

1 Purpose

The purpose of this Grievance Resolution Policy (**Policy**) is to create awareness around the processes that Wolters Kluwer may adopt in order to investigate an “equal opportunity related grievance”.

An equal opportunity related grievance is a grievance that relates to a workplace participant being subjected to any of the behaviours covered by Wolters Kluwer’s Equal Opportunity & Anti-Bullying Policy.

2 Application

This Policy applies to all employees, whether full-time, part-time, casual or temporary, as well as to contractors and consultants of Wolters Kluwer Asia Pacific (**Wolters Kluwer**) who wish to raise an equal opportunity related grievance. In this Policy, all people to whom the Policy applies are referred to as “workplace participants”.

This Policy sets out the guidelines by which Wolters Kluwer will endeavour to resolve any equal opportunity related grievance and ultimately seek to eliminate, discrimination, harassment, bullying, adverse action for prohibited reasons, vilification and victimisation in the workplace.

This Policy does not form part of any employee’s contract of employment and Wolters Kluwer reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to supplement, change or amend this Policy at any time.

3 Policy & Procedure

3.1 Determining the Nature of your Grievance

Workplace participants who believe they have an equal opportunity related grievance are encouraged to have a confidential discussion about the issue/ situation with their line manager or HR representative. The line manager or HR representative can outline the different resolution options available in relation to the grievance and will advise you if your grievance classifies as a one covered by this Policy.

3.2 Establish Resolution Options

Workplace participants can access the informal or formal complaints resolutions process for resolution of their equal opportunity related grievance. These processes are outlined below.

The objectives of the complaint resolution process are to provide a mechanism for workplace participants to raise a complaint without fear of retribution, and to enable corrective action to be taken where necessary.

The complaint resolution process is intended to give workplace participants the ability to say “no”, and to tell a person who is subjecting the workplace participants to bullying, discrimination, harassment etc to stop, regardless of who that person is.

The complaint resolution process is also intended to assist Wolters Kluwer to determine whether any inappropriate conduct has occurred, and, if so, to take appropriate disciplinary action and implement measures to prevent any further inappropriate conduct from occurring.

3.3 Informal Process

If possible, try to resolve the issue with the person(s) involved directly. People do not always intend to do things which hurt or offend others. Workplace participants can attempt to deal with their grievance by telling the person whose actions are inappropriate or offensive to stop their behaviour, if they feel comfortable doing this. *This is often a good technique for minor grievances.*

If a workplace participant would prefer to attempt the resolution of the grievance by using the informal process or Wolters Kluwer determines it is appropriate to attempt resolution of the grievance in this way, then informal resolution can be attempted by approaching the other involved parties directly. The line manager or HR Representative can assist with this. In such cases, the line manager or HR Representative, will in the first instance:

- Meet with the workplace participant
- Determine the nature of the issue
- Explain the procedure for managing the grievance
- Discuss and advise the most appropriate way of handling the particular issue

The informal process includes the following steps:

- (1) Discuss and agree on a course of action with either the line manager or HR Representative.
- (2) Discuss issue with all involved parties highlighting exactly the behaviour that the workplace participant wishes to cease.
- (3) Reach an agreeable outcome including an undertaking that the behaviour will not continue.
- (4) Confirm the resolution of issue with either the line manager or HR Representative.
- (5) Inform either the line manager or HR Representative immediately of any reoccurrence of offending/ inappropriate behaviour.

Available Support

If a grievance is dealt with by the informal complaints resolution process, either the line manager or HR Representative should:

- Explain that concerns may arise from misunderstandings that the other party is unaware of;
- Provide support to the workplace participant in bringing the complaint, and if they wish, approach the other party or parties in a safe, fair and conciliatory manner to ask about the behaviour in question; and
- Approach the other party on the behalf of the workplace participant to explore the other party's response and seek a mutually agreed outcome which is appropriate.

3.4 Formal Process

If Wolters Kluwer decides it is appropriate to proceed with a formal resolution of the grievance or if the parties have tried to resolve the grievance informally to no avail, then the line manager or HR Representative will in the first instance:

- Meet with the workplace participant who is raising the grievance.
- Determine the nature of the issue.
- Explain the formal process for managing grievances at Wolters Kluwer.

Workplace participants have the right at any time throughout the process, to withdraw their grievance. However, there may be occasions, depending on the nature of the grievance, where Wolters Kluwer will decide to take a matter further even if the workplace participant wishes to withdraw. The line manager or HR Representative will consult with the workplace participant before taking such a step.

