



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE POLICY

Rev	Date	Purpose of Issue/Description of Change		Review Date
1.				
2.				
3.				
Policy officer		Senior Responsible Officer	Approved By and Date	Equality Impact Assessed and date
Director of HR		Director of HR		June 2017

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1.0 Policy Purpose

- 1.1 This policy provides a framework for the University to follow in circumstances where a change programme takes place. It focuses specifically on the staffing implications of any change, and the policy will be further underpinned by other supporting interventions, for example training and development programmes and opportunities.
- 1.2 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The University requires a staffing profile appropriate to its academic and business plans, and needs for the future. This is in the context of the University's short, medium and long term financial requirements, taking into account of the rights, needs and aspirations of staff.
- 2.2 When the University makes plans for the future, its priorities will include security of employment for its staff and the desirability of avoidance of redundancy. The University is committed to avoiding redundancies wherever possible, adopting the principles set out in this Policy. The University commits to consider compulsory redundancy only as a last resort when all other alternatives have been fully explored and exhausted. The University acknowledges the Trade Unions' position on compulsory redundancy. The University will endeavour to manage the redundancy process with care and sensitivity appreciating its impact upon all staff.
- 2.3 The policy illustrates the types of measures that will be considered with a view to avoiding / minimising redundancies. In the event that redundancies become necessary, the University intends to follow a fair and transparent process, and to take measures to mitigate their impact should redundancies become unavoidable, whilst providing a transparent and fair process.
- 2.4 During a change process no employee will be treated less favourably on the basis of criteria unrelated to their role/employment, eg. sex or gender, marital or parental status or other family circumstance, sexual orientation, civil partner status, disability, religion, race, colour, age, ethnic or national origin, political views or Trade Union membership, duties or activities. Specific consideration is to be given to those on a period of absence such as maternity, paternity, adoption leave, or sickness absence.

3.0 The principles

- 3.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that, whenever reduction in employee numbers may become necessary, the University:
 - Communicates clearly with all affected employees and ensures that they are treated fairly;
 - tries to find ways to avoid compulsory redundancies;

- consults with employees, and with recognised trade unions and/or employee representatives; and
- ensures that selection for compulsory redundancy is undertaken fairly, reasonably and without discrimination.

4.0 Scope

4.1 This policy is applicable to all staff engaged on a contract of employment. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, or self-employed contractors. In relation to Academic, Managerial and Professional employees, it is applicable only to those employed on or after 20 November 1987, or promoted on or after that date.

5.0 Trade Union Consultation

5.1 The University undertakes to consult the relevant recognised Trade Union(s) about proposed redundancies, potential or otherwise, as early as practicable and will keep the relevant trade unions informed of further developments as they arise throughout the period of consultation.

5.2 In particular, such consultations will begin:

- at least 60 days before the first dismissal is due to take effect, where it is proposed to dismiss as redundant 20 or more staff within a period of 90 days or less within the University, or
- as soon as is reasonably practicable before the first dismissal is due to take effect, where it is proposed to dismiss as redundant fewer than 20 staff within the University

5.3 To initiate and facilitate consultation formally, where required, the University will provide the relevant recognised Trade Union(s) with written information relating to its proposals, including the:

- A Business Case outlining the rationale for the proposal;
- number and description of employees it is proposed to declare redundant;
- total number of employees of any such description employed in the University, directly affected;
- proposed method of selecting the employees who may be identified as redundant;
- proposed method of carrying out the dismissals in accordance with agreed procedures as appropriate;
- period over which the dismissals are to take effect;
- proposed redundancy terms, including whether provision is to be made for pay in lieu of notice, and the method of calculation, if other than that specified by employment legislation.
- Details of the relevant financial position of the University
- The financial impact of the proposed redundancies
- The impact on remaining posts of any job losses

5.4 The University's aim is for consultation to be meaningful to both parties, conducted with the representatives of all employees who may be affected, with a view to reaching agreement on ways to avoid, or to reduce the numbers of and to mitigate the consequences of the proposed redundancies.

