

Employee Relations Newsletter: ER Matters

In this issue:

1. Introduction
2. Meet the Team
3. Disciplinary Warnings
4. Report and Support Data
5. Statutory Payment Increases
6. College Values and Behaviours
7. Update on Training
8. Further information

Introduction

Dear Colleagues



Welcome to our latest ER Newsletter.

The themes in this Newsletter includes a focus on disciplinary warnings, why they are issued, why they are important, and when we can rely on active warnings. In an ideal world we would not have to issue warnings, however, sometimes they are necessary and therefore we need to ensure that they are reasonable and relevant to the issues being considered. Warnings are also important and relevant to the fairness of the Disciplinary and Capability processes.

I am sharing some data from the Report and Support reporting tool. This should provide you with some understanding of the type of issues people are reporting and the number of anonymous and named reports. We would encourage people who wish to disclose or report that they make a named report so that a member of the ER team can make contact to discuss options.

Once again we would encourage you to sign up to our training; details of the dates for Managing Sickness Absence, Managing Probation and Investigating Officer training are outlined below.

If there is a topic that anyone would like us to cover in this Newsletter do get in touch.

Finally, I would like to welcome our most recent recruits Maudlyn Aaron, ER Adviser, Beth Coffey and Eilis Lysaght, ER Administrators to the team and we look forward to working with them.

Best wishes

Ann

Ann Kelly
Head of Employee Relations

Meet the Team



Maudlyn Aaron.

I am the newly appointed ER Adviser within the ER Team. I started my journey in the HR field many years ago and have a wealth of experience, gained by working in a variety of organisations. I am always open to learning and sharing any knowledge and experience I have with fellow colleagues and clients.

I consider myself to be a fair and hard-working practitioner, who is not afraid to make those tough decisions, that sometimes have to be made. I am looking forward to my journey at Imperial College, which has a reputation second to none. I am also looking forward to meeting those of you that I will support and guide through the often tempestuous waters of Employee Relations, with a view to entering calmer waters and a positive way forward. Employee wellbeing is the key to successful organisations.

When I am not working, I enjoy reading, knitting, keeping fit and Salsa. I am hoping to get back to Salsa and enjoying the social aspects of a great activity.

Beth Coffey

I am the new Employee Relations Administrator in the ER team. I have always had an interest in working with people, and since studying business management & human resources at university it has helped to further ignite my interest. I have previously worked in learning & development and in general HR roles, however I have always wanted to pursue a career in employee relations. I look forward to learning and developing new skills in employee relations, specifically at Imperial College. As well as working in partnership with other colleagues in the college.

Eilis Lysaght

I am Eilis, one of the new Employee Relations Administrators. I graduated in 2020 with a degree in Human Geography and since then have enjoyed working in a variety of roles, most recently as an editor of biographies. This will be my first role in HR, though I have always been curious about it because of my natural interest in people and their practices. I'm really excited to develop new skills and interact with a large range of people while working at Imperial. Outside of work I love cycling, swimming in my local lido and going to the cinema.

[Visit the ER Contact Us page](#), for information on the ER team together with our contact details.



Disciplinary Warnings

The reason we care about warnings and why they are the important is because effective disciplinary procedures are a valuable management tool to help avoid allegations of disparity in the treatment of members of staff and minimises the risk of action for unlawful discrimination, constructive dismissal or procedurally unfair dismissal. They are relevant to the fairness of the disciplinary process.

A written warning is a formal warning that the College can give a member of staff at the end of a disciplinary hearing.

Dismissal may be considered in cases of gross misconduct, or where the member of staff had previously had a final written warning.

The ACAS Code of Practice applies to both misconduct and performance issues. Employment legislation does not set out a staged approach to warnings. This can be found in the ACAS Code [\[ACAS Codes of Conduct\]](#)

- In some instances if a member of staff's first misconduct or unsatisfactory performance is sufficiently serious, it may be appropriate to move directly to a final written warning. This might occur where the member of staff's actions have had, or are liable to have, a serious or harmful impact on the organisation.
- A written warning will set out the nature of the misconduct or poor performance and the change in behaviour or improvement in performance required (with timescale). The member of staff will be told how long the warning will remain current. They will also be informed of the consequences of further misconduct, or failure to improve performance. For instance that it may result in dismissal.
- Some actions, which we call gross misconduct, are so serious in themselves or have such serious consequences that they may result in dismissal without notice for a first offence. However, a full and fair disciplinary process will be followed, before dismissing for gross misconduct.

When can the College rely on active warnings?

Where a member of staff has already received a warning and commits a further act of misconduct or their performance does not improve, provided the previous warning remains active, the College can take it into account when deciding on the appropriate sanction for the most recent conduct.

