



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

People & Development

Professional Standards Grievance Policy

Owner	Executive Director of People and Development
Responsible Person	Head of Human Resources
Date Written	July 2018
Date of Last Review	June 2023
Date of next review	June 2026
EIA Completed	November 2020



What we must
do well



How we support our
communities



We value and support
the people we employ



We efficiently manage
the Service

CONTENTS

1. [Introduction](#)
 - [Core Code of Ethics](#)
 - [National Guidance](#)
2. [Equality and Inclusion](#)
3. [Aim and Objectives](#)
4. [Associated Documents](#)
 - [Equality Impact Analysis](#)
 - [Legal References](#)
 - [National Guidance](#)
5. [General Principles](#)
 - [Meeting Arrangements](#)
 - [Time Limits](#)
 - [Mediation](#)
6. [Meeting Arrangements](#)
7. [Time Limits](#)
8. [Mediation](#)
9. [Grievance Procedure](#)
 - [Stage 1: Informal](#)
 - [Stage 2: Formal](#)
 - [The Grievance Hearing](#)
 - [Stage 3: Appeal](#)
 - [Appeal Hearing Process](#)
 - [Possible Outcomes](#)
 - [Where a Grievance is raised during a Disciplinary procedure](#)
10. [Raising Awareness and Training](#)
11. [Who Can Provide Support or Advice to Employees](#)
12. [Grievance Raised Through the Complaints Process](#)
 - [Appendix A: Grievance Forms](#)
 - [Appendix B: Grievance Procedure Flowcharts](#)
 - [Appendix C: Complaints Process Flowchart](#)

Human Resources Professional Standards Grievance Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

Humberside Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) is committed to maintaining good working relationships with its employees in line with its principles and behaviours. This policy is in line with the ACAS Code of Practice Disciplinary and Grievances procedures and grievances will be acknowledged within five working days.

A grievance is a work concern, problem or issue raised by an employee and could be related to, for example, terms and conditions of employment, health and safety, working relationships, working practices, change management.

On a day to day basis, effective line management facilitates the resolution of daily concerns and maintains good working relationships. Members of staff and line managers are therefore expected to make every effort to resolve differences through day to day discussion prior to initiating the grievance procedure.

It is in everyone's interest to resolve workplace issues at the earliest opportunity through constructive and open discussions between the parties involved.

Core Code of Ethics

HFRS has adopted the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services. The Service is committed to the ethical principles of the Code and strives to apply them in all we do, therefore, those principles are reflected in this Policy.

National Guidance

Any National Guidance which has been adopted by HFRS, will be reflected in this Policy.

2. EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

HFRS has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010, and a commitment, to ensure it does not discriminate either directly or indirectly in any of its functions and services nor in its treatment of staff, in relation to race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, gender reassignment or marriage and civil partnership. It also has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, employees and service users.

3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim and objective of this policy is to enable employees to voice any concerns they may have and to ensure that any concerns are dealt with in a fair, consistent, timely and transparent manner.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- [Equality Impact Analysis](#)

Human Resources Professional Standards Grievance Policy

- Legal References
 - Grey Book Terms and Conditions of Employment
- National Guidance

There is no specific National Guidance relating to this policy.

- [Disciplinary Procedure Policy](#)
- [ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievances](#)

5. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Grievance Policy is intended to provide a means for grievances to be dealt with fairly, consistently and as quickly as possible.

If any aspect of the Grievance Policy causes you difficulty in accessing its use, in relation to any disability that you may have or you need assistance because English is not your first language, you should raise this with your line manager who will make appropriate arrangements for any reasonable adjustments.

A grievance may be individual, i.e., relating solely to one person, or collective, whereby a group of employees are unhappy about their work, working conditions or relationships with colleague(s). A collective grievance should be distinguished from a collective issue as defined in Grey Book terms and conditions of employment.

Both individual and collective grievances should be dealt with through this policy.

It should be noted that managers and supervisors are responsible for addressing matters of conduct or poor performance at work. Provided that this is completed in a fair, consistent and reasonable way, this is not deemed as harassment or bullying.

