



Face Front Inclusive Theatre

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Grievance, Disciplinary, Bullying and Harassment Policy

Face Front Inclusive Theatre (FFIT/ Face Front) is committed to being a welcoming, inclusive and safe place to work. We have a zero-tolerance policy to bullying or harassment and have a clear disciplinary and grievance policy.

This policy applies the concepts set out in the ACAS Code of Practice which came into effect in March 2015, issued under section 199 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992

For the purposes of this policy the word 'employees' includes freelancers, volunteers, core team members, trustees and consultants.

The rules and procedures set out here are intended to promote consistency and fairness in the treatment of employees. Our aim is to emphasise and encourage improvement in the conduct and performance of individuals in preference to punitive action. Accordingly, every effort will be made to ensure that when action is taken under the disciplinary procedure it is fair and reasonable, employees are given every opportunity to present their case, and there is a right of appeal against any disciplinary decision which the employee considers to be either unfair or unjust.

The following rules and procedures are intended to ensure that:

- Disciplinary action is taken quickly, fairly and in a uniform and consistent manner
- Employees will only be subject to disciplinary action once there has been a full investigation of all of the facts and they have had an opportunity to present their side of the case
- Employees who are disciplined will receive a clear explanation of both the decision reached and any penalty imposed, and of the right to appeal against the decision and/or penalty.

We reserve the right to deal with every case entirely on its merits but we undertake that we will always seek to conduct the disciplinary procedure reasonably, fairly and consistently.

Inclusion Through Theatre

Patrons: Mat Fraser | Josette Bushell-Mingo OBE | Rachel Denning | Doris Jiagge
Aditya Chakrabortty | Onjali Rauf MBE | Joseph Adelakun | Jamie Beddard

Face Front Inclusive Theatre is a company limited by guarantee.
Registered in England and Wales No.05154096. Registered Charity No.1116506.

Reasons for disciplinary action

It is not practical to set out all the instances of conduct or performance which may lead to disciplinary action being taken. However, it should be understood by all employees that the disciplinary procedure may be invoked as a result of:

- Any failure to observe the rules set out in the current policies and procedures of Face Front or in any other part of your Contract of Employment and Terms and Conditions of Service and other policies and procedures of the organisation.
- Any other instance of conduct or performance, which we believe could only properly be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Where a breach of conduct or poor performance is regarded as being not particularly serious and is shown to have been caused by your capabilities, competence or behaviour, it is open to us to deal with this matter informally in the first instance and to give an opportunity for improvement, if necessary with training, rather than to revert to the formal disciplinary procedure. Any decision to proceed in this way, however, is a matter for our discretion and will depend entirely on the circumstances of each case.

In general, action will be appropriate to the nature of the incident prompting disciplinary action.

Categories of poor conduct

Unacceptable conduct or performance will fall into one of the following four categories:

- Unsatisfactory conduct
- Misconduct
- Serious misconduct
- Gross misconduct.

Unsatisfactory conduct

Any minor breach of the rules and regulations. If it is sufficiently serious to warrant disciplinary action and this is the first instance of such a minor misdemeanour, the disciplinary consequence will probably be a verbal warning. It is important to note, within this category, it is the standard of conduct or performance in this instance which is being considered and not necessarily any repetition of an earlier misdemeanour.

Misconduct

Misconduct includes but is not restricted to the following:

- Continued repetition of action which has resulted in a previous verbal warning and there has been no improvement or there has been continued breach
- Persistent lateness or absence
- Minor breaches of procedure
- Verbal abuse or verbal aggression

The misconduct in question may be sufficiently serious to warrant an immediate written warning without there having been a previous verbal warning.

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Serious misconduct

A serious breach of conduct or performance. Serious misconduct includes but is not restricted to the following

- Insubordination which is not wilful, i.e. you openly refuse to do something but agree reluctantly when faced with suspension.
- Rudeness towards members of the public or other employees.
- Persistent or serious breaches of Company procedures.
- Neglect of duties.
- Putting a child or vulnerable adult in your supervisory care at serious risk.

This may require a final written warning irrespective of whether there have been previous warnings. A first and final written warning may be issued where it is considered that the conduct or performance is not sufficiently serious to warrant dismissal but nevertheless is considerably more serious than the action which would normally have warranted an initial written warning for misconduct.

There may be occasions when a combination of either verbal and/or written warnings have been issued and there has still been no marked improvement, or there has been repetition of the action for which the previous warnings have been given. If there has been no improvement following previous written warning or continuous repetition then the next disciplinary action will usually be a final written warning for serious misconduct.