As a general rule the relevant date for assessing whether a previous warning is still active is the date of the further act of misconduct, not the end date of the active sanction itself.

Difference between timescale for improvement and duration of warning

The difference between the duration of the warning and the timescale for improvement is communicated to the member of staff when issuing a warning. The duration of the warning is the period when it remains active – so for example if it is live for 12 months, it can be taken into account in the event of any repeat issue in that 12-month period. However, that does not mean that the College has to wait a year before considering what to do next. Depending on the circumstances, it may also be appropriate to set a timescale for improvement within the warning duration which can be much shorter, e.g. three months.



Report and Support Data

Autumn 2021 saw the roll out of the Report and Support Tool to be used by Staff and Students to report incidents related to:

Bullying & Harassment; Hate Crime; Other; Racial Harassment; Sexual Harassment & Sexual Misconduct

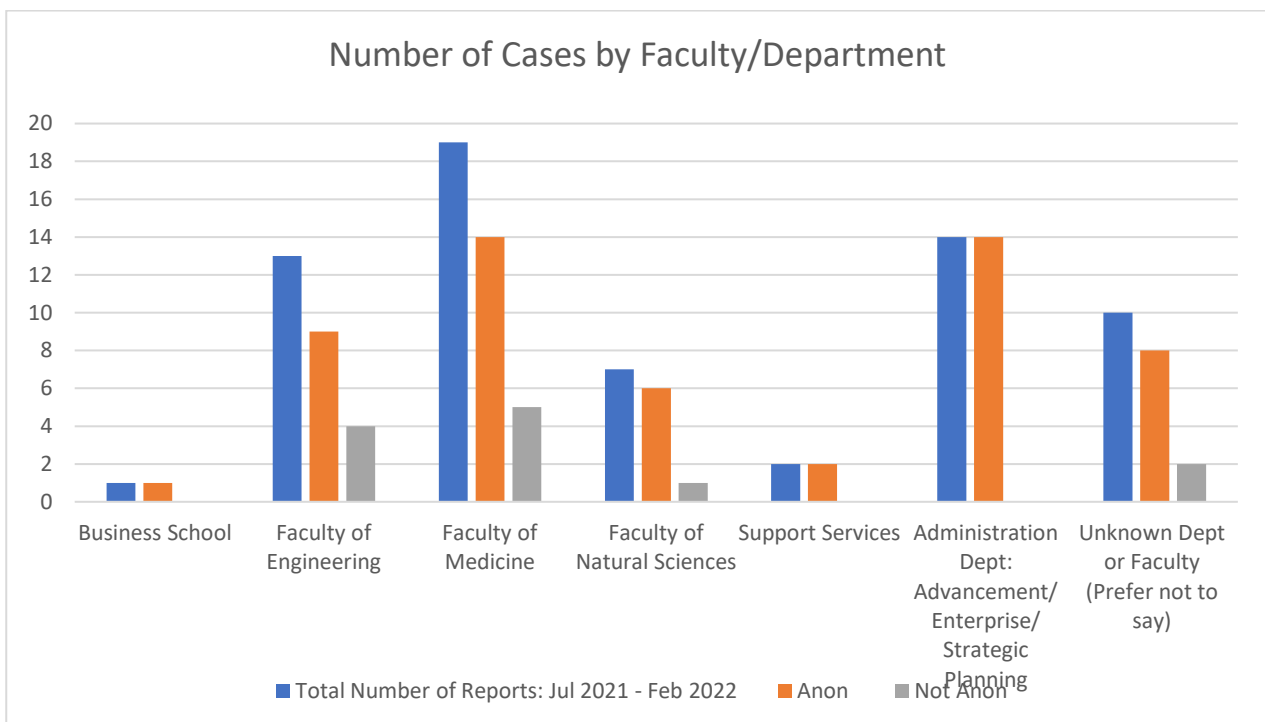
For the period July 2021 to February 2022 a total of 66 reports were made by staff through Report & Support. Across the faculties/departments, 19 were made in Medicine, 14 Administration Advancement /Strategic Planning, 13 in Engineering and 7 within Natural Sciences, 2 reports were made in Support Services and 1 within the Business School. 10 reports were received from individuals who preferred not to disclose details of the Faculty / Department.

12 reports were logged by individuals who provided information to identify themselves; across the faculties this was 4 in Engineering, 5 in Medicine and 1 within Natural Sciences. 2 reports were made by individuals who chose not to disclose the Faculty or Department.

54 of the reports were made anonymously with 14 anonymous reports coming from both Medicine and Administration Department, Advancement Enterprise/Strategic Planning respectively. The Faculty of Engineering had 9 and there were 8 where the reporter did not disclose the Faculty/Department or preferred not to provide this information. 6 reports were made in Natural Sciences, 2 within Support Services and 1 in the Business School.