If it has not been possible for issues to be resolved on a day to day basis, by line management, then employees may raise the issue as a grievance. This should be made in writing by the employee and managers should seek advice from Human Resources (HR). Progress of a grievance will be monitored centrally, and managers must ensure that grievances are recorded (at every stage) and copied to the relevant HR Service Partner for recording and reporting purposes.

All issues that are raised as either informal or formal grievances will be monitored for the purpose of identifying trends and governance, so that the Service can respond to these accordingly.

Employees have a right to have their grievance heard in three stages as detailed later in the policy. If unresolved, each stage should be referred to either a more senior level of management, or a member of the same level of management who is impartial and who has not been previously involved.

Human Resources Professional Standards Grievance Policy

Employees have a right to be accompanied by a fellow employee or trade union representative of their choice during a grievance hearing at Stages 2 and 3 of the procedure. Employees have no right to be accompanied during day-to-day discussions with their line manager or at Stage 1, (the informal part) of this procedure.

Every effort will be made to resolve a grievance promptly, however, it may not always be possible where the manager considering the grievance needs to make further, relevant enquiries. Managers shall make every effort, subject to the needs of the Service, not to implement any proposed change until the grievance has been resolved.

In the case of appeal, once the final decision has been made by the appeal manager, the matter is deemed to have been closed with no further right of appeal. The employee is unable to raise the same or similar grievance again under the procedure. However, should additional further difficulties be experienced, these should be referred to the line manager.

In serious cases such as allegations of bullying, harassment, racism or other unlawful discrimination which suggests major problems, for example, with culture or management style, will (where the matter remains unresolved) require a further hearing to be conducted by a member of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), the appropriate level which both appreciates the wider importance and significance of the issue and has the authority to deal with it.

Grievances will not be accepted if they relate to HFRS policy and processes such as recruitment, job evaluation (which carries its own appeal process), postings and transfers where formal consultation on the policy or process has already taken place. Grievances will still be accepted where it is believed that the Service has breached the requirements of the policy.

The raising of false or malicious grievances is an abuse of the Grievance Policy and may be treated as a conduct matter in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy should a grievance have been raised in bad faith.

All data arising from grievance matters will be collated by the HR team and analysed for trends and patterns to enable appropriate action and/or training to be undertaken if required.

6. MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

All meetings will be held in private, avoiding foreseeable interruptions.

A written record will be kept of all meetings at every stage and made available to employees and their representatives using the form at [Appendix A](#).

All decisions will be confirmed in writing, treated as confidential and managed in accordance with data protection legislation.

Human Resources Professional Standards Grievance Policy

The manager/appeal manager will be accompanied by a member of the HR team who will provide guidance and advice and act as note-taker

7. TIME LIMITS

When an employee has a grievance, this should be raised at the earliest opportunity or within 30 days of the individual becoming aggrieved. This timeframe may be extended in exceptional circumstances.

The time limits expressed throughout the procedure should be regarded as the normal maximum limits required at each stage. If a grievance is identified as requiring more time at any stage, the time limit may be extended, and the manager will communicate this together with the reasons for the decision.

Concerns regarding the time taken to conclude a grievance (at any stage) should be raised with the Head of Human Resources in the first instance.

8. MEDIATION

When a grievance is about the working relationship between two or more staff, mediation is a useful way to discuss and resolve differences.

The Service has access to trained internal mediators and reference should be made to the Mediation Policy. Advice about mediation can be sought from HR.

The Service's expectation is that all staff work professionally with each other in accordance with the Service's principles and behaviours. Where working relationships are compromised this can impact upon other team members and affect service delivery.

9. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Stage 1: Informal

The employee should complete Stage 1 of the PER 24 Grievance Form, at [Appendix A](#), detailing their grievance and pass to their manager.

The employee should also send a copy of this grievance (either paper copy or scan via email) to HR to ensure that this issue is registered and recorded centrally.

A summary of the outcomes agreed are to be recorded by the manager **on the same PER 24 form**, [Appendix A](#). A copy of the completed form should be sent to HR.

Where the line manager doesn't have the authority to resolve the grievance e.g., it is related to Service policy, the matter should be escalated to a manager who has the appropriate authority to decide. Escalation can be completed outside of the formal Grievance Policy as a day to day matter in the first instance.

