity of the companion (or any change in their choice of companion) and whether they will require any special adjustments to be made for their or their companion's attendance, at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting.
- c. The role of the companion in a formal meeting is to make notes, confer with the employee and if the employee requests it, to address the hearing to state the employee's case and respond to any views expressed at the meeting. The companion does not have the right to answer questions or address the hearing if the employee does not request this and must not prevent the employer from explaining its case.
- d. If an employee or their companion is unable to attend the meeting at the time, date and place specified by the chair, they must notify the chair of the meeting as soon as possible in writing. Except in the case of an emergency, this should be at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting and the employee should advise of a time when they and their choice of companion will be available within five working days of the original proposed meeting and, provided this is reasonable, a new meeting time will be agreed.
- e. Employees must make every effort to attend any scheduled meeting under this procedure. If they are unable to attend more than two scheduled meetings, the chair reserves the right to make a decision about your grievance using available evidence but in your absence.
- f. If the chair or employee will be referring to any documentation during the formal meeting, this should be sent to the other party at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting, so that they have a reasonable chance to prepare.
- g. The chair may, in their absolute discretion, adjourn a meeting to carry out further investigations, after which the meeting will usually reconvene.
- h. After the meeting, the chair will give the employee a decision in writing, normally within 24 hours. This must give full reason for the decision, so the employee is completely informed.

Step 4 - Appeal

- a. If the employee is unhappy with the grievance chair's decision and they wish to appeal, they should write to a more senior manager, a member the Senior Leadership Team (Operations Manager, Fundraising Manager, CEO) or a member of the Board of Trustees within five (5) working days of the date of the decision, saying that they disagree with the decision and giving their reason(s) why and providing any new evidence they seek to rely on.
- b. The employee will be invited to an appeal meeting, normally within ten (10) working days of the appeal chair receiving the employee's letter of appeal. The employee's appeal will either be a review of the grievance decision made or a complete rehearing, at the appeal chair's discretion. The right to be accompanied to the appeal meeting is the same as set out in step 3 above.
- c. After the meeting the employee will be given a decision, normally within 24 hours. The appeal chair's decision is final and there is no further right to appeal. The employee, however, will be provided with any support that is appropriate and possible, as with any other colleague.

Suspension during the Grievance Process

Employees will not normally be suspended during the grievance process, but FEAST may choose to suspend the employee if this is deemed helpful and reasonable to the process or if this is for their own wellbeing. Employees will continue to receive their normal pay and benefits during this time, and it is in no way a form of disciplinary action.

Please contact the Operations Manager should you have any queries about this procedure. For the avoidance of doubt, this procedure is non-contractual and is a statement of the practice and the policy and procedures that FEAST will usually follow using any such process. FEAST reserves the right to deviate from the procedure set out in this policy or to change it at any time.

Contacting Us

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact us at info@feastwithus.org.uk.

Reviewed and approved on 3 April 2025 by Caroline Monkhouse Flower, CEO, and Helen Burgess, Chair of the Board of Trustees, on behalf of the board.

Signed by:



Helen Burgess
Chair of the Board of Trustees

FEAST With Us, Registered Charity in England and Wales

Charity Number: 1172884

Address: 2A, The Quadrant, Epsom, KT17 4RH