The formal process includes the following steps:

- (1) The workplace participant who is raising the grievance will meet with their line manager or HR Representative to formally advise them of the grievance.

- (2) The line manager or HR Representative may determine that it is appropriate to conduct an investigation into the grievance. This will likely include an individual (who may be an individual external to Wolters Kluwer) (“investigator”) meeting with the workplace participant and potentially each of the other parties to the grievance.
- (3) Once the investigator has obtained information from all relevant witnesses, there may be a need to have some follow-up individual meetings with the party bringing the grievance or any other parties to the grievance.
- (4) The investigator will present their findings and recommended actions to the HR Director. Once appropriate remedial action has been determined, the line manager or HR Representative will again meet with the workplace participant who raised the grievance to advise them of the findings and the intended action and next steps. Any workplace participant who is advised of the findings, intended actions and next steps to be taken arising from an investigation, is required to maintain confidentiality and should not discuss such matters with other workplace participants.
- (5) Workplace participants should inform either the line manager or HR Representative immediately of any reoccurrence of offending/ inappropriate behaviour.

Issues to Consider

When proceeding with the formal process, Wolters Kluwer should consider the following issues:

- Whether any of the parties to be involved in the investigation process have an actual or potential conflict of interest that should prevent them from being involved. If there is an actual or potential conflict then Wolters Kluwer should appoint a different representative to conduct the formal process or appoint an external investigator.
- Whether any parties to the grievance do not feel comfortable discussing this matter in English and an interpreter should be appointed.
- The use of support persons during any interview. Where possible, Wolters Kluwer should inform all parties who participate in an interview of the ability to bring a support person with them to the interview. The purpose of the support person attending an interview is to provide support to the person being interviewed. They are not present to contribute to the discussions unless permitted by the either the line manager or HR Representative and they must comply with Wolters Kluwer confidentiality requirements.
- Commencing the investigation as soon as possible. Where possible, Wolters Kluwer will attempt to resolve minor grievances within 1 week of the grievance being lodged. More complex grievances requiring an investigation will take longer, but ideally should be completed within 4 weeks.
- The recording of meetings. Generally Wolters Kluwer will take minutes of any meeting held in relation to a grievance. Those minutes should be forwarded to the participant in draft form following the meeting with a request to either confirm or make appropriate amendments to the minutes and return them to the line manager or HR Representative.
- Changes to minutes. Wolters Kluwer should determine whether amendments requested by participants are acceptable. Any aspects of the minutes which are contested should be marked appropriately. Once finalised, the participant should will receive a final copy of their meeting minutes. Participant should not be given minutes of other participants to review.
- Keeping finalised minutes. All finalised minutes should be held on separate confidential file, away from participants personal records in the event that those minutes subsequently become relevant (eg due to a repeat of the original behaviour, or if the behaviour complained of becomes a problem for someone else).
- Recording the grievance details. A short note of the dates, parties and a brief account of the grievance should be included in each relevant participants personnel file. The outcome should also be recorded in the event future disciplinary action is necessary.
- Maintenance of Confidentiality. Line managers and HR Representatives should endeavour to ensure that confidentiality is maintained as far as possible without impeding the conduct of any investigation. Where necessary, details of grievances should only be disclosed to those individuals involved in the grievance, their support persons, appropriate Wolters Kluwer’s representatives

(including external legal representatives). All participants involved in a grievance are to be reminded of their obligation to maintain confidentiality in relation to information disclosed to them during the course of the investigation, and in relation to its outcome. Warnings about disciplinary action (which may include termination of employment) being initiated against them if they breach the confidential nature of these discussions should also be given.

- Vexatious grievances. If any person within Wolters Kluwer is found to have raised vexatious or false grievance against other person/s, they should be subject to disciplinary action which may include termination of their employment.
- Access to EAP. Line Managers and HR Representatives should advise participants that at any time throughout the process, they are able to access independent counselling through the Employee Assistance Program.

3.5 Internal appeals

Any party to an equal opportunity related grievance can appeal to either the CEO or the Human Resources Director if they think that the grievance handling procedures have not been followed or that something was done improperly. The CEO or the Human Resources Director will determine how any appeal will be conducted.

3.6 External Assistance

Workplace participants are also able to seek external advice via agencies such as the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), or relevant state bodies.

3.7 Questions about this Policy

Should workplace participants have any questions in respect of this Policy, they should contact their line manager or HR Representative.

4 References

- Equal Opportunity & Anti-Bullying Policy

5 Revisions

Date of Last Review:	Revision Description
16 January 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formatting• Inclusion of References