Human Resources Professional Standards Grievance Policy

The relevant manager will endeavour to arrange an informal meeting with the individual as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where a manager agrees with the grievance, it may be possible to resolve the grievance on the basis of a brief discussion rather than a full grievance hearing. Here the manager will confirm the outcome within **five working days** of the discussion.

Where the grievance is a complaint against the line manager with whom the grievance would normally be raised, the employee(s) should approach that person's line manager.

If the situation that gave rise to the grievance cannot be resolved at Stage 1, Stage 2 can be initiated.

Stage 2: Formal

If the grievance is not resolved at Stage 1, the employee should continue to complete the same PER 24 form, by using the Stage 2 section, at [Appendix A](#).

The PER 24 form should be submitted to the Stage 2 manager and HR, **within five working days** of receiving the Stage 1 outcome in writing, with any supporting documentation and with the desired outcome clearly stated.

The receiving manager will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the grievance in writing within **five working days** from the receipt of the completed PER 24 form and arrange to meet the employee within the following ten working days.
- Seek the assistance of HR.
- Discuss with the employee, whether employee welfare support or Occupational Health referral is appropriate.

The Grievance Hearing

- The hearing should be held at a reasonable time and place, and the employee has a duty to attend. It is recognised that any grievance will be important to the employee and, as such, every effort will be made to schedule the hearing as soon as possible. To that end, employees should note that the hearing may be when they are away from rostered duty. Attendance at the hearing will not attract any financial remuneration. The employee can suggest an alternative time and date so long as it is reasonable and not more than **five working days** after the original date.
- The employee has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or be represented by a recognised trade union representative during this hearing.
- If the companion cannot attend on a proposed date, the employee can suggest an alternative time and date so long as it is reasonable and not

Human Resources Professional Standards Grievance Policy

more than **five working days** after the original date.

- A representative from HR will be present at the meeting to provide appropriate advice and guidance and will take notes of the meeting.
- At the hearing, the manager will seek to understand the grievance by inviting the employee to discuss their grievance and explore how the employee would like to see it resolved.
- If the matter does not require further investigation, the decision will be given verbally and be communicated by the hearing manager in writing within **five working days** of the meeting. A copy of this will be forwarded to HR.
- Should the matter require further investigation, the manager will make the employee aware and indicate likely timescales by when a decision is to be made. The manager should take steps to ensure that a decision is made within a reasonably practicable timescale.
- The outcome of the grievance hearing will be confirmed in writing to the employee, without unreasonable delay. The outcome will detail what action will be taken with a copy being forwarded to HR.
- The employee will be notified of their right of appeal against the decision if they are not satisfied.

Stage 3: Appeal

Where the employee remains dissatisfied with the decision at Stage 2, they may appeal within **five working days** of receiving the outcome in writing. The appeal request should be sent to the Stage 2 decision makers manager and HR. This request to include completed PER 24 form, notes of the grievance hearing and any supporting documents.

In deciding who should be the appeal manager, the Service will consider who is the appropriate manager who has the appropriate authority to make the decision. This could be another manager with the same seniority or a more senior manager. On occasion, the appeal may need to be heard by a member of SLT and each grievance will therefore be individually considered.

The employee in their appeal request is expected to summarise:

- Why they are not happy with the Stage 2 outcome.
- Their suggested remedies for resolving the grievance.
- The appeal manager will acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing within **five working days** from receipt of the appeal letter. The appeal hearing should be held within **ten working days** from receipt of the appeal letter wherever possible. However, subject to agreement between all parties, this timeframe may be extended.

**Human Resources
Professional Standards Grievance Policy**

Appeal Hearing Process

- **Two working days** prior to the appeal hearing, both parties will exchange all the information which will be referred to during the appeal.
- The hearing will be held at a reasonable place and time, and the employee has a duty to attend.
- The employee has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or be represented by a recognised trade union representative during this hearing.
- A representative from HR will attend the hearing to provide advice and guidance and take the notes of the meeting.
- At the hearing, the manager who heard the grievance at Stage 2, will present their reason for the initial decision to the appeal manager and the employee will then be asked to present their reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision.
- The appeal manager will adjourn the hearing to decide. The decision will be communicated in writing and given to the employee within **five working days** of the hearing.
- This is the final stage of the grievance procedure and there is no further right of appeal.

