

## SECTION 7. OUR FORMAL PROCEDURES

### 7.1 YOUR RIGHT TO BE ACCOMPANIED

- 7.1.1** An employee invited to any formal meeting stated in any of the respective policies listed under this section of the employee handbook will have the right to be accompanied.
- 7.1.2** For clarity, there is no right to be accompanied at an investigation meeting, unless the Council exercises discretion in extenuating circumstances.
- 7.1.3** Under your right to be accompanied, your companion may be either a trade union representative or a colleague. You must tell the person holding the meeting who your chosen companion is, in good time before the meeting.
- 7.1.4** At the meeting, your companion may make representations and ask questions on your behalf, however, would not be permitted to answer questions on your behalf. You may talk privately with them at any time during the meeting.
- 7.1.5** Acting as a companion is voluntary and your colleagues are under no obligation to do so. If they agree to do so they will be allowed reasonable time off from duties without loss of pay to act as a companion.
- 7.1.6** You and your companion (if any) should make every effort to attend meetings. If you or your companion cannot attend at the time specified, you should inform the person holding the meeting immediately and we will try, within reason, to agree an alternative time. If your chosen companion is unavailable at the time a meeting is scheduled and will not be available for more than five working days afterwards, we may ask you to choose someone else.
- 7.1.7** We may, at our discretion, allow you to bring a companion who is not a colleague or union representative (for example, a member of your family) if this will help overcome a disability, or if you have difficulty understanding English.

### 7.2 FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

- 7.2.1** Under this policy, any employee with at least 26 weeks' service will be permitted to request a change to their working pattern. This may be to vary or reduce your working hours/days or to work in a different location such as from home.
- 7.2.2** Employees are only permitted to make one flexible working application every 12-months.

#### How do I make a flexible working request?

- 7.2.3** Your flexible working request should be submitted to your manager in writing and should be dated. It should:
- state that it is a flexible working request;
  - explain the change being requested and proposed start date;
  - identify the impact the change would have on the business and how that might be dealt with; and
  - state whether you have made any previous flexible working requests.
- 7.2.4** We may require you to complete a formal flexible working request form and if so, this will be provided to you.
- 7.2.5** We will arrange a meeting at a convenient time and place to discuss your request.
- 7.2.6** We may decide to grant your request in full without a meeting, in which case we will write to you with our decision.

#### Decision

- 7.2.7** We will inform you in writing of our decision as soon as possible after the meeting.
- 7.2.8** If your request is accepted, we will write to you with details of the new working arrangements and the date on which they will commence. You will be asked to sign and return a copy of the letter.
- 7.2.9** If we cannot immediately accept your request, we may require you to undertake a trial period to determine whether the request can be accommodated, before reaching a final decision on your request.
- 7.2.10** Unless otherwise agreed, changes to your terms of employment will be permanent.
- 7.2.11** If we feel your request cannot be accommodated, we may reject your request for one or more of the following business reasons:
- the burden of additional costs;
  - detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand;
  - inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
  - inability to recruit additional staff;
  - detrimental impact on quality;
  - detrimental impact on performance;
  - insufficiency of work during the periods that you propose to work; or
  - planned changes.
- 7.2.12** If we are unable to agree to your request, we will write to tell you which of those reasons applies in your case. If you are unhappy with the decision, you will have the right to appeal this. You should make your appeal in writing within the time period, and to the name stated in your outcome letter. Your appeal should be dated and state on what grounds you are appealing. A further meeting will then be scheduled to discuss your appeal where you will have the right to be accompanied.
- 7.2.13** After the conclusion of the appeal process, you will be provided with a written appeal outcome, the decision of which is final, meaning there would be no further course of action which can be taken under this policy.

### **7.3 POOR PERFORMANCE POLICY**

- 7.3.1** There may be instances where an employee's performance falls below the standards required by the Council. This policy is designed to help and encourage employees to achieve and maintain standards of job performance in the event the Council has concerns that this has fallen below the expected level.
- 7.3.2** For the avoidance of doubt this policy is non-contractual and the Council reserves the right not to apply this policy in full to those employees who have less than two years' service.

#### **Informal Performance Management**

- 7.3.3** If performance concerns are evidenced, we will speak to you informally in the first instance to explore the reasons for the poor performance. From this meeting targets for improvement will likely be set. We will make every effort to ensure that you understand the level of performance expected of you and that you receive adequate training and supervision.

