

Labour Party disciplinary procedures

This Congress notes the large number of Labour Party members who were suspended or expelled during 2016, many of whom have now been readmitted to the party. This Congress believes that in some cases decisions were made at either regional or national level that could feed into suspicions of political partiality in the disciplinary process.

This Congress notes the conclusions in the Chakrabarti report, published in 2016 by the Labour Party that “there is a lack of clarity and confidence in current disciplinary procedures from all sides of the party, including on the part of those who have complained, and been complained against”

This Congress endorses the spirit of the recommendations of the Chakrabarti report relating to internal discipline in the Labour Party, and GMB urges the Labour Party to draw up and adopt an improved disciplinary policy and procedure.

In particular, this Congress resolves to encourage the Labour Party to include in its disciplinary processes and procedures, the following:

That the Party’s disciplinary policy should be readily accessible and understandable

That the Party’s disciplinary policy should be consistent in its application

That the Party’s disciplinary policy should, in the words of the Chakrabarti report, “seek to uphold the strongest principles of natural justice, however difficult the circumstances and to resist subjecting members to trial by media”

That the Party should use a wider and more creative range of disciplinary sanctions, in the words of the Chakrabarti report, “these may include a warning, the requirement for apologies and/or some other form of sensitive reparation to another member or person or persons, a public warning or reprimand, suspension from the Party for up to two years, and expulsion.”

That the Party needs internal legal expertise, in the words of the Chakrabarti report, in the form “of a General Counsel or other staff lawyer to the Labour Party to give initial advice, including and in particular on disciplinary matters and to take responsibility for instructing external lawyers as appropriate.”

That individuals who have been suspended or expelled should have the right for a review by a legal panel of that decision, and that the legal panel should have the power to refer the decision back to the National Constitutional Committee or other appropriate appeal body.