- 5.5 Consultation with groups of affected employees will be conducted in conjunction with the HR Department. Such consultation will involve considering ways to avoid proposed compulsory redundancies, including consideration of volunteers for redeployment, voluntary redundancy or early retirement. At all stages of individual consultation staff may be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or colleague.
- 5.6 The University will provide the relevant Trade Union(s) with a copy of any statutory notice supplied to the relevant Government Department about the proposed redundancies.

6.0 Initial steps to avoid redundancy

- 6.1 The University, in consultation with individual employees and the relevant recognised Trade Union(s), will seek to mitigate the effects of any potential redundancies by considering alternative courses of action which may minimise or eliminate the need for compulsory redundancy. The action which may be considered include:
- reduction in non-staffing costs;
 - methods of increasing income to the college or department affected;
 - reduction and/or termination of the use of external staffing resources e.g. agency staff;
 - non-replacement of staff following normal staff turnover;
 - restrictions on external recruitment in the staff categories affected or in areas to which staff may be redeployed;
 - where relevant, reducing or eliminating paid overtime;
 - reduction of hours of work and consideration of volunteers for part-time working;
 - Consideration of volunteers for job sharing;
 - Consideration of volunteers for sabbaticals and secondments;
 - redeployment, relocation and/or retraining of employees to, and for, alternative types of work, or places of work within the University; and
 - Offering voluntary early retirement or voluntary redundancy to employees within the college, department, section or department affected, or elsewhere (further detail noted below).
- 6.2 The scope to use any of these measures will be considered by the relevant college or department, or the University Executive Team as appropriate to the circumstances of each case, in consultation with relevant individual members of staff and the relevant recognised Trade Union(s).

7.0 Voluntary Redundancy / Early Retirement

- 7.1 When considering requests for voluntary redundancy or early retirement, the University will be guided by the institutional interest and financial considerations. The Director of Human Resources or his/her nominee would manage the process, in consultation with the management of the college or department as appropriate. Under any voluntary redundancy/early retirement scheme an application by an employee from a college or department would be considered using the order set out below:
- within the category of staff in the college or department directly affected;

- in another category of staff in the college or department directly affected;
- within the same category affected but in another college or department, section or budget centre, but only if the consequent vacancy could be used for the redeployment of a member of staff declared redundant elsewhere;
- in another category and another college or department, only if the consequent vacancy could, after a reasonable training period, be used for the redeployment of a member of staff declared redundant elsewhere.

7.2 Employees whose applications for voluntary redundancy/early retirement have been accepted by the University may be eligible to receive a redundancy payment and/or pension according to the rules of the members' pension scheme. In cases of voluntary redundancy/early retirement the terms of any enhancement to the Statutory Redundancy payment will be made at the University's discretion and may vary depending upon the circumstances of each redundancy proposal, taking account of equality and value for money considerations as appropriate. Whilst minimum terms will normally be agreed for each redundancy proposal the University retains the right to offer additional terms on a case by case basis as appropriate.

7.3 Employees who leave the University through voluntary redundancy/early retirement may only be eligible for re-employment after a suitable break in service, which would usually be a minimum of two years duration, and not normally on the same contractual terms i.e. hours/salary as those that applied when the employee was employed previously.

8.0 The Procedure for Restructuring

8.1 This section of the Policy outlines the procedure to be followed when it is established that a re-structuring exercise needs to take place. A re-structuring is defined as the implementation of a new staffing structure, which differs from the existing structure. This procedure outlines the stages to be followed in moving staff members from the existing structure to the new.

8.2 In moving from one structure to another it is anticipated that the impact on employees will range from those who experience no change or minor changes within their continuing role; to employees whose roles change substantially or wholly and those roles include new reporting lines; to employees for whom there is no available role within the new structure. The University may also require employees to change location.