#### **Formal Performance Management**

- 7.3.4** If following the informal stage your standard of performance is still not adequate you will likely be subject to formal performance management in line with this policy. The stages of this process are as follows:

##### **Stage One – First Improvement Notice**

**7.3.1** Following a Stage One performance hearing, if we decide that your performance is unsatisfactory, we will give you a first improvement notice.

**7.3.2** The improvement notice will normally remain active for 12 months from the end of the review period, after which time it will be disregarded for the purposes of performance management. Your performance will be monitored during the review period and we will write to inform you of the outcome.

#### **Stage Two – Final Improvement Notice**

**7.3.3** If your performance does not improve within the review period set out in a first improvement notice, or if there is further evidence of poor performance while your first improvement notice is still active, we may decide to hold a Stage Two performance hearing. Following a Stage Two performance hearing, if we decide that your performance is unsatisfactory, we will give you a final improvement notice, which will normally remain active for 12 months from the end of the review period.

#### **Stage Three – Dismissal**

**7.3.4** If your performance has not improved to the required standard or is still unsatisfactory dismissal will normally result. As an alternative to the dismissal, the manager may consider demotion, which would involve a reallocation of duties on a salary commensurate with the post, as an appropriate sanction.

**7.3.5** If we cannot transfer you to a more suitable work and there is still no improvement after a reasonable time, or the standard of achievement is not maintained, you will be subject to further performance management that may result in your dismissal.

#### **Review Periods**

**7.3.6** Following each warning there will be a review period. At the end of this review period we will meet to discuss your performance and whether you have improved your performance to the required standard / and/or hit the required targets which were previously set. Following this meeting, the next steps will be one of the following:

- If your manager is satisfied with your performance, no further action will be taken;
- If your manager is not satisfied, the matter may be progressed to the next stage of the poor performance process;
- If your manager feels that there has been a substantial but insufficient improvement, the review period may be extended.

#### **The Hearing**

**7.3.7** Any hearing will normally be held by your manager. At all stages you will be invited into the hearing with appropriate notice and will be advised in writing which will set out the alleged unsatisfactory performance and the likely outcome if we decide after the hearing that your performance is unsatisfactory. You will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider your response before any formal meeting.

**7.3.8** The aims of a performance hearing will usually include:

- Setting out the required standards that we believe you may have failed to meet and going through any relevant evidence that we have gathered.
- You will be given an opportunity at that meeting to state your case and present information and facts that you feel are relevant before any decision is made.
- Establishing the likely causes of poor performance including any reasons why any measures taken so far have not led to the required improvement.
- Identifying whether there are further measures, such as additional training or supervision, which may improve performance.
- Where appropriate, discussing targets for improvement and a time-scale for review.

- If dismissal is a possibility, establishing whether there is any likelihood of a significant improvement being made within a reasonable time and whether there is any practical alternative to dismissal, such as redeployment.

### **The Outcome**

**7.3.9** We will inform you in writing of the decision and the reasons for it, where possible also explaining this information to you in person.

**7.3.10** The warning will set out:

- the areas in which you have not met the required performance standards, explaining any further specific targets which have been set and the review period;
- any measures, such as additional training or supervision, which will be taken with a view to improving performance; and
- the consequences of failing to improve within the review period, or of further unsatisfactory performance.

### **Right of Appeal**

**7.3.1** If you are unhappy with the decision, you will have the right to appeal this. You should make your appeal in writing within the time period, and to the name stated in your outcome letter. A further meeting will then be scheduled to discuss your appeal, where you will again have the right to be accompanied.

**7.3.2** The appeal hearing will reconsider the original decision and you will have the opportunity to put forward new evidence which was not available during the first hearing and/or raise complaints of a flaw of the original decision-making process, such as the failure to follow procedures or the failure to give you a fair hearing.

**7.3.3** After the conclusion of the appeal process, you will be provided with a written appeal outcome, the decision of which is final, meaning there would be no further course of redress under this policy.

## **7.4 SICKNESS ABSENCE/CAPABILITY POLICY**

**7.4.1** The Council may need to dismiss an employee whose attendance does not meet an acceptable standard either because of a long-term absence or because of a series of short-term absences. Such dismissals do not depend on any wrongdoing on the employee's part and do not mean that the Council does not accept that their absences are genuinely due to illness or injury. Rather, dismissal is recognition that unfortunately the employee is no longer able to perform their role or attend work on a sufficiently regular basis to make their continued employment a viable option.