Following a final written warning any further repetition or further breach will usually result in dismissal (albeit contractual dismissal, with notice, after a disciplinary hearing).

Gross misconduct

An aspect of behaviour, conduct or performance which is particularly serious in itself or in its consequences. In such cases, it is considered inappropriate to allow the employee to continue at work and the only proper penalty would be summary dismissal – which means immediate dismissal after a disciplinary hearing without notice.

Examples of gross misconduct

Gross misconduct includes but is not restricted to the following:

- Deliberate, or serious breaches of conduct standards/rules and regulations.
- Theft of money, or property, whether belonging to the business, a fellow employee, or a party associated with the business.
- Any action which can be construed as intent to defraud/deceive the business.
- Being under the influence of intoxicants, drugs, or other substances.
- Fighting, or physical assault, or abusive/threatening behaviour.
- Grossly indecent, or immoral, behaviour.
- Wilful refusal to carry out a legitimate instruction.
- Deliberate or serious breach(es) of the Health and Safety rules.
- Carrying out private work, on the premises and/or in working hours, without express permission.

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- Deliberate damage, destruction, or sabotage, of company property, or any property belonging to a fellow employee, or a third party associated with the business.
- Discriminatory conduct, bullying or harassment.
- Deliberate, or serious, breach(es) of computer/software/e-mail/internet, rules and procedures.
- Any verbal or written derogatory remarks of any Face Front staff or the organisation in a public meeting or place including social media, that brings the organisation into disrepute
- Serious negligence, including reckless driving on business journeys
- Engaging in other work when claiming to be unfit for work due to sickness or injury.

Disciplinary procedure

We prefer to deal with issues informally in the first instance, especially in matters relating to employee performance which we believe can be resolved by discussion, training or supervision. However, if there is no improvement after 6 months and training has been given, the matter may have to be dealt with more formally.

When we invoke the disciplinary procedure, we will first seek to establish the facts of the case as soon as possible. Other employees who may be involved in this investigation will be required to cooperate fully.

An employee may be suspended with pay pending the conclusion of any investigation and subsequent hearing. Such suspension with pay is not disciplinary action and is only a temporary measure intended to assist in the proper conduct of the disciplinary process. It is not a pre-judgement of that process. The authority to suspend with pay is vested in the Chair of Trustees, in consultation with the Executive and Artistic Directors. In the absence of the Chair, the Artistic and Executive Directors have authority in suspension matters. The Chair has authority to suspend the Executive and Artistic Directors.

If, following initial investigation it is considered that there is a case to answer, a disciplinary hearing will be established within two working weeks. An employee may be accompanied by a fellow employee, a trade union representative, or an official employed by the trade union. We do not consider that legal representation, or representation by an external person or body other than a trade union, is either appropriate or necessary for either side.

The nature of the disciplinary matter will be explained to you in as much detail as possible and you will have every opportunity at the hearing to present your case in full, to call any witnesses and to present any written evidence. If further time is required to prepare your case we may postpone the hearing but in the normal course of events only one adjournment will be granted. If necessary we will undertake further investigations to establish the credibility of your explanation and the result of these investigations will be put to you before any final decision is made.

At the conclusion of the hearing, if you accept that the matters raised against you are correct, or if a decision is made against you, before any penalty is imposed we will give you an opportunity to put forward any mitigating circumstances. At that time there will be a verbal explanation of the decision and this will then be confirmed in writing. Your right to appeal against either the findings and/or the penalty to be imposed will also be explained to you verbally and in writing.

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Disciplinary action

Stage 1 – verbal warning:

A verbal warning is given by your line manager when conduct is below acceptable standards. The following information will be recorded:

- that you have received a recorded warning
- the reason for the warning
- the improvements you need to make and the timescales for these improvements
- details of your right of appeal.

You will receive a copy of the warning and a copy will be kept on file. The warning will normally be disregarded for future disciplinary purposes after six months subject to continued satisfactory conduct.

Stage 2 – written warning:

Written warnings are used when the offence is serious or if further unacceptable conduct occurs while a recorded verbal warning is in place. The written warning will contain:

- details of the complaint
- the improvements you will need to make and the timescales for these improvements
- a warning that further disciplinary action will be considered if there is no satisfactory improvement
- details of your right of appeal.

You will receive a copy of the warning and a copy will be kept. The warning will normally be disregarded for future disciplinary purposes after 12 months subject to continued satisfactory conduct.

Stage 3 – final written warning:

If your conduct has not improved and continues to be unsatisfactory during the 12 months following a written warning, you will receive a final written warning from the CEO in consultation with the Chair of the disciplinary panel. All matters relating to the misconduct or gross misconduct of the CEO are issued by the Chair of the Trustees.