8.3 The University's aim is for this procedure to provide a transparent means for determining how ongoing roles and new roles are populated, whilst allowing a degree of flexibility to accommodate individual contractual arrangements.

8.4 In certain re-structuring exercises it may be more appropriate to adopt a phased migration from existing to new structures. Phasing the moves mean that people may be allocated to roles, but not formally take on those roles until a later date. Phasing may ease some work flow problems inherent in any restructuring exercise, but it may mean that the new structure would not be wholly implemented until a later date.

- 8.5 Given the complexity and scale of some change projects that result in restructuring, it would be optimistic to assume that the new roles and new structure will always produce the result intended first time. It is also important that processes put in place are subject to continuous improvement. For these reasons further review and refinement of the new structure may be required.
- 8.6 To support employees through a restructuring exercise the University may offer a range of interventions. These include voluntary redundancy/early retirement, redeployment in accordance with the Redeployment Policy, and staff development support.
- 8.7 The following principles underpin the University's approach to restructuring:
- The desire to minimise disruption and maximise continuity – The University's aim is to assimilate as many employees as possible into new roles within the new structure as far as possible (further information on 'assimilation' and 'prior consideration' is set out later in this policy).
 - The need to minimise uncertainty by communicating openly and moving as quickly as practicably possible from existing to new structures while managing the risks.
 - A desire to provide job security and new opportunities for existing employees as far as possible.
 - A desire to support individuals through a fair process while not compromising the effectiveness of new structures and processes.
 - Advice should be sought from Human Resources about liaising with those on a period of absence such as maternity leave, adoption leave, or sickness absence.
 - A desire to consult appropriately with employees and the recognised Trade Unions. New structures will not be confirmed until the consultation process has been completed and employees can be accompanied by a colleague or union representative at any stage.
 - Throughout the process, and at any stage, new posts in the structure will be advertised, with the caveat that prior consideration will be given to applicants who are identified as being 'at risk', and in accordance with the Redeployment Policy.
 - Existing part time employees will be considered for roles on their existing hours wherever possible. The University has no intention to withdraw flexibility of working arrangements or to create a new work pattern, unless it becomes necessary in the opinion of the University. The University aims to balance the requirements of roles with current working arrangements where this is feasible. It is not possible to give any guarantees on this, however, and in many cases, such discussions and decisions may need to be made on an individual basis.
 - Opportunities for new roles to be worked on a part-time basis will be considered, in line with existing procedures on flexible working.
 - The University aims to support employees with their training and development needs prior to, during and after the transition to the new structure. Consideration will be given to the provision of reasonable retraining for employees at risk, where this could avoid the need for compulsory redundancy.

9.0 Restructuring Stages

9.1 Stage 1 – Consultation

9.1.1 During the re-structuring process, the University aims to provide the following information, initially to the Trade Unions and then to employees who are identified as being directly affected by the restructuring -

- A Business Case outlining the rationale for the proposal
- a copy of the proposed structures
- an outline of posts in the proposed new structures, including a brief summary of principal responsibilities and likely salaries
- a proposed outline of the process for filling posts (a copy of this policy)
- the trade unions will be informed and provided with an opportunity to request relevant and appropriate information

The main purpose of consultation is -

- to explain the reasons for the proposed restructure
- to give employees and the recognised unions a fair and proper opportunity to understand how the proposed changes will affect the employees.
- to give employees and unions an opportunity to express their views, to request information and to suggest alternatives for how the needs of the University can be met.
- Meaningful consideration will be given to the responses and comments received as part of the consultation exercise, and feedback provided. A final proposal will then be produced, taking meaningful account of responses.

9.2 Stage 2 - Confirmation of Structures

9.2.1 Following the consultation process, all employees affected by the proposals will be informed of the confirmed structures.