### **Short-term absence**

**7.4.2** An employee who is absent on more than four occasions within a eight month period will be invited to a meeting to discuss their attendance. The meeting will usually be conducted by the employee's line manager and the employee will have a right to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trade union official on the same basis as set out in the performance management procedure.

**7.4.3** At the meeting the employee will be asked to explain the level of their absence. Where there is any indication that the absences are caused by an underlying medical condition then the matter may be dealt with under the procedure for long-term absence set out below. The Council may also seek medical evidence from either the employee's doctor or an occupational health specialist in which case the meeting will be adjourned for a report to be obtained

**7.4.4** Subject to any medical evidence, the manager conducting this first-stage meeting may decide to issue a warning to the employee setting out the Council's expectations regarding attendance and indicating the level of improvement needed. A review period will normally be set which may range from one month to 12 months depending on the circumstances.

- 7.4.5** If the employee's attendance does not improve to the extent required, they may at any stage in the review period be invited to attend a second-stage meeting to discuss the matter. The meeting will again be conducted by the line manager and the employee will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or trade union official. This meeting may result in an extension of the review period, or the issuing of a final written warning requiring the employee's attendance to improve and setting out the level of improvement required over a specified period of up to 12 months.
- 7.4.6** If the employee does not meet this standard and there is no underlying condition where reasonable adjustments would assist the employee to attend, then they may be dismissed. A final meeting will be convened which shall be conducted by a manager of appropriate authority seniority and will consider any representations made by or on behalf of the employee who will once again have the right to be accompanied by a fellow employee or trade union official.
- 7.4.7** Any dismissal arising out of this meeting will be with notice and will include the right of appeal which must be exercised within the period stated in the dismissal letter, (usually five working days of the decision being communicated).

#### **Long-term sickness absence**

- 7.4.8** Where an employee is absent for an extended period – or it is clear that their absence is likely to continue for some time – then the Council will want to investigate the prospects for their return and consider what actions can be taken to facilitate this. The extent to which the Council can continue to accommodate an employee's absence will depend on a range of factors, including the role of the employee and the prevailing circumstances of the business.
- 7.4.9** The Council will seek medical advice as to the employee's condition either from the appropriate professionals caring for the employee or from a specialist occupational health practitioner or doctor. The focus will be on ascertaining when the employee will be able to return to work and what steps the Council can take to help support the employee back to work.
- 7.4.10** An employee is not obliged to consent to any medical reports or records being shared with the Council as part of this process. However, in the absence of medical evidence the Council will have to work on the basis of what information is available in reaching its decision which is likely to be to the employee's detriment.
- 7.4.11** One or more meetings will be arranged with the employee to discuss their condition, the prospects for any return to work, and whether anything more can be done by the Council to help. The employee will be entitled to be accompanied at the meeting by a fellow employee or trade union official.
- 7.4.12** Every effort will be made to make suitable arrangements for the meeting to allow the employee to attend. Where the employee is simply too ill to take part in the process, the Council may proceed to dismissal in the absence of a meeting taking into account any representations made on the employee's behalf.
- 7.4.13** Where it appears that the employee will be unable to return to work within a reasonable time frame then the Council may need to consider dismissal.
- 7.4.14** Any dismissal will be with notice and will include the right of appeal which must be exercised within the period stated in the dismissal letter.

## **7.5 DISCIPLINARY POLICY**

- 7.5.1** This policy is designed to help and encourage all employees to achieve and maintain standards of conduct, attendance and job performance and this policy may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants this.
- 7.5.2** For the avoidance of doubt this policy is non-contractual and the Council reserves the right not to apply this policy in full to those employees who have less than two years' service.

#### **What may constitute as misconduct?**

**7.5.3** The following which is not intended to be an exhaustive list are examples of matters that will normally be regarded as misconduct and will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure:

- Minor breaches of your contract terms or our policies;
- Damage to, or unauthorised use of, our property;
- Lateness;
- Unauthorised absence from work;
- Refusal to follow management instructions;
- Excessive personal use of our telephones/email/internet;
- Obscene language or other offensive behaviour;
- Negligence in the performance of your duties.

