

# Slow Theatre Company

## Grievance policy

Slow Theatre Company aims to foster a culture of harmonious employee relations, managers and employees are encouraged to have open dialogue on a regular basis.

From time to time, employees may have problems or concerns about their work, working environment or working relationships, which can affect their performance, both to their own detriment and that of the organisation, and which cannot be resolved through informal communications alone. In such circumstances a more formal Grievance Policy and Procedure may be required.

This policy aims to provide a fair, consistent and speedy approach to resolving employee grievances. The policy has been determined, and will be updated in the context of relevant legislation and codes of practice e.g. ACAS Code of Practice.

### **Informal Procedure**

All employees should discuss any grievance they have in relation to their employment with their line manager with a view to resolving the issue through dialogue. Both the employee and the manager should keep notes of the discussion. Employees who are unable to discuss the grievance with their line manager should raise their grievance with the next level manager or an alternative manager. Every effort should be made by both parties to resolve any grievance through informal discussion. However, where all attempts have failed, then the formal grievance should be followed.

### **Formal Grievance Procedure**

#### ***General Principles***

- The timing and location of meetings must be reasonable and acceptable to both parties.
- Meetings must be conducted in a way that enables both the line manager and the employee to explain their cases and propose how the matter should be settled.
- Another manager will accompany the line manager at all stages and ensure that the procedure is followed and notes taken.
- If, during the course of any stage of the grievance procedure it becomes apparent that further investigation is required, the meeting will be adjourned until a thorough investigation has been carried out (calling witnesses where appropriate) and all parties have agreed a new date for the next meeting.
- Records will be kept on the employee's personal file and destroyed after an appropriate time has elapsed.
- Proceedings are considered to be confidential.

#### ***Raising a grievance***

Employees should send their written grievance to their line manager. Where the manager is the subject of the complaint and it would therefore be inappropriate for the line manager to hear the grievance, the complaint should be made to the next level of management. In the case of the Chief Executive, directors should send their written grievance to the Chair. Upon receipt of the grievance letter the line manager will arrange a meeting to discuss the issue(s) raised. The meeting should be held, if possible, within five working days of receipt of the written grievance.

Within five working days of the meeting the line manager will respond to the employee in writing, detailing Slow Theatre Company's response to the grievance, including any action to be taken.

Where this is not possible, the employee will be given an explanation for the delay and told when to expect a response.

### ***Appeals***

If the employee is not satisfied with the outcome of the grievance, then an appeal should be made in writing, within five working days of receipt of the decision, to the next level line manager. Appeals can be raised sequentially through the line management structure with the final appeal to the Chief Executive. At all levels, appeal hearings will be heard within five working days of receipt of the written appeal. Following an appeal hearing, within five working days of the meeting a letter will be sent to the employee, detailing Slow Theatre Company written response to the grievance, including any action to be taken. Where this is not possible, the employee will be given an explanation for the delay and told when to expect a response.

The Artistic Director's decision is final. If the Artistic Director has been involved in hearing the grievance, appeals should be made to the Board of Directors.

### ***Right of accompaniment***

At any formal grievance hearing an employee has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague of their choice or a trade union official.

The trade union official must be either a full-time official employed by a trade union, or a trade union official who has received appropriate training in acting as an employee's companion and has a written certificate stating this from the union.

The role of the employee's companion is to provide support to the employee, and he or she may participate in the hearing, e.g. by putting the employee's case across, summing up the employee's case and responding on the employee's behalf to any view expressed at the hearing. The employee's companion will also have an opportunity to confer privately with the employee for a reasonable time during the hearing. The employee's companion may not, however, answer questions on the employee's behalf. An employee who wishes to be accompanied by a companion must make a request to the line manager who will conduct the hearing, which must identify the companion. The choice of companion must be reasonable. Employees should bear in mind that it would not be appropriate to insist on being accompanied by a colleague who might have a conflict of interest, or whose presence would prejudice the hearing. The request must be made in good time prior to the hearing.

If the employee's chosen companion cannot attend on the date proposed by Slow Theatre Company for the grievance hearing, the employee may offer an alternative time and date so long as it is reasonable, having regard, for example to the availability of the manager who will conduct the hearing. In any event, the proposed alternative date must be no later than five working days, beginning with the first working day after the date originally proposed by Slow Theatre Company.

Signed

Name

Date

Date to be reviewed