

Transcript of disciplinary meeting – 21st September 2004

Before the meeting, I enquired about whether it was okay for Christine Shimmel to attend as my companion, due to her concern that as a student, her presence at this meeting could be seen as further contact with students, a further transgression of my suspension, and therefore further “insubordination”. We were reassured that it would be okay for Christine to attend.

Nigel: Steve, I think everyone ought to know, you’ve got a recording device.

Richard: Sorry, yeah, is that ok?

Steve: Yes alright.

You’ve read the letter, so really what we’re doing today is picking up on the fact that you’re suspended at the moment and in order to give the best opportunity that we can to give you the best opportunity so that we are acting in an informed way. We’ve offered you this opportunity to take up an occupational health assessment.

Richard: I’d like to accept the opportunity.

Steve: So I’d like to...

That’s pretty much all it says

Nigel: One of the reasons for doing this is that because this information that you’re going to discuss with this person is private, we need, if you like, the authority to go and do it, cos you know, we can’t go talking to people like this and saying this guy needs it unless you say okay this is acceptable.

Steve: So that’s pretty much where we’re at the moment. I don’t know if there’s anything you’d want to add in response to the letter or bring up.

Richard: I’d want to reassure you that I haven’t changed my personality suddenly since the suspension and become a threat to anything. I’ve continued to use the same professional discretion that I’ve used for the last three years in my dealings with all this.

Christine: One thing that we were going to ask was: Does this mean that Richard will be able to carry on doing the course or does this mean that he’s still suspended?

Steve: This means that he stays suspended until this is carried out, obviously that would be something that we would do with the greatest dispatch.

Richard: I've got an employment contract for Volunteer Co-ordinator, but I've only got a one-line statement as tutor. Just to give you a bit of background on that, this is my professional course, long term ambition. And also I was very aware that students had come along to the first class with the hope that they'd be back next week and people had gone out and bought books for the course and things like that. So there was a bit of momentum there both from the students and myself and that wasn't meant in any way as insubordination against the Trust. I considered it and thought, chance to keep the course going, that was uppermost in my mind personally and I should have taken other professional things seriously. But there was that ongoing momentum and it was hopefully to negotiate with you later about keeping the course going in order to keep the figures we need to deliver the project. So I wasn't acting against the project.

Christine: And I think that in a way, that's been accepted and what's being offered is this assessment and it feels there's a line drawn, from this point, this assessment will be the condition upon which Richard's employment continues.

Steve: It's going to be what we take into consideration in making this decision. So you've nothing else you want to pick up on from the letter, when we last met there were a number of other issues.

Richard: I'd like to state one more thing, that I've not made any "allegations against my manager". All I've done is presented a transcript from the disciplinary hearing, but that wasn't presented or stated by me as an allegation against the manager. It was just point of information to show people what Daz had said at that hearing.

Christine: I think at this moment, Richard, you have a choice as to whether you want to get into a discussion about that and based on the fact that what's been suggested is that maybe you are maybe not well enough to do your job, it's maybe not the appropriate time to have that conversation.

Steve: And really that's it. We would be looking towards, we hope that this is something we can sort out very, very quickly of course for everybody concerned. In the mean time, we're going to be looking for ways to maintain the course. We're not exactly sure how we're going to manage that, and clearly it's something in which you have a particular skill. So we're exploring that possibility and your co-operation in that would be appreciated. Obviously our concern as we've stated is about your contact with people here, we'll be

looking maybe towards inviting you to consult with anybody else we get to hold the fort if you like, and take it from there.

Richard: I can see that as a working practice.

Steve: Along with which, any material that you've got on it can come back, so that we can share that, whatever we need basically, with whoever might be standing in.

Richard: I accept what you say without going into details. You've got the course as written and that's with Unstone Grange as a Learning Centre. Let us know what's happening with the course.

Richard: One more thing. Request to remove from the site certain teaching materials which I need to deliver my other courses?

Angela: At Hope?

Well that's nothing to do with us.

Richard: So It's ok to stay on site a little longer and collect some things?

Steve: Yes, that's ok.

Richard: Thank you very much

Steve: I think that's it.

Richard: So I'll be contacted by an independent health professional?

Steve: Or by us.

Angela:

And you probably know that we've written to students to ask them to let us know whether they want to continue doing the course with us, which is about protecting our interests. But you haven't had a copy of that letter, you may have seen that separately from us. Because our main consideration, well we've got as well as our duty to you as employers, we have a duty to the learners to help them fulfil in whichever way we can their course and we have a duty to the funders to maintain our contract with them. It's about balancing all those things, those different duties.

Nigel:

Thank you for your time.