**What may constitute as gross misconduct?**

**7.5.4** Gross misconduct is a serious breach of contract and includes misconduct which, in our opinion, is likely to prejudice our business or reputation or irreparably damage the working relationship and trust between us. If evidenced, gross misconduct will normally lead to dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice (summary dismissal).

**7.5.5** The following which is not intended to be an exhaustive list are examples of matters that are normally regarded as gross misconduct:

- Theft, or unauthorised removal of our property or the property of a colleague, contractor, customer or member of the public;
- Fraud, forgery or other dishonesty, including fabrication of expense claims and time sheets;
- Physical violence or bullying including actual or threatened violence, or behaviour which provokes violence;
- Deliberate and serious damage to property such as deliberate damage to our buildings, fittings, property or equipment, or the property of a colleague, contractor, customer or member of the public;
- Serious misuse of our property or name;
- Deliberately accessing internet sites containing pornographic, offensive or obscene material;
- Serious insubordination including repeated or serious failure to obey instructions, or any other serious act of insubordination;
- Unlawful discrimination or harassment;
- Bringing the Council into serious disrepute;
- Serious incapability at work brought on by alcohol or illegal drugs or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or other substances during working hours;
- Causing loss, damage or injury through serious negligence;
- Serious breach of health and safety rules or serious or repeated breach of health and safety rules or serious misuse of safety equipment;
- Serious breach of confidence or unauthorised use or disclosure of confidential information or failure to ensure that confidential information in your possession is kept secure;
- Accepting or offering a bribe or other secret payment or other breach of our Anti-Bribery policy;

- Conviction for a criminal offence that in our opinion may affect our reputation or our relationships with our staff, customers or the public, or otherwise affects your suitability to continue to work for us;
- Possession, use, supply or attempted supply of illegal drugs;
- Serious neglect of duties, or a serious or deliberate breach of your contract or operating procedures;
- Knowingly breach of statutory rules affecting your work;
- Unauthorised use, processing or disclosure of personal data contrary to our Data Protection Policy;
- Harassing or discriminatory behaviour contrary to our Equality and Diversity Policy and Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy;
- Refusal to disclose any of the information required by your employment or any other information that may have a bearing on the performance of your duties;
- Giving false information as to qualifications or entitlement to work (including immigration status) in order to gain employment or other benefits;
- Knowingly taking parental, paternity or adoption leave when not eligible to do so or for a purpose other than supporting a child;
- Making a disclosure of false or misleading information under our Whistleblowing Policy maliciously, for personal gain, or otherwise in bad faith;
- Making untrue allegations in bad faith against a colleague;
- Victimising a colleague who has raised concerns, made a complaint or given evidence or information under our Whistleblowing Policy, Anti-Bribery policy, Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy, Grievance Policy, Disciplinary Policy or otherwise;
- Serious misuse of our information technology systems (including misuse of developed or licensed software, use of unauthorised software and misuse of e-mail and the internet) contrary to our Information and Communications Systems Policy;
- Undertaking unauthorised paid or unpaid employment during your working hours.

### **Confidentiality**

- 7.5.6** Our aim is to deal with disciplinary matters sensitively and with due respect for the privacy of any individuals involved. All employees must treat as confidential any information communicated to them in connection with an investigation or disciplinary matter.
- 7.5.7** You, and anyone accompanying you (including witnesses), must not make covert electronic recordings of any meetings or hearings conducted under this procedure. It may be appropriate on occasion to make a recording of the meeting in order for thorough and verbatim notes to be able to be made following the hearing. If the Council intends to record the meeting, this will be explained to you and your consent sought.
- 7.5.8** You will normally be told the names of any witnesses whose evidence is relevant to disciplinary proceedings against you, unless we believe that a witness's identity should remain confidential.

### **Investigations**

- 7.5.9** Unless the misconduct in questions does not require this, an investigation will usually be required before proceeding to a formal disciplinary hearing.
- 7.5.10** An investigation meeting is simply a fact-finding meeting to enable the Council to establish a fair and balanced view of the facts relating to any disciplinary allegations against you, before deciding whether to proceed with a disciplinary hearing. The amount of investigation required will depend on the nature of the allegations and will vary from case to case. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from you and any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents.

**7.5.11** You must co-operate fully and promptly in any investigation. This will include informing us of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents to us and attending investigative interviews if required.

