

GRIEVANCE POLICY (STAFF)

RATIONALE

North Melbourne Language and Learning (NMLL) aims to deliver courses in a safe and supportive environment. In the event where staff have a concern about the behaviour of another person at NMLL, or about the work they are asked to do, it is important to have in place a clear, structured process for reporting and resolving the problem. This policy seeks to provide a grievance process that staff may use to raise their concerns in an appropriate manner.

DEFINITIONS

Grievance: a concern about the behaviour of another person, this can include harassment of any form such as sexist or racist language, physical, emotional or verbal abuse; it can also include concern about an action taken by another person which is perceived as disadvantaging a particular individual.

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

All Victorian organisations, including NMLL, must comply with Commonwealth and State human rights legislation such as:

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Racial Hatred Act 1995*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*

The major purpose of these Acts is to eliminate discrimination against people because of their disability, race, gender or age.

PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on the principles that:

- all staff should have the opportunity to raise issues and for the issues to be addressed and recorded as appropriate
- a process should exist to determine whether a grievance is justified
- when a grievance is not upheld, an appeal process should be available

- all staff should be confident about the grievance and appeal process available to them.

PROCEDURES

Resolving a problem / grievance

(Note: throughout these processes all parties are entitled to an advocate)

1. Try talking to the other person/s concerned

- be clear about what you are unhappy about
- suggest some ways you would like to resolve the conflict
- be open to ideas from the other person/s.

2. If you are unable to resolve the conflict refer the matter to the NMLL Manager:

- explain and be clear about why you are unhappy with the current situation
- say what you think could assist to resolve the problem
- be prepared to consider different options for resolving the grievance.

3. The NMLL Manager will

- document the issue/s that is causing concern. The focus is to be specific about what is happening and how this affects each person
- clarify the desired outcome
- provide any available information that will assist the resolution process e.g. reasons for existing circumstances, limitations imposed on NMLL or other parties, resources etc.
- attempt to reach resolution between the parties via meetings and negotiation
- document the agreed resolution and provide copies to each person involved.

4. If you are unhappy with the NMLL Manager's suggestions or actions

- you may put your problem or concern in writing and send it to the NMLL Committee of Management, addressed to the Chairperson
- the Chairperson will provide a written response to your grievance.

5. If you are unhappy with the Chairperson's response

- external avenues of dispute resolution may also be utilised. The Dispute Settlement Centre services are outlined below:

**Dispute Settlement Centre helps resolve conflict
in community organisations**

All community organisations experience conflict from time to time, either within the management group or between staff and/or staff and management. However, there is an alternative to the traditional legal processes and that is the Dispute Settlement Centre, based in Level 4/456 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne.

Mediation through the Centre is free and is offered to both country and metropolitan organisations and individuals. They have trained professionals who can provide both mediation and counselling.

Dispute Settlement Centre Victoria 4/456 Lonsdale St Melbourne VIC 3000

Tel: 03 9603 8370

Tel: 1800 658 528 (toll free for regional callers)

Email: dscv@justice.vic.gov.au Web: www.disputes.vic.gov.au

CHANGE HISTORY of POLICY

**Previously known as:
Grievance Policy - Staff**

Initial approval date: 7 April 2008

**Date last reviewed:
27 November 2010**

**This version approved at Committee of
Management Meeting date: 11th Dec 2013**

Policy review due: December 2016