Operational Guidelines for Informal Resolution under Staff Grievance Procedures

1. The operational guidelines are set out for the staff receiving the grievance (the "Supervisor") to conduct informal resolution under the Staff Grievance Procedures (the "Procedures"). The guidelines are for reference only and do not form part of the Procedures.

2. All grievance cases should be treated with utmost sensitivity and strictest confidentiality. Staff may contact the Human Resources Office ("HRO") for assistance at any stage of the Procedures where necessary.

3. The Supervisor should be sensitive to and aware of the needs of their staff and should accept responsibility for attempting to address disagreement or dissatisfaction. S/he should listen objectively to the parties involved.

4. When the Complainant approaches the Supervisor for informal resolution, the Supervisor, where appropriate, shall:

   When meeting with Complainant
   (a) inform the Complainant of the Procedures;
   (b) understand the facts and nature of the complaint;
   (c) explore possible means of resolution;
   (d) offer proper assistance including counselling and advising the Complainant to seek professional counselling service via the Employee Assistance Programme (https://www.eduhk.hk/hro_new/view.php?secid=4119) where necessary. Conversations will be kept in strict confidence;

   When meeting with Respondent
   (e) inform the Respondent of the allegations made in the complaint and the Procedures;
   (f) provide an opportunity for a response;
   (g) where appropriate, take appropriate preventive or remedial measures to address the situation, *e.g.,* pointing out to the relevant individual that his/her behaviour/action/arrangement may be deemed inappropriate and should cease. Such informal action is particularly useful where a party may not realise that his/her certain behaviour/action/arrangement may not be appropriate;
   (h) explore possible means of resolution;
   (i) advise the Respondent to seek professional counselling service via the Employee Assistance Programme (https://www.eduhk.hk/hro_new/view.php?secid=4119) where necessary. Conversations will be kept in strict confidence;

   When attempting to resolve conflict with the Complainant and Respondent
   (j) clarify and confirm the case information;
   (k) try to resolve the disputes between the Complainant and the Respondent informally by joint and/or separate discussions in an atmosphere of trust and frankness. No determination as to whether the grievance has been substantiated will be made;
   (l) discuss appropriate behaviour for moving forward and how to avoid retaliation against the Complainant;
   (m) take appropriate management measures such as revised work arrangement and procedures;

(n) seeking assistance from HRO and/or supervisor where necessary;
(o) if the grievance can be resolved informally, record the resolution in writing and forward a copy to HRO for record;
(p) if the grievance cannot be resolved informally, inform both parties of the unsuccessful informal resolution. The Complainant may raise the matter formally in accordance with paragraph 19 of the Procedures.

5. The informal resolution will normally be conducted within 15 working days after receipt of the grievance.