Possible Outcomes

Where a grievance is upheld, possible outcomes, at any stage of the procedure may include (but are not limited to):

- A written apology.
- An agreement to amend behaviour or monitor progress.
- Referral to other policies or procedures.
- A full explanation of how and why a policy or procedure has been implemented.
- A referral to a correct procedure where an inappropriate one has been followed.
- An offer of fresh application of a procedure which had been incorrectly implemented.

Outcomes may need to be reviewed periodically to assess implementation e.g., by diarising reviews into day to day line management.

In serious cases such as allegations of bullying, harassment, racism or other unlawful discrimination which suggests major problems for example, with culture or management style will (where the matter remains unresolved) require a further hearing to be conducted by a member of SLT, the appropriate level which both appreciates the wider importance and significance of the issue and has the authority to deal with it.

Where a grievance is raised during a disciplinary procedure

Where a grievance is raised during a disciplinary procedure, the appropriate action will be determined on a case by case basis.

If the issue relates to the content of the disciplinary procedure or the procedure itself, the matter will usually be dealt with via the disciplinary appeal procedure.

In exceptional circumstances any such matters should be referred to the Head of HR for consideration.

10. RAISING AWARENESS AND TRAINING

It is important that everyone in the organisation understands how to raise a grievance. Managers will receive training on the statutory requirements and the use of the procedure.

All new starters should be signposted to the Grievance Policy as part of their induction.

11. WHO CAN PROVIDE SUPPORT OR ADVICE TO EMPLOYEES

We are committed to maintaining a safe and supportive work environment for everyone. Below are internal and external routes staff can use to speak up, raise a concern and get support.

Most speaking up happens through conversations with supervisors and line managers where challenges are raised and resolved quickly. We strive for a culture where that is normal, everyday practice and encourage you to explore this option it may well be the easiest and simplest way of resolving matters. However, you have other options: Station Managers, Group Managers, TLT and SLT member with responsibility for the subject matter you are speaking up about.

Via your line manager

Your line manager is a key point of contact for reporting concerns and seeking support. They are here to listen, provide guidance, and ensure that your concerns are addressed appropriately. Whether you have questions about workplace policies, encounter issues with colleagues, or require assistance with personal matters affecting your work, your line manager is there to support you.

If, for any reason, you feel uncomfortable discussing your concerns with your line manager, we have established multiple channels for reporting concerns anonymously or confidentially.

Through our Policies and our Professional Standards Policies

Various routes are included in our Policies and our Professional Standards Policies listed below:

- Anti-Fraud and Corruption

Human Resources Professional Standards Grievance Policy

- Complaints
- Dignity at Work (anti Bullying and Harassment)
- Disciplinary
- Exits From the Service
- Equality and Inclusion
- Grievance
- Menopause
- Mediation
- Personal Relationships at Work Policy
- Safety Event Reporting Recording and Investigation Arrangements
- Whistleblowing

Our Internal Bullying and Harassment Hotline

Bullying will not be tolerated within Humberside Fire and Rescue Service. Our Dignity at Work policy clearly defines bullying and how to report it.

The Service's 'Zero Tolerance' campaign has a very simple strapline - SUPPORT - **CHALLENGE - REPORT** - and we encourage our employees to do just that.

Internal Freedom to Speak Up Routes

The Freedom to Speak Up model was developed in health and has six key elements; we have used the model as the basis for the HFRS process. How we implement 'Valuing' and 'Modelling' Speaking Up within HFRS will be developed from the 'ground up' by listening to staff about how line managers and the organisation can value and model Speaking Up.

Our 'Freedom to Speak Up Guardian' can support you to speak up if you feel unable to do so. The Guardian will ensure that people who speak up are thanked for doing so, that the issues they raise are responded to, and that the person speaking up receives feedback on the actions taken. You can find out more about the guardian role [here](#).

Additional information relating to Freedom to Speak Up Routes can be found [here](#).

Contact HR

You can contact your HR team, in complete confidence, on: 01482 567572.

This number will take you through to one of our HR advisers who will listen to what has caused you to feel the way you do.

You don't need to provide names and you will receive completely confidential advice as to how to manage any issues you raise.