If your conduct continues to be unsatisfactory during the 12 months following a final written warning or your behaviour amounts to gross misconduct, you may become subject to a dismissal hearing. The final written warning will contain:

- details of the complaint
- a warning that dismissal will result if there is no satisfactory improvement
- details of your right of appeal.

You will receive a copy of the warning and a copy will be kept. It will normally be disregarded for future disciplinary purposes after 12 months subject to continued satisfactory conduct.

Suspension without pay

In circumstances where the company feels there are sufficient grounds to warrant dismissal, mitigating circumstances may cause Face Front not to dismiss the employee. Instead, the appropriate sanction may be suspension without pay for a period not exceeding five days. Such suspension may be coupled with a final written warning.

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Full details will be made known to you either at the conclusion of the disciplinary hearing, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Dismissal

Dismissal for gross misconduct will result in immediate termination of employment without notice. Dismissal for misconduct will result in termination of employment with contractual notice.

If dismissed, you will be provided, as soon as reasonably possible, with:

- Written notice of the dismissal
- The date on which the contract of employment is to end
- The reasons for dismissal
- Details of your right of appeal

Disciplinary appeals procedure

At the end of a disciplinary hearing, you will be informed both verbally and in writing of your rights of appeal, including the name of the person to whom your appeal should be made.

Appeals

Our aim in providing an appeal system is to re-appraise the facts and procedures and reconsider the soundness of the initial decision.

The appeal hearing will be conducted by a person who has not previously been involved in the disciplinary process. It reviews the original hearing to establish whether:

- the hearing was a full and thorough airing and examination of all the facts/evidence
- proper procedures were observed
- the findings were fair and reasonable
- the penalty imposed properly reflected the gravity of the offence and any mitigating factors are fully considered

The appeal hearing is an opportunity for you to present your supporting reasons as to why you believe the disciplinary action taken is either unfair, or too harsh. You may submit any appropriate evidence and call any appropriate witness on your behalf.

At an appeal hearing, you are entitled to be accompanied by a work colleague of your choice, or a trade union representative. Legal representation will not be recognised.

The findings, decision and outcome of the appeal hearing will be confirmed to you in writing. You may wish to take your case to an employment tribunal if you are not satisfied with the appeal outcome.

If you decide to appeal, you must give written notice of appeal to the nominated person, the notice must be received within 5 working days, from the day on which you received the written confirmation of the disciplinary hearing decision. The notice of appeal must state, whether you are appealing against the conduct of the disciplinary hearing, its finding, the penalties imposed, or a combination of these factors and the supporting reasons for your appeal.

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If you appeal, your line manager will contact you with the appeal arrangements as soon as possible. If the disciplinary action is against the CEO, the Chair of Trustees will contact you with the appeal arrangements as soon as possible.

Time limits:

- You have seven working days from the date of formal notification to appeal against a disciplinary warning by informing your line manager or CEO whichever is appropriate.
- If you have been dismissed, you have **five days** to appeal

Hearing the appeal

Verbal or written warnings

An appeal against a verbal or written warning is heard by a Trustee who has not been involved in the case. It will take place within 15 working days of the appeal being lodged with your line manager, the CEO or Chair of the Trustees.

Records and notes of the original disciplinary meeting should be made available to the person hearing the appeal.

Final written warnings

The Chair of the Trustees and/or the CEO will hear an appeal against a final written warning, within 15 working days of the appeal being lodged.

Dismissal

For all staff, the Chair of the Trustees and two other Trustees will hear an appeal against dismissal. It is Face Front's intention that appeals against dismissal are heard within six weeks of registration.

Outcomes at appeal

There are a number of possible outcomes to an appeal:

- To confirm the action
- Substitute a lesser penalty
- Overturn the original decision.

The decision of the appeal is final, although employees may have a right of complaint to an employment tribunal.

This grievance procedure does not form part of a contract but is central to Face Front's good practice in employment and service delivery. This procedure should be used to settle all disputes and grievances which you wish to raise, concerning other employees, your work, the organisation or other matters relating to Face Front's services. It will not consider issues that are not related to Face Front's activities or services.

For the purposes of this policy the word 'employee' is defined as and includes employees, freelancers, volunteers, core team members and consultants.

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Preliminary Stage: Discussion (optional)

If your grievance concerns another person, you should first raise it and try to resolve it informally with that person. If this is not appropriate, you should discuss it informally with your line manager or supervisor. If this is not appropriate, see the CEO. If the grievance relates to conduct of the CEO then the matter should be referred to the Chair of the Trustees. Should the grievance relate to the conduct of a colleague, then that colleague will be notified of the terms of the grievance and will have an opportunity to respond.

