

IMPRESS

Disciplinary Policy

The purpose of the Disciplinary Policy is to encourage employees to improve and to maintain satisfactory standards of conduct, attendance and job performance. The primary objective is to take corrective rather than punitive action.

The aim of IMPRESS is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all its employees. This procedure sets out the action which will be taken when the company rules are broken and provides a fair, effective and consistent method of dealing with disciplinary matters.

Principles

- Employees are expected to know the standard of conduct or work expected of them as detailed in the Code of Conduct and IMPRESS policies.
- IMPRESS will investigate complaints or allegations of misconduct promptly to establish the facts of the case.
- Employees will be advised of the nature of the complaint or alleged misconduct and given an opportunity to state their case before any decision is taken.
- Employees can be accompanied to any disciplinary or appeal meeting by a fellow worker or a friend.
- IMPRESS will record any disciplinary action taken and this will be retained on the employee's personnel file for 12 months. At the end of that period, subject to satisfactory conduct and/or improved performance, the warning will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes.
- IMPRESS reserves the right, where appropriate, to suspend an employee (on full pay) whilst it undertakes an investigation. The employee will be required to cooperate with the investigation and be available for interview(s) during office hours.
- No employee will be dismissed for a first breach of discipline, except in cases of gross misconduct
- Employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action taken.

Procedures

1. Informal Discussions

Before taking formal disciplinary action, the manager will make every effort to resolve the matter by informal discussion with the employee. Only where this fails to bring about the desired improvement should the formal disciplinary procedure be implemented.

2. Formal Verbal Warning

If conduct or performance is unsatisfactory, the employee will be given a verbal warning or performance note. Such warnings will be recorded but disregarded after three months of satisfactory service, providing there have been no subsequent disciplinary issues.

3. First Written Warning

If the conduct is regarded as more serious or the employee's work/conduct are considered unsatisfactory after they have received a formal verbal warning, the employee will be advised in writing of the organisation's concerns and asked to attend a disciplinary meeting.

The employee will be given a reasonable amount of time to prepare for the disciplinary meeting and will have the right to be accompanied to the disciplinary meeting by a fellow worker or a friend. The meeting is an opportunity for the employee to set out his or her case and to answer the concerns raised by IMPRESS.

If the employee fails to attend a disciplinary meeting, IMPRESS reserves the right to make a decision in their absence.

After the meeting, the manager conducting it will decide whether or not any further action is to be taken. The employee will be notified of the decision, in writing, as soon as practicable after the disciplinary meeting.

4. Final Written Warning

If the employee's work or conduct fails to improve, or where the allegation is particularly serious, the manager will follow the same procedure for a written warning. If proven, a final written warning will be given to the employee warning that any further misconduct will result in a dismissal with appropriate notice. Employees will be paid for this notice period.

5. Gross Misconduct

An employee can be dismissed without notice on grounds of gross misconduct. The employee will be suspended with pay while the circumstances of the alleged incident are investigated.

Gross misconduct is behaviour which is so serious or unacceptable that it is likely to irreparably damage the relationship of trust and confidence between IMPRESS and the employee. If IMPRESS is satisfied that gross misconduct has occurred the normal consequence will be dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice. A dismissal must be confirmed in writing within 10 working days of the date of the disciplinary interview.

Examples of gross misconduct include (but this is not an exhaustive list):

- theft, fraud, dishonesty or deceit;
- any act of violence or attempted violence, bullying or abusive or threatening behaviour towards people or property;
- being under the influence of, or breaching any IMPRESS rules concerning, alcohol, non-prescribed drugs or other substances during the course of employment;
- a serious act of insubordination, gross rudeness or extreme discourtesy to another employee or a third party in the course of employment;
- a serious and deliberate breach of the Health and Safety Policy of IMPRESS or any conduct likely to endanger the health or safety of others;

- indecent, disorderly or immoral conduct during employment;
- unauthorised use, disclosure or divulgence of any confidential information or trade secrets relating to IMPRESS or any of its officers or employees;
- unlawful harassment or discrimination (including harassment or discrimination on the grounds of a person's marital or civil partner status, sex, race (including colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, gender reassignment or disability);
- a serious breach of the policies and procedures of Impress in relation to the use of IT, telecommunications, email and the internet;
- a serious breach of the policies or operating procedures of IMPRESS;
- being charged with or convicted of a criminal offence (other than an offence which, in the reasonable opinion of IMPRESS, does not affect the employee's suitability to do the job and/or their relationship with the Company, colleagues complainants or participant publishers);
- serious negligence, neglect or failure in the performance of duties;
- any other behaviour reasonably considered by IMPRESS to be prejudicial to the interests or reputation of IMPRESS;
- Deliberate and serious damage to property;
- Serious misuse of the property or name of IMPRESS;
- Giving false information as to qualifications or entitlement to work (including immigration status) to gain employment or other benefits;
- Knowingly taking parental, paternity or adoption leave when not eligible to do so or for a purpose other than supporting a child;
- Making a disclosure of false or misleading information under the Whistleblowing Policy of IMPRESS, in bad faith;
- Making untrue allegations in bad faith against a colleague;
- Victimising a colleague who has raised concerns, made a complaint or given evidence or information under any Policy of IMPRESS, Grievance Procedure, Disciplinary Procedure or otherwise; and,
- Undertaking unauthorised paid or unpaid employment during your working hours.

Appeals

If an employee wishes to appeal against any disciplinary decision, they must appeal, in writing, within five working days of being notified of the decision. The appeal will be heard by two members of the Board.