9.3 Stage 3 - Provisional Assimilation (matching people and posts)

9.3.1 The restructuring exercise may involve a process of assimilating existing employees into new roles within the new structure. Management, in consultation with Human Resources, will consider the eligibility of individual employees for assimilation, and will then:

- provisionally assimilate employees to a post following the principles for assimilation, or
- provisionally allocate an employee to a post or group of posts, or
- identify those employees who do not fit into either of the above categories.

9.3.2 During this exercise management may wish to speak to individual employees to clarify any specific issues and explore alternatives as outlined in section 6.1 of this policy.

9.3.3 The principles of '**assimilation**' are as follows:

- where the employee is the sole occupant, or the number of employees match the number of new posts

- where the responsibilities of the new post in the new structure are substantially equivalent to the responsibilities of the old post, and are compatible with the experience and qualifications of the employee.
- 9.3.4 Employees will be individually informed in writing by Human Resources of the outcome. Employees who have been provisionally assimilated in to a post, but who wish to be considered for voluntary redundancy/early retirement should notify their interest with the Deputy HR Director (Operations) as soon as possible, as this could create a suitable vacancy for another appropriately experienced person. Staff members will be advised of their right of appeal in accordance with section 15 of this policy.

9.4 Stage 4 - Discussions with employees who are not assimilated

- 9.4.1 In circumstances where there are more members of staff than the number required for a particular post or group of posts, assimilation will not be possible. The principles of prior consideration will be followed.
- 9.4.2 The principles of '**prior consideration**' are as follows:
- the responsibilities of the new post are equivalent to the employee's former responsibilities and compatible with the employee's current experience and qualifications however it has not been possible to assimilate as there are more employees than there are posts.
 - Staff members would therefore have the right to have their application for other suitable posts considered separately from and in advance of all other applications for the post in question, only competing with others to which this definition applies i.e posts would be ring-fenced.
- 9.4.3 For employees not assimilated into a post, consultation will continue with appropriate manager and a member of staff from Human Resources. The purpose will be to -
- confirm or identify a post or posts where the employee may be eligible for prior consideration
 - confirm with each employee, as appropriate, their order of preference for the posts for which they have prior consideration eligibility.
 - Ascertain the employee's interest in posts either within their own department or outside the department in which they are currently employed, in conjunction with the Redeployment Policy.
 - take note of the employee's interest, if any, in voluntary redundancy/early retirement
 - alert the employee to the possibility of compulsory redundancy.
 - Make a note of the employee feedback, and take note of any issues the employee raises, which the employee feels has unfairly disadvantaged them in this process. Managers should refer to Human Resources if they are unable to resolve an issue at the local level.

9.5 Stage 5 - Interviews for prior consideration for posts within a College / School / Department

- 9.5.1 Selection interviews will be held for those posts where employees are eligible for prior consideration within the existing College / School / Department as part of the restructuring process. This process will incorporate the principles outlined in section 2.4 of this policy and be underpinned by fairness, transparency and objectivity.
- 9.5.2 On completion of the round of selection interviews the interviewees will be informed of the outcome.

9.6 Stage 6 – Unplaced Staff

- 9.6.1 The employees who are unsuccessful in the selection interviews will be identified as 'unplaced staff' and be placed on the Redeployment Register. Voluntary Redundancy will be discussed with the unplaced staff at this stage.
- 9.6.2 The selection of staff for compulsory redundancy will be ratified by a Redundancy Committee as appointed by the University Council.
- 9.6.3 Once the employee has been identified as unplaced staff, the employee will be given notice in accordance with their contractual notice period, and their employment will end by reason of redundancy upon the expiry of that notice period. Staff members will remain on the Redeployment register throughout their notice period.