HMICFRS Independent reporting line

The independent reporting line (IRL) form is a tool for fire and rescue service staff to confidentially pass information to HMICFRS, which as an independent body is responsible for inspecting fire and rescue services on their efficiency, effectiveness and how well they look after their people.

The reporting line can be accessed [here](#).

Employee Assistance Programme

As part of an ongoing commitment to employee wellbeing, Humberside Fire and Rescue Service Occupational Health Team are very pleased to offer all employees confidential support, with free access to emotional and practical support through CiC's Confidential Care Service.

The service is provided by CiC, an external organisation, who are entirely independent, so support and advice is completely confidential. You can call the Confidential Care line as often and for as long as you need to discuss any issues you would like support with.

The Confidential Care service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and is accessed by calling the freephone number: 0800 085 1376.

Independent Speak Up

This service aims to provide a safe space for staff to speak up when something isn't right in the workplace:

- Discrimination, victimisation and harassment (on gender, sexual orientation, disability)
- Misogyny and violence against women and girls
- Health and safety breaches
- Fraud and corruption
- Poor or unsafe working practices

The service is available online or via phone [here](#).

Service users can remain anonymous or can choose to provide their name and contact details which will then be shared for confidential use by the Fire Service

You may also wish to speak to:

- A colleague
- A trade union representative
- The Humberside Fire Authority Counselling Service

**Human Resources
Professional Standards Grievance Policy**

- Protect – UK Charity

You may wish to discuss the concern with a colleague or trade union representative first and may find it easier to raise the matter if there are other colleagues who share the same concerns. A trade union representative or work colleague may accompany a member of staff at any meetings or interviews in connection with the concerns raised.

12. Grievance raised through the Complaints process

If the alleged grievance was initially raised under the Complaints Policy, and the Complaint's Officer has determined that this Policy is the most appropriate avenue for the complaint to be progressed, then the HR team shall keep the Feedback Officer updated on the outcome of the grievance case (see Appendix D).

**If you require any further information regarding this policy,
please contact Human Resources.**



APPENDIX A: GRIEVANCE STAGE 1 FORM

For completion by the individual(s) raising the grievance. Make a copy of this form once you have completed it, keep a copy for yourself and send the other via email to the HR team in the first instance (HR@humbersidefire.gov.uk) for processing.

Name of Employee(s):	
Line Manager:	

Date of Grievance:	
---------------------------	--

Summary of my/our grievance (use extra sheets and attach to this form as necessary):

How my/our grievance can be resolved:



APPENDIX A: GRIEVANCE STAGE 1 OUTCOME FORM

To be completed by the manager hearing the grievance under Stage 1 of the Grievance Policy. This form, along with an email outlining an explanation for the outcome should be submitted to the individual and the HR team (HR@humbersidefire.gov.uk) for processing.

Name of Employee(s):	
Line Manager:	

Date stage 1 meeting held:						
Outcome (tick as necessary):	Upheld		Partially Upheld		Not Upheld	

Stage 1 Recommendations						

Signature:	
Name and Job Title:	



APPENDIX A: GRIEVANCE STAGE 2 FORM

For completion by the individual(s) raising the grievance. Make a copy of this form once you have completed it, keep a copy for yourself and send the other via email to the HR team in the first instance (HR@humbersidefire.gov.uk) for processing.

Name of Employee(s):	
Line Manager:	

Following the outcome of my Stage 1 grievance, I continue to be aggrieved because:

How my/our grievance can be resolved:



APPENDIX A: GRIEVANCE STAGE 2 OUTCOME FORM

To be completed by the manager hearing the grievance under Stage 2 of the Grievance Policy. This form, along with a formal letter outlining an explanation for the outcome should be submitted to the individual and the HR team (HR@humbersidefire.gov.uk) for processing.

Name of Employee(s):	
Line Manager:	

Date stage 2 meeting held:					
Outcome (tick as necessary):	Upheld		Partially Upheld		Not Upheld

Stage 2 Recommendations					

Signature:	
Name and Job Title:	



APPENDIX A: GRIEVANCE STAGE 3 APPEAL FORM

For completion by the individual(s) raising the grievance. Make a copy of this form once you have completed it, keep a copy for yourself and send the other via email to the HR team in the first instance (HR@humbersidefire.gov.uk) for processing.

