

Grievance Policy and Procedure

Purpose of the Grievance Procedure

The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland is committed to supporting the appropriate and successful progression of all Trainees through the Training Programmes at both BST and HST level. The purpose of this procedure is to enable Trainees to raise any complaint relating to the training programme so that the issue may be addressed promptly and without disruption to training progression.

Definition of Grievance

A grievance may be defined as a complaint which a Trainee has concerning his or her terms of the training programme, (or decisions made by CPsychI in relation to the Trainee's programme of training) or relationships within the training structure. This procedure covers individual and collective grievances, i.e., complaints raised by or on behalf of a group of Trainees, which are not incorporated in other College processes or procedures.

Scope of the Procedure

The type of issues which are appropriate for referral under this procedure include:

- Allocation of training placements
- Granting time out of training
- Recognition of time spent in research or academic posts
- Recognition of training undertaken prior to appointment to CPsychI training programmes
- Recruitment and Selection decisions

Issues excluded from this process are:

- Progress decisions made by ARP panels
- Examination results
- Decisions made through the SDR process

Principles

- The grievance procedure will be communicated to all Trainees and Educational Supervisors
- The Trainee should raise complaints on an informal basis in the first instance before invoking the formal grievance procedure.
- Every effort will be made to address complaints quickly and fairly and at the lowest level possible at which the matter can be resolved.
- A Trainee will not be penalised in any way for making a complaint in good faith regardless of whether the complaint is upheld.
- The Trainee has the right to be accompanied by a colleague or representative (e.g. a member of the Trainee Committee, an Educational Supervisor, Vice Dean or HST Mentor) at all formal hearings under the grievance procedure. It is not envisaged that the Trainee would be accompanied by a legal representative.
- While every effort will be made to adhere to the prescribed time limits these may be extended at any stage in exceptional circumstances.
- This procedure provides a comprehensive method for the resolution of grievances with minimal conflict. Where possible, issues raised under it will be processed in accordance with the principles of consultation and agreement during the process.

- The grievance hearing cannot be used as an opportunity to address shortcomings in any Trainees' work standards, conduct or attendance. Any such deficiencies will be dealt with through other appropriate processes/procedures (e.g., ARP, professionalism in training panel or employer grievance processes, as appropriate.)

Informal Discussions

Most routine complaints are capable of being resolved on an informal basis without recourse to the formal grievance procedure. Before invoking the grievance procedure, the Trainee may raise the matter informally with his or her immediate Educational Supervisor, Vice Dean/HST Mentor, or a member of College staff. If the matter has not been resolved satisfactorily through informal discussions, the Trainee may raise a formal complaint under the grievance procedure.

Grievance Procedure

Stage 1

The Trainee should refer the complaint to the Operations Manager, Postgraduate Training in the College. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the matter not later than ten working days following receipt of the complaint. The Trainee will be advised of his/her right to be accompanied by a colleague or other representative. Following this meeting, the decision will be conveyed in writing to the Trainee within seven working days.

Stage 2

If agreement cannot be reached at stage 1 the matter may be referred to the Dean of Education or appropriate representative depending on the complaint. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the matter not later than ten working days following receipt of the complaint. The Trainee will be advised of his/her right to be accompanied by a colleague or other representative. Following this meeting, the decision will be conveyed in writing to the Trainee within seven working days.

Stage 3

If agreement cannot be reached at stage 3 the matter may be referred to the President of the College for independent review. An independent review panel will be arranged to discuss the matter not later than ten working days following receipt of the complaint. The Trainee will be advised of his/her right to be accompanied by a colleague or other representative. Following this meeting, the decision will be conveyed in writing to the Trainee within seven working days.