



Introduction

We foster a culture in which you can raise any problems, complaints or concerns in a supportive framework, and we will ensure that all genuine grievances are dealt with quickly and fairly.

Most grievances can be resolved informally. However, if an informal approach does not resolve matters, or is not appropriate, you may choose to raise a formal grievance.

This policy outlines the grievance process, the roles of those involved and support that is available to you.

Scope

This policy applies to volunteers for Marlow FM. It does not apply to contractors, consultants or any self-employed individuals working for the organisation.

If you have a grievance that relates to ongoing disciplinary proceedings against you, you should raise this during the disciplinary procedure (for example during the disciplinary hearing or appeal stage).

If you raise a grievance during disciplinary proceedings that is unrelated to those proceedings, the disciplinary proceedings and grievance procedure will normally run independently in parallel.

Mediation

Depending on the nature of your grievance, we may suggest mediation as a means of trying to resolve it. We will use mediation only where you, and the other parties involved in your grievance, agree to do so.

Fairness and respect

We recognise that a grievance procedure can be stressful and upsetting. Everyone involved in the process is entitled to be treated calmly and with respect.

We will not tolerate abusive or insulting behaviour from anyone taking part in a grievance procedure and will treat any such behaviour as misconduct under our disciplinary procedure.

Remote proceedings

Where it is not possible to hold a face-to-face meeting under this procedure, we will conduct the process remotely. Your rights will not be affected, and we will ensure that the procedure remains fair and reasonable.

Adjustments to proceedings

If any aspect of the grievance procedure causes you difficulty as a result of a disability, or if you need assistance because English is not your first language, you should raise this with the HR Director via Slack direct message or via direct email, who will make appropriate arrangements for you.

Recording of meetings

A written record of all meetings conducted under this procedure will be made, either by the person holding the meeting or by an additional person arranged by us to take notes.



You, or any person acting on your behalf, are not normally permitted to record electronically any meeting that we hold under the grievance procedure. This is to encourage openness and full participation. Any breach of this provision may lead to disciplinary action, which could include dismissal.

In certain limited circumstances, we may permit a meeting to be recorded electronically, for example where it is a reasonable adjustment for a volunteer with a disability. Where we permit a meeting to be recorded electronically, we will take responsibility for making the recording.

Raising an informal grievance

In the first instance, you should raise any grievance that you may have informally with the HR Director. If your grievance is about the HR Director then you should raise the grievance with the Managing Director.

The relevant Director will speak with you to give you the opportunity to explain your grievance and seek to identify whether the issue can be resolved informally. Many concerns can be resolved informally.

However, while we encourage the informal resolution of complaints, we recognise that this is not always possible or appropriate, for example if your grievance relates to a serious issue such as discrimination. Therefore, if the informal process does not resolve matters or is not appropriate, you should raise a formal grievance under this procedure.

Raising a formal grievance

Where your grievance has not been resolved informally, or if your grievance is serious in nature, you should raise the matter formally in writing.

It is important that you set out clearly the nature of your grievance and indicate the outcome that you are seeking. If your grievance is unclear, we may ask you to clarify your complaint before we hold a grievance meeting.

Your complaint should be headed "Confidential - Formal grievance" and sent to your either the HR Director or the Managing Director.

Stage 1 - Investigation

Your grievance will be kept confidential as far as possible.

However, before proceeding to a grievance meeting, we may have to carry out an investigation. This will usually be conducted by the same Director who will hear your grievance. The relevant Director will write to you confirming that they are conducting the investigation and the timescale for completion.

The level of investigation and time this will take will vary depending on the nature of your grievance.

You will be given a copy of any evidence collated during the investigation in advance of the grievance meeting. However, in some cases, the evidence given by individuals may have to remain confidential. Where confidentiality is necessary, we will provide you with an appropriate summary of the evidence.

Stage 2 - Hearing your grievance

The grievance meeting

The grievance meeting will be held within seven days of receiving your written complaint. However, if this is not possible, you will be informed of the reason for any delay.



You will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow volunteer.

The purpose of the meeting is for you to explain the nature of your complaint and what action you feel should be taken to resolve the matter. If more information comes to light, it may be necessary to adjourn the grievance meeting to conduct a further investigation and reconvene the meeting when this has been done.

If you are unable to attend the grievance meeting because of circumstances beyond your control, you should inform the Director conducting the meeting as soon as possible. If you fail to attend without explanation, or if it appears that you have not made sufficient attempts to attend, the grievance meeting may take place in your absence, based on your written grievance statement and any other documentation available.

The outcome

Following the meeting, the relevant Director will inform you in writing, usually within seven days after the meeting, of the outcome and any action that will be taken as a result of your complaint.

Stage 3 - Appeal

Appealing against the outcome

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your grievance, you may submit a formal appeal.

You should appeal in writing to the Director who conducted the initial grievance hearing within seven days of receipt of the grievance outcome letter.

Your letter should clearly state the grounds of your appeal, i.e., the basis on which you consider that your grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved.

Appeal meeting

We will then arrange an appeal meeting within seven days to consider the matter. However, if this is not possible, you will be informed of the reason for any delay.

You are entitled to be accompanied by a fellow volunteer at the appeal meeting.

The appeal meeting will be conducted by you're a different Director of the management team to the one who conducted the original grievance hearing. They will consider the grounds that you have put forward and review the conclusion reached in the original grievance meeting. Where it is considered appropriate, additional members of the management team maybe present.

If you are unable to attend the appeal meeting because of circumstances beyond your control, you should inform the Director conducting the meeting as soon as possible. If you fail to attend without explanation, or if it appears that you have not made sufficient attempts to attend, the meeting may take place in your absence, based on your written grievance statement and any other supporting documentation available.

Outcome of appeal

Following the appeal meeting, the relevant Director will inform you in writing, usually within seven days, of the outcome. The outcome of the appeal i final.



Appendix 1

Volunteer Grievance Form	
<p>This form is intended for use by any volunteer who wants to make a formal complaint about the behaviour of a fellow volunteer.</p> <p>Where the volunteer requests that the complaint be dealt with formally, this form should be completed and our organisation's grievance procedure will be invoked.</p> <p>In certain circumstances, volunteers can request that their complaint be kept anonymous. Where possible, we will respect a volunteer's request for anonymity, but cannot guarantee that it will be able to do so.</p> <p>This form should be delivered to the HR Director via email and marked with "confidential" in the subject line.</p>	
Formal grievance	
Volunteer's name:	
Volunteer's role at Marlow FM:	
Date:	
Summary of complaint:	
<p>Please set out the details of your complaint (providing as much detail as possible, particularly dates, times, locations and the identities of those involved). You may attach additional sheets if required.</p>	
Individuals involved in the alleged incident/complaint:	
<p>Please provide the names and details of any people involved in your complaint, including witnesses.</p>	



Outcome requested:	
Please set out how you would like to see your complaint dealt with, and why and how you believe that this will resolve the issue.	
Declaration:	
I confirm that the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that making any false, malicious or untrue allegations may result in disciplinary action being taken against me by the organisation. (In the most serious cases, making false, malicious or untrue allegations can be treated as gross misconduct.)	
Form completed by:	
Signature:	
For completion by the organisation:	
Date form received by the organisation:	
Name of recipient and role at Marlow FM:	
Signature:	