



## Grievance Management

E/1.1.1

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### Purpose

The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod is committed to providing a safe, effective and acceptable means for employees and volunteers to address issues relating to their engagement within the Queensland Synod Office.

Where an employee is covered by a Modern Award or Enterprise Agreement, nothing in this procedure will affect the rights of the employee to seek to resolve a dispute in relation to a matter under the Award, Enterprise Agreement or in relation to the National Employment Standards. It is however, expected that this policy will be used to facilitate a resolution to the dispute.

### Scope

This procedure applies to:

- all employees (lay staff), ministry agents and volunteers engaged in work and activities of the Uniting Church in Australia within the bounds of the Queensland Synod Office including Trinity College Queensland, Raymont Residential College, Alexandra Park Conference Centre and Uniting Early Learning;
- This does not apply to complaints made about a Minister under The Uniting Church in Australia Regulation 5.4, in instances where the Minister is not currently engaged in work and activities within the bounds of the Queensland Synod Office including Trinity College Queensland, Raymont Residential College, Alexandra Park Conference Centre and Uniting Early Learning.

### Procedure

During any stage, the parties are to conduct themselves as per the Fairness At Work Policy.

#### 1. Informal resolution

- 1.1. All employees and volunteers must try to settle any grievance directly with the person(s) concerned before initiating a formal grievance process. If the grievance is not with another person, then the complainant must raise the grievance with their line manager.
- 1.2. Should the employee or volunteer feel that they cannot settle the grievance directly with person, because they are concerned for their safety they may proceed to a formal grievance process in the first instance. This escalation would be necessary in instances where there is a psychosocial hazard which is at high risk of a consequence for either party involved.
- 1.3. Any grievances where the respondent is an employee of Alexandra Park Conference Centre, Uniting Early Learning or Raymont Residential College, must be escalated to the Decision Maker as per Appendix A.
- 1.4. Should the grievance include allegations of a sexual harassment or discrimination nature the matter must be escalate by the Decision Maker to both the General Secretary and General Manager People & Culture, who will provide advice on the best approach, which may include moving directly to a Formal Resolution.
- 1.5. A mutually satisfactory outcome should be sought by the parties involved. The informal process should be undertaken to deal with the grievance matter as quickly as possible, be confidential, and



within a timeframe negotiated between the parties for their resolution. As a guide only, the timeframe should be no more than 14 days.

- 1.6. If requested by either party, the informal resolution may be documented by the person in control of the workplace and retained in their personnel file.
- 1.7. If a mutually satisfactory outcome is not achieved, the matter must be brought to the person in control of the workplace for further discussion to assist towards a resolution.
- 1.8. If an outcome is not achieved through the involvement of the person in control of the workplace, the grievance may progress to a formal resolution.
- 1.9. People & Culture advice may be sought by either parties of the grievance.

### 2. Formal resolution

- 2.1. Where a grievance cannot be resolved through the informal process, a formal resolution process is to be used.
- 2.2. The formal resolution process requires the complainant to escalate the grievance in writing to the line manager of the respondent, to an appropriate person from the People & Culture team.
- 2.3. Upon receipt of the grievance the applicable Decision Maker (as per Appendix A) or People & Culture representative shall conduct an initial assessment to determine whether there is substance to the grievance.
- 2.4. If the determination is made that the grievance does not have substance, such finding will be promptly communicated to the complainant. The complainant shall then have the option to submit a new grievance or initiate the appeal process as outlined below.
- 2.5. If the initial assessment indicates substance to the grievance, the respondent shall be promptly notified of the complaint. On instances where a complaint is received prior to planned leave, a weekend or public holiday, timing of notification must be carefully considered.
- 2.6. The respondent shall be afforded the opportunity to provide a response to allegations raised as part of the Grievance Resolution process.
- 2.7. Where necessary, an investigation may be conducted to validate the substance of the grievance. The Line Manager will nominate an investigator for this purpose. This may be themselves, a member of the People & Culture team or an external investigator. In instances where an external investigator is used cost of the service is at the responsibility of the Decision Maker.
- 2.8. An investigation report will be provided to the Decision Maker for review. It is not necessary to provide the report in full to the parties involved.
- 2.9. In cases where the investigation reveals that the grievance is valid and some action must be taken against the party or parties, a number of actions may be taken by the Decision Maker depending upon the nature of the grievance, which may include Disciplinary Action as per the Disciplinary Procedure, or in instances where the respondent is a Ministry Agent the Disciplinary Process of the Uniting Church under the Church Regulations.