10.0 Redeployment

- 10.1 If suitable alternative employment is available in another college or department, the employee who might otherwise be potentially 'at risk' or actually declared redundant may be offered redeployment in accordance with the University's Redeployment Policy. The Redeployment Policy seeks to ensure that eligible staff are assisted to obtain suitable alternative posts within the University

11.0 Impact on Pay

- 11.1 Where staff have not been able to secure a role at their existing grade but are offered and accept a lower graded role (usually one grade difference), their salary will be protected for a period of 2 years.
- 11.2 Staff appointed to a higher graded role will receive the appropriate salary for that role from the date that they take up full duties.
- 11.3 If an employee does not accept a lower or higher graded role, and is not able to secure a position at the same grade as their existing grade, redundancy proceedings will commence. During that period the employee will continue to be considered for redeployment.

12.0 Compulsory Redundancy

12.1 When the University Council, following appropriate consultation, concludes that it is not possible to avoid making compulsory redundancies, the University will advise all affected employees and the recognized trade unions.

12.2 Redundancy is defined (in both UK employment legislation and in paragraph 6 of Ordinance XX of Bangor University: Academic Staff), as a dismissal attributable wholly or mainly to:

- *the fact that the University has ceased, or intends to cease, to carry on the activity for the purposes of which the member of Academic Staff concerned was appointed or employed by the University, or has ceased, or intends to cease, to carry on that activity in the place in which the member of staff concerned worked; or*
- *the fact that the requirements of that activity for members of the Academic Staff to carry out work of a particular kind, or for members of Academic Staff to carry out work of a particular kind in that place, have ceased or diminished, or are expected to cease or diminish.*

The above is referenced directly from Ordinance XX. Any reference in the above to Academic staff, applies to non-academic staff members, and therefore to all University roles.

12.3 Where compulsory redundancies appear necessary, a recommendation will be made by the Executive Team to the University Council (the Council) for consideration. The recommendation should outline the measures taken to avoid redundancies, and the reasons why a reduction in staff remains necessary. If the Council considers a reduction in staff is necessary it will subsequently appoint, in accordance with Part II of the Ordinance XX: Academic Staff, a Redundancy Committee to undertake the redundancies by such date as the Council may specify. The Redundancy Committee, appointed by the Council, will comprise a Chairperson, two members of the Council, not being employed by the University, and two members of the Academic Staff nominated by the Senate.

12.4 The Redundancy Committee will be charged with the determination of the criteria for selection, and recommendation of the requisite staff for redundancy, and to report its recommendations to Council for consideration and approval as appropriate.

12.5 The University will seek to limit the redundancies, as far as practical, to the affected area in which the required changes in work or finance fall.

12.6 The Redundancy Committee will usually appoint a Management Group to assist with the selection process. The Management Group will act on its behalf locally at a College/School/Department, level as appropriate. Where a Management Group is not established the Redundancy Committee will act directly and all references hereafter to the Management Group will refer to the Redundancy Committee.

12.7 The Management Group will comprise the relevant Head of College/Department or equivalent manager, other appropriate senior manager(s) and the Director of HR or Deputy Director of HR. The HR

representative will advise the Management Group on the operation and application of this policy to ensure the Management Group's activities are conducted in an objective and fair manner. The Management Group will consult with the relevant Trade Union(s) and employees appropriately before making any selection recommendations to the Redundancy Committee.