### **Criminal allegations**

**7.5.12** Where your conduct is the subject of a criminal investigation, charge or conviction we will investigate the facts before deciding whether to take formal disciplinary action.

**7.5.13** We will not usually wait for the outcome of any Police action or prosecution before deciding what action, if any, to take. Where you are unable or have been advised not to attend a disciplinary hearing or say anything about a pending criminal matter, we may have to take a decision based on the available evidence.

**7.5.14** A criminal investigation, charge or conviction relating to conduct outside work may be treated as a disciplinary matter if we consider that it is relevant to your employment.

### **Suspension**

**7.5.15** In some circumstances we may need to suspend you from work which we will always endeavour to keep as short as possible. While suspended you should not visit our premises or contact any of our clients, customers, suppliers, contractors or staff, unless you have been authorised to do so by your manager.

**7.5.16** Suspension of this kind is not a disciplinary penalty and does not imply that any decision has already been made about the allegations.

### **Notification of a hearing**

**7.5.17** Following any investigation, if we consider there are grounds for disciplinary action, you will be required to attend a disciplinary hearing. We will inform you in writing of the allegations against you, the basis for those allegations, and what the likely range of consequences will be if we decide after the hearing that the allegations are true. We will also include the following where appropriate:

- a summary of relevant information gathered during the investigation;
- a copy of any relevant documents which will be used at the disciplinary hearing; and
- a copy of any relevant witness statements, except where a witness's identity is to be kept confidential, in which case we will give you as much information as possible while maintaining confidentiality.

**7.5.18** We will give you written notice of the date, time and place of the disciplinary hearing. The hearing will be held as soon as reasonably practicable, but you will be given a reasonable amount of time to prepare your case based on the information we have given you.

### **Procedure at disciplinary hearings**

**7.5.19** If you or your companion cannot attend the hearing you should inform us immediately and we will arrange an alternative time. You must make every effort to attend the hearing, and failure to attend without good reason may be treated as misconduct in itself. If you fail to attend without good reason or are persistently unable to do so (for example for health reasons), we may have to take a decision based on the available evidence.

**7.5.20** Who chairs the hearing will depend on the circumstances, and will normally be your line manager, or another appropriate member of the management team.

**7.5.21** If you have difficulty at any stage of the procedure because of a disability, you should discuss the situation with your manager as soon as possible.

**7.5.22** At the disciplinary hearing we will go through the allegations against you and the evidence that has been gathered. You will be able to respond and present any evidence of your own. Your companion may make representations to us and ask questions but should not answer questions on your behalf. You may confer privately with your companion at any time during the hearing.

**7.5.23** We may adjourn the disciplinary hearing if we need to carry out any further investigations such as re-interviewing witnesses in the light of any new points you have raised at the hearing. You



will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider any new information obtained before the hearing is reconvened.

**7.5.24** We will inform you in writing of our decision as soon as reasonably possible following the hearing. This will set out the nature of the misconduct, our findings and any action required by you.

**7.5.25** In the instance of a written warning, the letter will also set out the time period this remains active on your file, and the likely consequences of further misconduct in that active period.

**Disciplinary sanctions**

**7.5.26** We aim to treat all employees fairly and consistently, and a penalty imposed on another employee for similar misconduct will usually be taken into account but should not be treated as a precedent as each case will be assessed on its own merits.

**7.5.27** There may be instances where we decide not to proceed for formal disciplinary action and may instead issue you with a letter of concern which is an informal warning.

**7.5.28** Subject to the circumstances and the conduct in question will determine what sanction is applied would be one of the following:

<b>First Written Warning</b>	This will usually be appropriate for a first act of misconduct where there are no other active written warnings on your disciplinary record.	This will usually remain on your file for a period of 6-12 months
<b>Final Written Warning</b>	This will usually be appropriate for further misconduct where an active first written warning is on your file, or misconduct which is considered sufficiently serious to move straight to a final written warning.	This will usually remain on your file for a period of 12 months
<b>Dismissal (with notice)</b>	This will usually be appropriate for further misconduct where there is an active final written warning on your record.	
<b>Dismissal (Gross Misconduct)</b>	Any gross misconduct regardless of whether there are active warnings on your record will usually result in immediate dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice (summary dismissal).	

