

Employee Relations Newsletter: ER Matters

In this issue:

1. Meet the Employee Relations team
2. Routes to Resolution
3. Training
4. Sickness Absence 'drop-in' sessions
5. Did you know...
6. Online Harassment and Bullying Reporting Tool
7. Further information
8. Any finally,...

Meet the Employee Relations (ER) team



Visit the [ER contact us page](#), for information on the ER team and our contact details.

Routes to Resolution



In July 2019, the ER Team together with representatives from the UNISON, UNITE and UCU unions along with Fiona Richmond, Lead Organisational Development Consultant attended a two-day Routes to Resolution training course delivered by Ade Adeniji, a Resolution Consultant at The TCM Group.

The course was designed to support us in the College's strategic aim of transitioning from our current traditional grievance process to resolving our workplace disputes by using a pro-active and more collaborative approach centred around facilitated conversations. The intention is to give individuals the opportunity to raise and resolve their concerns as quickly as possible.

We discussed the causes of conflict and how we can work towards reducing the number of conflict situations and formal processes. We had the opportunity to learn about our own conflict management style preferences and undertook practical exercises (skills practice, not 'role plays', apparently!) to introduce us to the skills needed for facilitated conversations.

Over the next few months we will be working with Fiona and the Unions to create a new Resolution Policy with a view to resolving conflicts informally and thereby help to create a better place to work.



Training



We will be running Investigation Officer training to provide managers with the knowledge and behaviours to undertake the role of Investigating Officer when dealing with disciplinary and grievance investigations.

The next date is Thursday 23 January 2020, 14:00-16:00 at St Mary's campus. To register your interest in these sessions, please email [Jackie Rajalingham](mailto:Jackie.Rajalingham).

Sickness Absence 'drop-in' sessions



Do you have problems with staff sickness? Do you need advice and guidance on how to manage? Are you feeling stuck on the next steps or confused with the policy? Come along to our Sick Absence 'Drop-in' session and speak to an expert. The ER team will be available to speak to you directly regarding your sickness absence queries.

When: first Friday of every month

Next date: 3 January 2020

Time: 10:00 – 12:00

Location: Behind the red screens, in front of the lifts, 3rd floor, Faculty Building, South Kensington campus

Do bring along any information to help inform the discussion.

Did you know...



Under the Maternity and Paternity Leave Regulation 1999 staff on maternity leave who are at risk of redundancy are entitled to special protection; this means that where there is a suitable vacancy which is on the same terms and no less favourable they should be put at the front of the queue for the post and there is no requirement for them to attend an interview or undergo any form of application process. They are also entitled to be given priority over all other candidates, both external and internal.

So, when commencing consultation with staff forward to them suitable alternative posts that are being advertised within the College and offer them a meeting date. If at the end of the consultation period, it has not been possible to secure suitable alternative employment and they are made redundant their notice is paid at full pay even if they had transferred onto the SMP/unpaid element of their maternity pay.

Online Harassment and Bullying Reporting Tool



We would like to make you aware of the on-line harassment and bullying reporting tool which can be used to report any concerns or other inappropriate behaviour that you have either experienced or witnessed. Staff have the options either to make a report anonymously or to make a report and have it followed up by the ER team to discuss in more detail with them.

Any concerns raised via this tool will only be seen by senior members of the ER team.

[Access the online harassment and bullying reporting tool](#), or visit the [Equality webpage](#) for further information about the harassment and bullying support available to all staff.

Further information



Visit the HR website for 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.

And finally,...



We are delighted to announce that Fern Whyte will be joining the team as our new Employee Relations Adviser. Fern will be joining us on Monday 18 November 2019 and brings with her a wide range of experience gained at the coalface of HR operations, particularly in the Faculty of Medicine and, more recently, Support Services.

Fern's contact details will be added to the ER team page on the College website shortly after she starts her new role.