Name of Employee(s):	
Line Manager:	

Following the outcome of my Stage 2 grievance, I continue to be aggrieved because:

--

How my/our grievance can be resolved:

--



APPENDIX A: GRIEVANCE STAGE 3 APPEAL OUTCOME FORM

To be completed by the manager hearing the grievance under Stage 3 of the Grievance Policy. This form, along with a formal letter outlining an explanation for the outcome should be submitted to the individual and the HR team (HR@humbersidefire.gov.uk) for processing.

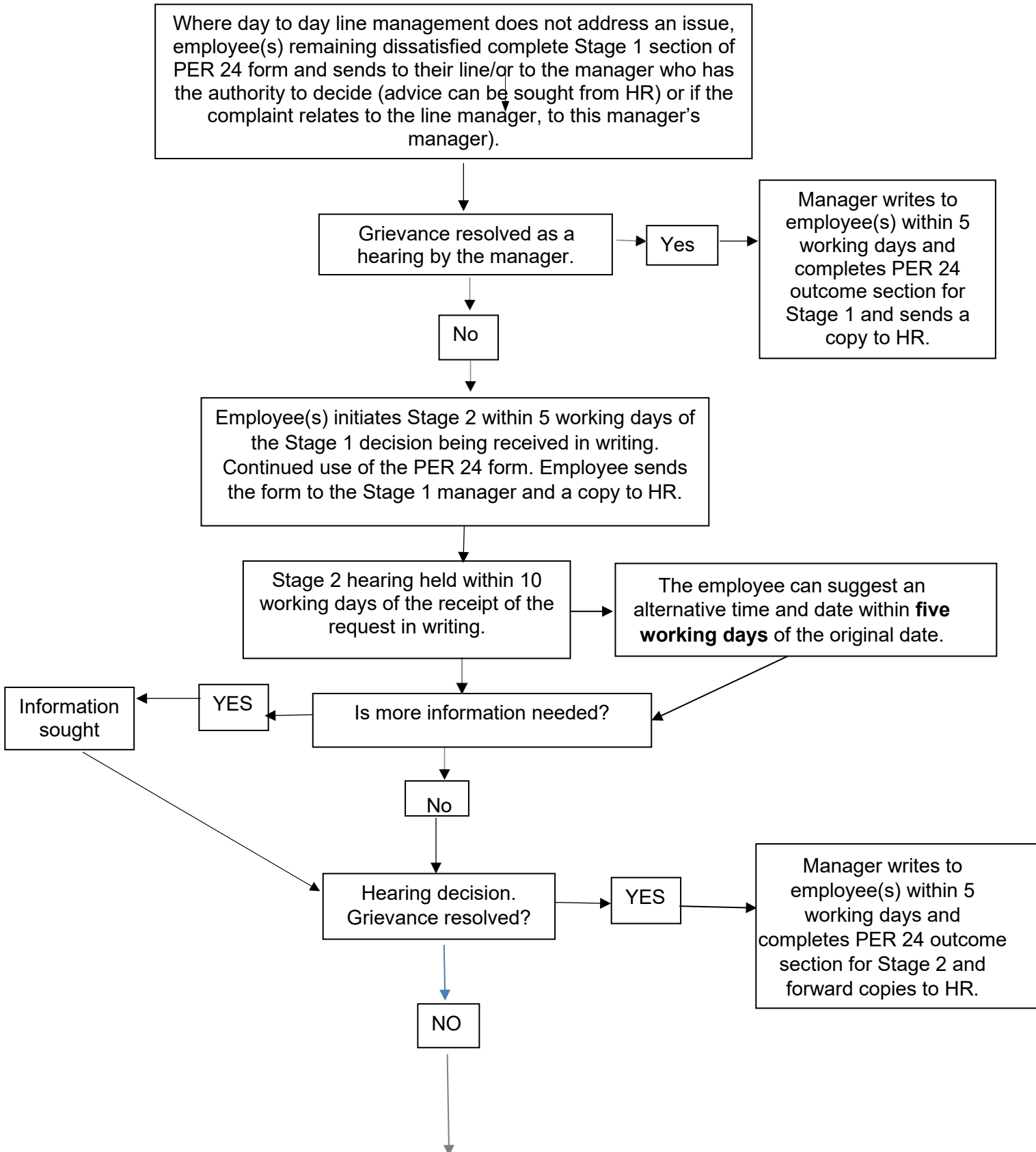
Name of Employee(s):	
Line Manager:	