Stage 1: Put it in writing (compulsory)

If a grievance cannot be settled informally you must register the issue as a formal grievance, in writing, to your line manager, giving full details of your concerns. This must be completed within fourteen working days of the event which has given rise to the grievance.

Stage 2: Meet and discuss (compulsory)

Your line manager will record the issues of concern and check with you that the record is accurate. If the complaint is against your line manager, the grievance should be registered with the CEO.

Your line manager will arrange a meeting with you within seven working days to explore possible resolutions. You may also bring a work colleague or a trade union representative with you to this meeting.

After the meeting your line manager will reply verbally, with written confirmation, within seven working days. The letter should describe the proposed action, give reasons, any timescales and explain your further right to appeal against the decision to the Trustees.

Stage 3: Appeal

If you are unhappy with the outcome of stage 2, you can appeal to the Trustees giving full details of the grievance, and indicating why you are dissatisfied with the stage 2 response. You must ensure it is registered within seven working days of receipt of the written reply from stage 2 by sending it to your line manager.

The appeal meeting will take place within twenty eight working days of all the statements being exchanged. It will hear the submissions of both sides, review the decision made at stage 2, and determine the outcome of the appeal. You will be notified of the final decision.

Bullying and harassment

Complaints about bullying or personal harassment and particularly of sexual harassment can be of a sensitive or intimate nature and may not be appropriate to raise through the normal grievance procedure.

Informal complaint

If you are the victim of minor harassment you should make it clear to the perpetrator on an informal basis that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask them to stop. Where the harassment continues or where it is difficult or inappropriate for you to raise the issue with the alleged perpetrator you should report the matter verbally to a senior colleague or Trustee. **(This person cannot be your line manager, who will be responsible for investigating the matter if it becomes a formal complaint.)**

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This confidential helper may deal with the matter on an informal and confidential basis by speaking to the alleged perpetrator on your behalf. A mediation meeting between you and the alleged perpetrator facilitated by a neutral mediator may be an option at this stage.

Formal complaint

Where the informal approach fails or if the harassment is more serious, you should bring the matter to the attention of your line manager as a formal written complaint, supported by your confidential helper if necessary. The written complaint can include:-

- the name of the alleged harasser
- the nature of the alleged harassment
- the dates and times when the alleged harassment occurred;
- the names of any witnesses
- any action already taken by you to stop the alleged harassment.

On receipt of a formal complaint we will take action to separate you from the alleged harasser to enable an uninterrupted investigation to take place. This may involve a temporary transfer of the alleged harasser to another work area or suspension with pay until the matter has been resolved.

The person dealing with the complaint will invite you to attend a meeting, at a reasonable time and location, to discuss the matter and carry out a thorough investigation. You have the right to be accompanied at such a meeting by your confidential helper or another work colleague of your choice and you must take all reasonable steps to attend. Those involved in the investigation will be expected to act in confidence and any breach of confidence will be a disciplinary matter.

On conclusion of the investigation which will normally be within ten working days of the meeting with you, a draft report of the findings and of the investigator's proposed decision will be sent, in writing, to you and to the alleged harasser.

If you or the alleged harasser are dissatisfied with the draft report or with the proposed decision this should be raised with the investigator within five working days of receiving the draft. Any points of concern will be considered by the investigator before a final report is sent, in writing, to you and to the alleged harasser. You have the right to appeal against the findings of the investigator in accordance with the appeal provisions of the grievance procedure.

If the report concludes that the allegation is well founded, the harasser will be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with our disciplinary and disciplinary dismissal procedure.

If you bring a complaint of harassment you will not be victimised for having brought the complaint. However, if the report concludes that the complaint is both untrue and has been brought with malicious intent, disciplinary action will be taken against you.

Related Policies and procedures

This policy should be read alongside all our related organisational policies and contracts:

- Acceptable use of Computer Network, Internet and Email policy
- Anti-Fraud Policy
- Code of Conduct When Working In Schools

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Confidentiality Policy
Conflict of Interest Policy
Data Protection Policy
Environmental Policy
Ethical Fundraising Policy
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Policy
Expenses Policy
Financial Procedures
Health and Safety Policy
Minibus Policy
Photography and Filming Policy
Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders
Safeguarding Child and Vulnerable Persons policy
Staff Review/Appraisal and Development
Training and Development Policy
Volunteer Policy and Induction
Whistleblowing Policy

LAST REVIEWED

December 2025

REVIEW

June 2026

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