

InterACT Church and Community Partnership Grievance Policy

Last Reviewed: January 2022. Date of next review: January 2023

This policy forms part of the Staff Handbook for InterACT employees.

It is also for the use of freelancers and volunteers working with InterACT CCP, and the term employee should also be read to include these personnel.

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1. Principles

1.1 This procedure should be used to address all disputes and grievances which you wish to raise concerning other employees, your work, the organisation, or other matters relating to your employment.

The purpose of the Grievance Procedure is to address and settle any grievance fairly and quickly.

1.2 If a grievance proceeds to the formal stage, details will be recorded on the Grievance Record Form (see copy attached); this will provide a record of the grievance with dates and responses added at each stage thereafter.

1.3 At all formal stages of this procedure, the complainant will be kept informed of the outcome in writing by the senior person involved.

1.4 Where a complaint relates to working conditions or inconsistent application of InterACT’s rules, pay or conditions, no changes will be made until the grievance is resolved or the procedure exhausted.

1.5 Employees may be accompanied and represented at every formal stage of this Procedure by a Trades Union representative, employee representative, or work colleague.

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1.6 You are reminded that InterACT will endeavour to maintain a fair and unbiased approach to all grievances, and that you will not be treated unfairly because you have raised any grievance, including a grievance against a senior employee, or a grievance on health and safety grounds, or because your grievance relates to a statutory right, including the rights granted under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998; in order to establish rights under this Act, employees should seek appropriate advice – e.g. from a Trades Union representative.

Informal Procedure

2.1 If your grievance concerns another employee, you should first try to discuss and resolve it with that person. This applies to all complaints regardless of status. You are encouraged to try to resolve grievances against line managers via the normal supervision process if appropriate. If your grievance concerns another matter (see clause 1.1 above) you are also encouraged to try to resolve it informally in the first instance via discussion with line managers.

2.2 If this is not possible, or if the matter cannot be resolved and you are still aggrieved, you should follow the formal procedure set out in the clauses in Section 3 as below.

2.3 If your complaint concerns your line manager, or if you are unable to approach your line manager for a particular reason which you can specify, or if your line manager is unavailable within a five day period, you should go to clause 3.4 below.

2.4 Unless there is good reason for not doing so, a grievance should be raised within one month of the incident to which it refers.

3. Formal Procedure

3.1 You should write to your line manager, stating that you wish to register a grievance under this Procedure, and stating the basis for your complaint. You will then be invited to meet with them to discuss your complaint at a mutually agreed time not exceeding ten working days from receipt of your written grievance.

3.2 At the end of this meeting, you will be asked to countersign the grievance record to ensure that a written record of the meeting is kept, and this document will be copied to you.

3.3 You will be given a response to your grievance in writing within 10 working days of the meeting. If it is not possible to give a complete reply at this stage, you will be given an initial written response, and be given a further written response as soon as reasonably practical.

3.4 If you are unable to approach your line manager because your complaint involves them, you should approach a member of the management team or trustees and the steps outlined in clauses 3.1 – 3.3 will apply. This should also be done where your line manager is unavailable for more than five working days.

4. Appeal Procedure

4.1 If you wish to appeal against your line manager's decision (or that of their replacement as in clause 3.4 above) or you feel that they have failed to make a decision, you should inform another member of the management team or trustees, who will convene an appeal meeting within 10 working days which you may attend, and at which you may be accompanied or represented if you wish (see clause 5.3); you and/or your representative may address this meeting. You may submit written evidence provided that this is received 2 working days before the day of the meeting. The decision will be given to you in writing as soon as is reasonably practical after the meeting.

You have the right to offer a reasonable alternative date for this meeting, provided that this is within five working days, counted from the day after the original date offered by the member of the management team. If the management team heard the original grievance, you should follow the steps outlined in the clauses of Section 5.

5. Grievances against the management team or trustees and appeals against Grievance Hearing Decisions made by the management team.

5.1 If your grievance concerns the management team and cannot be resolved informally, you should write to the Chair of the management Team stating the complaint and requesting an appointment to discuss the matter. The Chair will offer to meet with you as soon as is reasonably practical.

5.2 Following that meeting, should you disagree with the Chair's decision or feel that they have failed to make a decision, you may appeal. To exercise this right, you must write to the Chair stating that you disagree with their decision (or feel that they have failed to make a decision) and requesting that your case be heard by members of the InterACT Board of Trustees. The Chair will then convene a panel of up to three [other] trustees who will hear your case as soon as reasonably practical. Following that meeting, you will receive a written decision within five working days. A hearing by InterACT trustees is the final appeal.

5.3 As with all formal meetings, you have the right to offer a reasonable alternative date, and to attend with a representative if you so wish.

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Schedule 1: Grievance Protocol

A1. InterACT recognises your right to confidentiality during the Grievance Procedure, subject to clause A2 below; as far as possible, every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of proceedings and of records.

A2. Disclosure of any grievance to anyone not involved in a hearing or appeal will not be permitted without the express permission of the complainant; you should note, however, that investigation of a complaint may not be able to proceed in some circumstances if you refuse permission for witnesses to be approached, or for the person being complained about to see the evidence against them. In cases which may have a disciplinary implication, your right to confidentiality may need to take second place; you will, however, be informed if this is the case.

A3. Lobbying by or of any parties involved in a grievance hearing will not be permitted, to safeguard the impartiality of the process.

A4. This Procedure allows for the declaration of a conflict of interest by any manager, committee member or trustee involved. Where such a conflict is declared, this person will either be replaced by another manager, committee member or trustee, or they will not vote in any final decision, whichever is appropriate in the circumstances.

Sanctions taken during grievance hearings may include the instigation of disciplinary procedures; if this is the case, the procedures detailed in the document "Disciplinary Procedure" will apply.

Grievances "in Common"

In cases where a number of staff wish to raise a grievance about the same matter, depending on the circumstances, it may prove simpler for such issues to be resolved via collective discussion and agreement between the recognised Trades Union and InterACT as the employer, rather than following the full Grievance Procedure for each individual. This option will be considered should it seem viable, taking into account the views of those involved.

Schedule 2: InterACT Grievance Record

Complainant:

Date:

Grievance:

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Complainant's signature (confirming the above)

Response by line manager / trustee *:
(*delete as appropriate)

Date of Hearing by Panel:

Response of Panel:

Date of Hearing by Chair/trustees:

Response of Chair/trustees:

Copy given to Complainant :.....