Date stage 3 meeting held:						
Outcome (tick as necessary):	Upheld		Partially Upheld		Not Upheld	

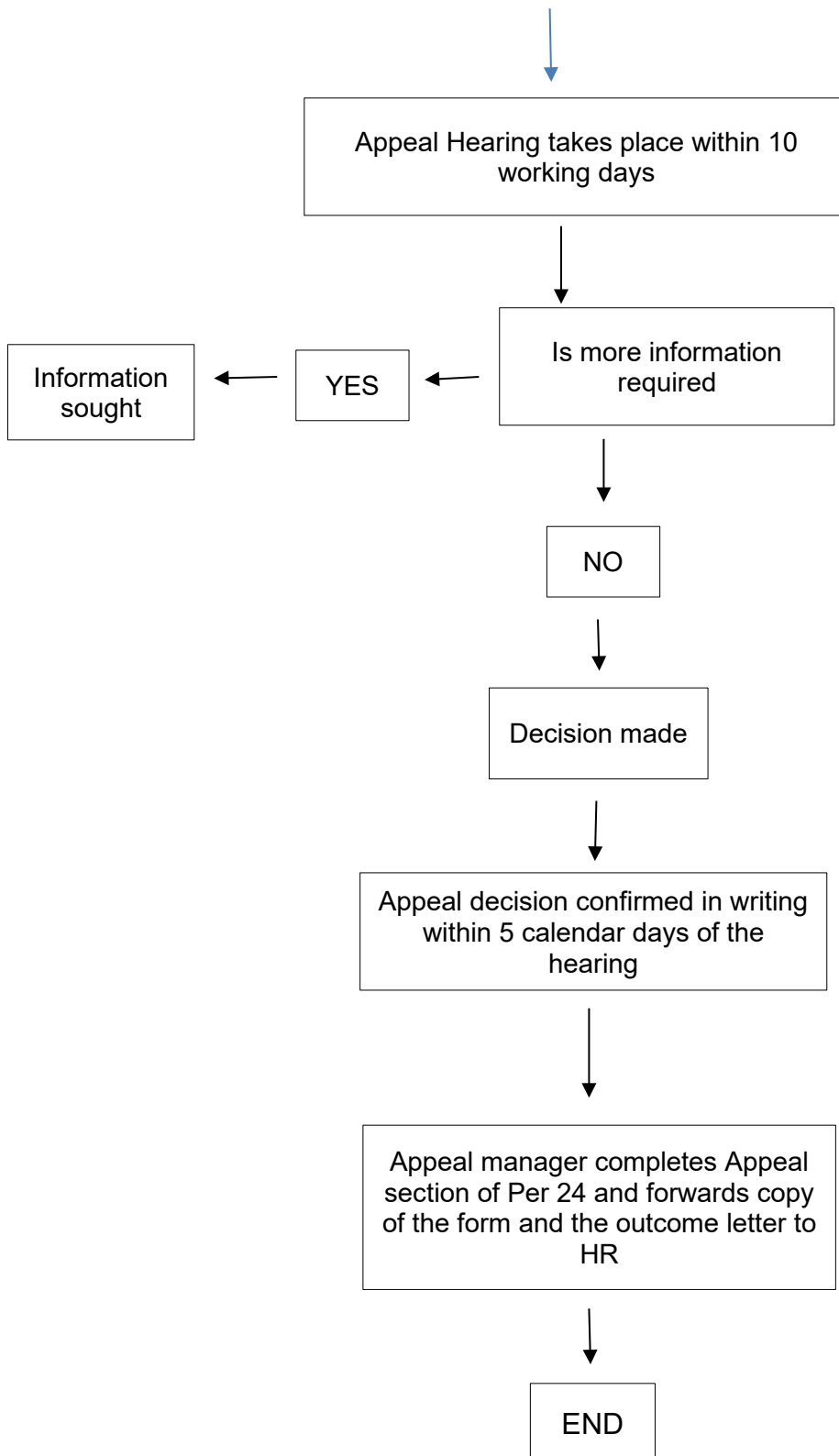
Stage 3 Recommendations

Signature:	
Name and Job Title:	