- 12.8 The Redundancy Committee will consider the Management Group's recommendations in undertaking its activities. It remains the final responsibility of the Redundancy Committee to select and recommend the requisite members of staff for redundancy and to make their recommendations to the Council.
- 12.9 The Management Group will be responsible for determining the pool for selection and for developing the proposed selection method. The Management Group will inform and consult with relevant Trade Union(s) with the intention of agreeing the pool for selection and the selection method.
- 12.10 Following consultation, the Management Group will recommend to the Redundancy Committee the pool for selection and the selection method. They will also report on the issues which were raised during collective and individual consultation.
- 12.11 Once the selection method has been approved by the Redundancy Committee they will be applied by the Management Group to develop provisional recommendations of the staff to be selected for redundancy.
- 12.12 The Management Group will inform the relevant recognised Trade Union(s) in writing of the names of those selected and the reasons for the provisional recommendations, together with the number, college/school/department and description of the members of staff who have been identified as potentially redundant, together with the total number of staff of that description in the college/school/department, as appropriate. It will also discuss with the relevant recognised Trade Union(s) the redundancy proposals, and give conscientious consideration to constructive alternatives proposed by the Trade Union(s) with a view to reaching agreement before its final recommendations are made to the Redundancy Committee.
- 12.13 The Council shall either approve any selection recommendation, or shall remit it to the Redundancy Committee for further consideration in accordance with its directions.
- 12.14 If the Council approves the Redundancy Committee's recommendations, the Director of HR, or his/her nominee, acting on behalf of the Council as its delegate, will notify the employees concerned that their employment is to be terminated by reason of redundancy. Notice of the date on which the employment is to end will be given as far in advance as is practical, and the employee will be given a statement explaining the circumstance for the decision, a summary of the action taken by the Council, and the selection processes applied by the Redundancy Committee.
- 12.15 The employee so notified will also be advised of his/her right of appeal and the grounds and timescale for lodging an appeal, as detailed in this policy

12.16 The Management Group will consult on an individual basis with the employees provisionally selected for redundancy.

13.0 Redundancy Support Measures

13.1 In facilitating redundancy support measures, the Director of HR will:

- ensure that all employees will be offered reasonable facilities to receive advice and support from relevant sources;
- ensure that a representative of the HR Department is available to meet, either collectively or individually, the employees affected with a view to advising on any matters in respect of the termination of his/her employment;
- ensure, in conjunction with the Deans of College, Directors, and Heads of Department, that employees are allowed a reasonable amount of time off with pay (regardless of length of service) to attend formally confirmed interviews and/or training for other employment;
- consider using internal services (eg. Staff Development Team) and/or external services (eg. outplacement agency or the Employment Service) to improve the employment potential of employees affected by redundancy, through such provision as careers advice/counselling, CV writing skills, interviewing skills. Additionally, pensions guidance will be offered via the University Pensions Officer.

13.2 The University is committed to providing effective redundancy support and will consult with the Trade Union(s) upon the range of measures which can be taken in the context of each redundancy proposal. Within the range of measures available, employees will receive support tailored to their needs.

13.3 Staff eligible for redundancy support will be those whose posts have been proposed as redundant or those who have received formal notice of redundancy.

14.0 Financial arrangements

14.1 Employees whose roles are being made redundant will usually be required to continue to work up to the date on which their formal notice expires. Where a member of staff wishes to leave before the end of his/her notice period, consideration will be given to the circumstances and permission will not be withheld without good reason. If an employee leaves prematurely without the University's permission, s/he may forfeit his/her entitlement to a redundancy payment or payment in lieu of notice.

14.2 In cases of compulsory redundancy, the scale of entitlement will be calculated on the basis of statutory provisions only. The University may offer enhanced redundancy terms and payments at its discretion. Any enhanced redundancy payment will be deemed to include statutory redundancy pay.

14.3 For the purpose of calculating the redundancy payment, pay is defined as at the date of termination, and in accordance with the limits of the statutory redundancy payment schedule applicable at that time. Where the pay fluctuates because of variable hours worked, the redundancy payment will be calculated at the time of issuing notice, and in accordance with legislative requirements.

14.4 Holiday entitlement will accrue up to the end of the notice period and will normally be taken prior to the expiry of notice.

15.0 Appeals

15.1 The University's goal is for this policy to be applied as fairly as possible. The University wishes that any concerns that employees may have about the application of this policy can be properly considered and resolved promptly and informally.

15.2 An employee who wishes to appeal against his/her selection for redundancy may submit an appeal in writing, setting out the grounds of appeal, to the University Secretary, within 28 days of receipt of his/her formal notice of termination. The Secretary will make arrangements for the appeal to be heard, in accordance with the appropriate appeal provisions.