### 3. Appeals process

- 3.1. If the complainant or the respondent are dissatisfied with the formal resolution decision, a written appeal may be lodged with the General Manager People & Culture.



- 3.2. In instances where the General Manager People & Culture was the investigator, an appeal may be lodged with the Executive Director Synod Services.
- 3.3. The appeal will be investigated by the People and Culture Manager or their delegate. The General Manager People & Culture will review the investigation recommendations and make a determination for resolution. The decision will be reported to the parties concerned. The appeal process must be resolved within the timeframe negotiated with the parties concerned and must be no more than 28 days.
- 3.4. If the complainant or the respondent are dissatisfied with the appeal determination, they may choose to lodge a written appeal with the General Secretary.
- 3.5. In the case of a dispute in relation to a matter under the Award, Enterprise Agreement or in relation the National Employment Standards, a party to the dispute may refer the dispute to the Fair Work Commission.

## Related documents

- [A/1.2.1 Conflict of Interest Procedure](#)
- [B/1.1 Privacy Policy](#)
- [E1.1 Fairness At Work Policy](#)

## Definitions

Term	Meaning
Queensland Synod	Means the work and activities of the Uniting Church in Australia within the bounds of the Queensland Synod Office including Trinity College Queensland, Raymont Residential College, Alexandra Park Conference Centre and Uniting Education Early Learning.
Person in control of a workplace	Means the Manager responsible for employees and volunteers in a workplace or engaged in an activity of the Church.
Line Manager	Direct Manager of the Respondent.
Grievance	A complaint made by a lay staff member or volunteer relating to their employment or work.
Complainant	The employee or volunteer lodging the grievance.
Respondent	The employee or volunteer against whom the grievance has been lodged.
Party	Means the complainant and/or respondent involved in the complaint.
Investigator	The impartial person appointed to conduct the investigation into the substance of the grievance who may be an internal or an external person who has not had any involvement in the subject matter of the grievance.
Psychosocial Hazard	According to WHSQ Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work, Code of Practice 2022; A psychosocial hazard is a hazard that arises from, or relates to, the design or management of work, a work environment, plant at a workplace, or workplace interactions and behaviours and may cause psychological harm, whether or not the hazard may also cause physical harm. In severe cases exposure to psychosocial hazards can lead to death by suicide.
Discrimination	In Queensland, Australia, discrimination is typically defined as treating someone less favourably because of certain attributes protected under Anti-Discrimination legislation. These attributes can include characteristics such as race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, disability, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender



Term	Meaning
	identity, age, or family responsibilities. Discrimination can occur in various contexts, such as employment, education, provision of goods and services, and accommodation.

## Appendix A – Decision Maker

The below table shows the stages of escalation to the Decision Maker for Grievance Resolution, where the respondent is an employee of Alexandra Park Conference Centre, Uniting Early Learning or Raymont Residential College. For employees who do not fall under this category, the Decision Maker is their Line Manager.

Service Stream	Escalations (step by step)	Decision Maker
Alexandra Park Conference Centre	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Complainant notifies Alexandra Park Operations Manager</li><li>2. Alexandra Park Operations Manager notifies General Manager Mission Enterprise and Programs</li></ol>	General Manager Mission Enterprise and Programs
Uniting Early Learning LDC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Complainant notifies Centre Director</li><li>2. Centre Director notifies their Area Manager</li><li>3. Area Manager notifies General Manager Uniting Early Learning</li></ol>	General Manager Uniting Early Learning
Uniting Early Learning IHC/FDC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Complainant notifies relevant Operations Manager</li><li>2. Operations Manager notifies General Manager Uniting Early Learning</li></ol>	General Manager Uniting Early Learning
Uniting Early Learning OSHC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Complainant notifies Coordinator</li><li>2. Coordinator notifies their Area Manager</li><li>3. Area Manager notifies General Manager Uniting Early Learning</li></ol>	General Manager Uniting Early Learning
Raymont Residential College	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Complainant notifies Operations Manager</li><li>2. Operations Manager notifies Principal</li><li>3. Principal notified General Manager Mission Enterprise and Programs</li></ol>	General Manager Mission Enterprise and Programs

## Revisions

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Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
2.0	22/01/2025	General Secretary	22/01/2025	People and Culture	General Manager – People & Culture
Next scheduled review		30/08/2026			