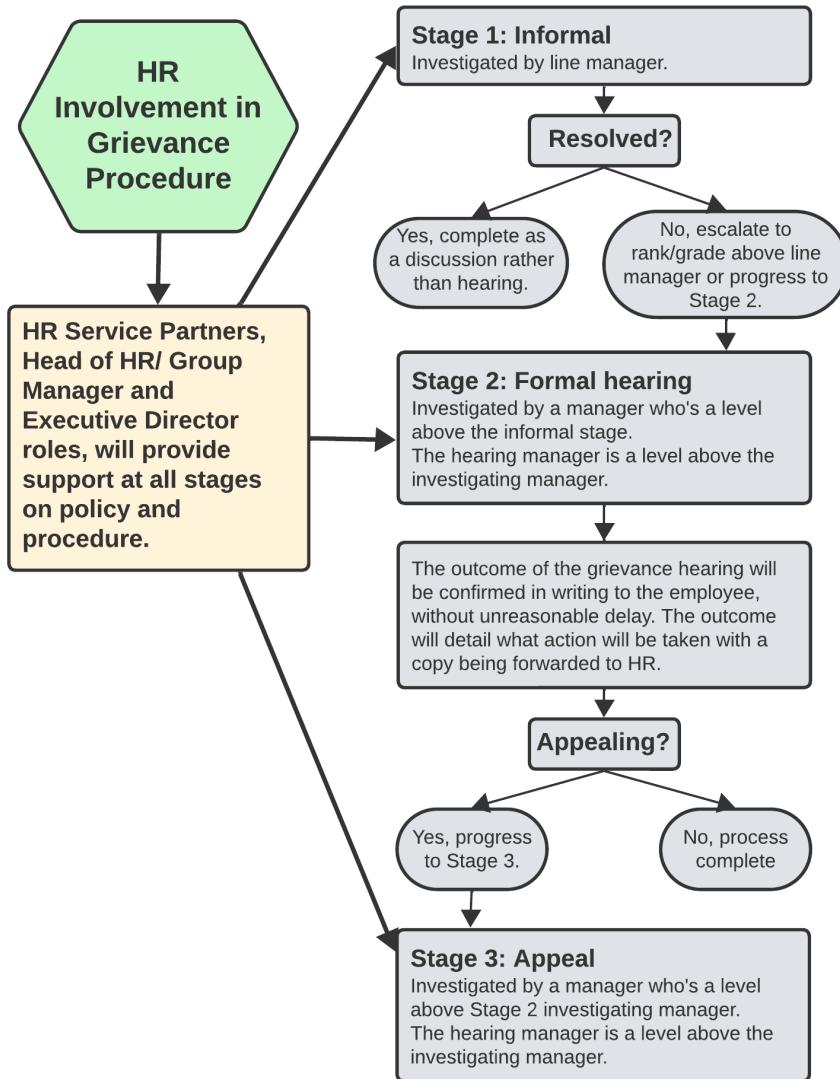
APPENDIX B: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FLOWCHARTS



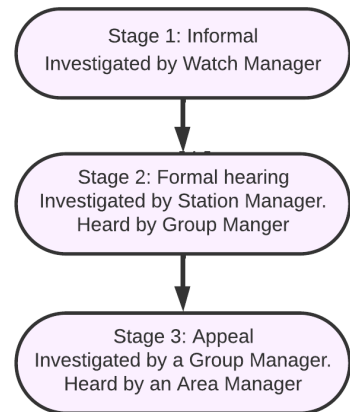
Employee(s) request an appeal, in writing to decision manager, at Stage 2.
Request is within 5 working days of receiving the outcome of Stage 2 in writing.
Request summarises the basis of their appeal.



Grievance Procedure



Example of a grievance using Grey Book roles which have Green Book equivalents:



APPENDIX C: COMPLAINTS PROCESS FLOWCHART

Complaints Process