15.3 Where the appeal relates to matters such as assimilation, prior consideration or some other part of the process followed (where the employee has not been issued with notice of redundancy) the appeal should be submitted to the Director of Human Resources. The appeal process is detailed in Appendix 1 of this policy.

16.0 Miscellaneous

16.1 Employees dismissed under the University's Disciplinary Procedure whilst under notice of redundancy will forfeit any entitlement to a redundancy payment, regardless of whether the redundancy was to be voluntary or compulsory.

16.2 Where the employee whose role is being made redundant is recognised by the University as an Officer or Official of a recognised Trade Union, the University will notify the regional office of that Trade Union.

17.0 Review

17.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years jointly with the recognised Trade Unions, or earlier if there is a change in relevant legislation or other factors that may necessitate a review.

18.0 Equality Impact Assessment

17.1 The University is committed to embedding its Equality Action Plan into its policies, procedures and practices. This policy has been equality impact assessed in accordance with the Equality Action Plan.

APPENDIX 1

Appeals process relevant to section 15 of this policy

There is a two stage approach to resolving issues, an informal review and followed by an appeal if the informal resolution is not to the satisfaction of the employee.

Informal Review

1. The employee will contact the Director of Human Resources if they wish to request an informal review of any decision in the process. Individuals may involve a trade union representative or colleague. The employee should outline the details of the issue, indicate the preferred outcome and provide any relevant information. The request will normally be made within five working days of the issue arising.
2. The Director of Human Resources (or their appointed nominee) will carry out a review of the issue, involving the appropriate members of staff, and aim to notify the employee of the outcome normally within 10 working days.
3. If the concerns raised cannot be resolved informally the member of staff can write to the Director of Human Resources requesting a formal appeal. This request should be made within 5 working days of the employee learning the outcome of the informal review and should include the basis for the appeal.

Formal Appeal

4. The appeal will be considered and dealt with by a Panel. The Panel will be chaired by a member of the Executive Team and will include one other manager, noting that this "other manager" must not be from the staff member's own Department. Any person designated to consider an appeal under this Procedure cannot have been involved in any previous decision making relating to the appeal.
5. The Panel will aim to notify the employee of the outcome of his/her appeal and reasoning for the decision normally within 15 working days of receipt of request for an Appeal
6. Individuals may involve a trade union representative or colleague
7. The nominated Chair may choose to deal with the appeal by way of a hearing or by correspondence depending upon the circumstance of the case. If the Chair decides that a hearing is most appropriate, the format of the appeal hearing will be as follows:
 - i) The relevant postholder(s) (with previous knowledge of and/or involvement in the matter the subject of the appeal) will be asked to attend the hearing to explain the grounds for his/her decision and to answer any relevant questions which may be raised by the Panel members
 - ii) The employee will be given an opportunity to state the grounds of the appeal.

If the Chair decides that correspondence is most appropriate, the format of the appeal will be as follows:

- iii) the relevant Postholder(s) (with previous knowledge of and/or involvement in the matter the subject of the appeal) will be asked to

explain in writing the grounds for his/her decision and to answer any relevant points raised by the employee in their grounds of appeal.

8. The Panels' decision may include (but will not be limited to) the following:
 - (i) that the original decision should stand;
 - (ii) that the appeal against the original decision should be upheld
 - (iii) that the appeal against the original decision should be upheld but that the decision should be substituted by a different measure;
 - (iv) that the case should be considered further by the body or persons whose decision is being appealed against.
9. The Chair or another member of the Panel will write to the employee informing him/her of the decision and the reasons for it within 10 working days.
10. The decision of the Panel shall be the final stage of appeal unless it falls within paragraph 8 (iv) above or the Panel has decided that it shall not be final. The decision does not affect other contractual terms and conditions.