**Alternatives to dismissal**

**7.5.29** In some instances where appropriate we may at our discretion consider alternatives to dismissal which could include demotion or the transfer to another role or department, and will usually be accompanied by a final written warning and examples include:

**Appeals process**

**7.5.30** If you are unhappy with the decision, you will have the right to appeal this. You should make your appeal in writing within the time period, and to the name stated in your disciplinary outcome letter. A further meeting will then be scheduled to discuss your appeal, where you will again have the right to be accompanied.

- 7.5.31** If you are appealing against dismissal, the date on which dismissal takes effect will not be delayed pending the outcome of the appeal. However, if your appeal is successful, you will be reinstated with no loss of continuity or pay.
- 7.5.32** If you raise any new matters in your appeal, we may need to carry out further investigation. If any new information comes to light, we will provide you with a summary including, where appropriate, copies of additional relevant documents and witness statements. You will have a reasonable opportunity to consider this information before the hearing, and you or your companion may comment on any new evidence arising during the appeal before any decision is taken.
- 7.5.33** The appeal hearing may be a complete re-hearing of the matter, or it may be a review of the fairness of the original decision in the light of the procedure that was followed and any new information that may have come to light. This will be at our discretion depending on the circumstances of your case. In any event the appeal will be dealt with as impartially as possible.
- 7.5.34** Where possible, the appeal hearing will be conducted impartially by a more senior Manager who has not been previously involved in the case.
- 7.5.35** We may adjourn the appeal hearing if we need to carry out any further investigations in the light of any new points you have raised at the hearing. You will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider any new information obtained before the hearing is reconvened.
- 7.5.36** Following the appeal hearing we may uphold or overturn the original decision or substitute a different penalty and you will be provided with a written appeal outcome, the decision of which is final, meaning there would be no further course of redress under this policy.

## **7.6 GRIEVANCE POLICY**

- 7.6.1** If you have a grievance or complaint to do with your work or the people you work with you should, wherever possible, start by talking it over with your manager. By raising the matter informally in the first instance, your manager may be able to assist and resolve the situation to your satisfaction without the need for a full formal grievance process being undertaken.
- 7.6.2** For the avoidance of doubt this policy is non-contractual and the Council reserves the right not to apply this policy in full to those employees who have less than two years' service.

### **Formal grievance**

- 7.6.3** You do however have the right to raise a formal grievance, and you may feel this is more appropriate in your circumstances. If so, you should set out your grievance in writing to your manager. You should stick to the facts and avoid language that is insulting or abusive. Where your grievance is against your manager, and you feel unable to approach them directly you should talk to another appropriate member of the management team.
- 7.6.4** The written grievance should contain a brief description of the nature of your complaint, including any relevant facts, dates, and names of individuals involved. In some situations, we may ask you to provide further information.

### **Investigations**

- 7.6.5** It may be necessary for us to carry out an investigation into your grievance. The length of any investigation required will depend on the nature of the allegations and will vary from case to case. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from you and any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents. The investigation may be carried out by your manager or someone else appointed by us.
- 7.6.6** You must co-operate fully and promptly in any investigation. This may include informing us of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents to us and attending interviews, as part of our investigation
- 7.6.7** We may initiate an investigation before holding a grievance meeting where we consider this appropriate. In other cases, we may hold a grievance meeting before deciding what

investigation (if any) to carry out. In those cases, we will hold a further grievance meeting with you after our investigation and before we reach a decision.

### **Grievance hearing**

- 7.6.8** Once your written grievance is received, a grievance hearing will be arranged to discuss your issues further once we have received your written grievance where you will have the right to be accompanied.
- 7.6.9** The purpose of a grievance meeting is to enable you to explain your grievance and how you think it should be resolved, and to assist us to reach a decision based on the available evidence and the representations you have made.
- 7.6.10** Following your grievance meeting, further investigations may be necessary, and following this we will write to you with a formal outcome of your grievance which will state any further action that we intend to take to resolve the grievance.

### **Appeal**

- 7.6.11** If you are unhappy with the decision, you will have the right to appeal this. You should make your appeal in writing within the time period, and to the name stated in your grievance outcome letter. A further meeting will then be scheduled to discuss your appeal, where you will again have the right to be accompanied.
- 7.6.12** After the conclusion of the appeal process, you will be provided with a written appeal outcome, the decision of which is final, meaning there would be no further course of redress under this policy.