We want to reassure those individuals who chose to make a disclosure anonymously, that the information provided remains confidential and is used to monitor issues across the College and helps to identify areas where appropriate intervention may be required.

Please see the chart below:



Further information on Report and Support can be found here:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/resources/report-and-support/>



Statutory Payment Increases

Statutory Redundancy Pay

The cap on the value of a week's pay, which is used to calculate Statutory Redundancy Pay for employees earning above that amount, increased to £571 per week (from £544) with effect from 6 April 2022.

The overall maximum Statutory Redundancy Pay, based on 20 years' service at an age multiplier of 1.5, therefore increases to £17,130 (from £16,320).

Statutory Maternity Pay

The statutory maternity, paternity and adoption pay increased to £156.66 with effect from 3 April 2022.



College Values and Behaviours

The College is committed to providing a working environment where staff are to be treated with dignity and respect. The College expects all members of staff to act in line with the College Values:

Respect - We treat each other **fairly**, with **kindness** and **respect**, **valuing** each person's individual experience, perspectives and contribution

Collaboration - We work together, cultivating an **inclusive and impactful** College community

Excellence - We strive for quality in everything we do, taking pride in our work, delivering impact through our commitment

Integrity - We act in a principled way, being honest and open, checking, challenging and changing our practices and behaviours when necessary.

Innovation - We become **inspired** by possibilities, venturing into the unknown with **open minds** and having the **courage to embrace change**

The College's Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation Policy provides information for employees about the type of behaviour that is unacceptable, and a range of support mechanisms for those who believe they are victims of bullying or harassment, to raise concerns and seek resolution.

Through the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Centre, the College provides:

- General harassment training for staff
- Tailored training for managers
- Active Bystander training on how to challenge poor behaviours

To support members of staff, the College provides the following support mechanisms:

- Confidential Care Helpline: Confidential Care
- Report & Support Tool: Report & Support
- Harassment Support Contacts (HSC's): HSCs List
- Mental Health First Aiders
- Trade Unions: Trade Unions
- HR: HR Hub

Update on Training



We are now taking bookings for our training for May – December 2022.

To book a space on one of the sessions detailed below, please email Eilis Lysaght e.lysaght@imperial.ac.uk

- **Investigating Officer Training**

This is a two-hour workshop aimed at managers who may be called upon to undertake the role of an Investigating Officer for grievance or disciplinary investigations. The workshop will provide a step-by-step guide on how to conduct investigations ensuring the investigation process is conducted fairly, consistently and in line with College processes and Values. You will also gain an understanding of the role Employee Relations play in the investigation process which will enable you to lead an investigation confidently and successfully.

2022 Dates and Times:

Thursday 19 May 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm
Thursday 16 June 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm
Thursday 21 July 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm
Thursday 18 August 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm
Thursday 22 September 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm
Thursday 20 October 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm
Thursday 17 November 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm
Thursday 15 December 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm

- **Managing Probation Effectively Workshop**

This is a 75-minute workshop run by the Employee Relations team. The workshop provides line managers with advice on how to effectively manage probation periods and includes guidance on the benefits of following College process and the repercussions when the process is not followed. This workshop looks at the probation process in depth, highlighting the importance of each stage, i.e. appointment, planning an induction, setting objectives, mid and final probation review meetings and PRDPs, in line with the College Policy and Values.

2022 Dates and Times:

Thursday 12 May 2022	10:00am – 11:15am
Thursday 26 May 2022	10:00am – 11:15am
Thursday 30 June 2022	10:00am – 11:15am
Thursday 28 July 2022	10:00am – 11:15am
Thursday 25 August 2022	10:00am – 11:15am
Thursday 29 September 2022	10:00am – 11:15am
Thursday 27 October 2022	10:00am – 11:15am
Thursday 24 November 2022	10:00am – 11:15am

- **Sickness Absence Workshop**

This is a two-hour workshop run by the Employee Relations team and provides line managers with advice on how to manage long and short-term sickness absence within their teams. The workshop includes guidance on the College's Sickness Absence policy and an interactive session where you are able to seek advice on real life scenarios and managing these in line with the Policy and Values.

2022 Dates and Times:

Wednesday 18 May 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm
Wednesday 20 July 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm
Wednesday 21 September 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm
Wednesday 16 November 2022	10:00am – 12:00pm

Further information



Please click <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/about-us/contact-us/employee-relations/> for more information about the ER team.

Please click <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/procedures/covid/> for current general HR information.

Please contact the team if you have any questions or ideas. We would really appreciate your feedback as to what you would like to see in future editions.