



Grievance Procedure

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Grievance Procedure

It is our policy to ensure that all employees have access to a procedure to help deal with any grievances relating to their employment fairly and without unreasonable delay. Redress of those grievances may be sought in accordance with the following procedure that will usually be adopted in the interests of fairness but is not contractually binding.

This procedure applies to all employees regardless of length of service. It does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time and we may depart from it depending on the circumstances of any case.

This Grievance Procedure should not be used to complain about dismissal or disciplinary action. If you are dissatisfied with any disciplinary action, you should submit an appeal under the appropriate procedure.

We have a separate Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy that may be useful if you have been the victim of bullying or harassment or wish to report an incident of bullying or harassment involving other people. Our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy is available in the Employee Handbook.

We operate a separate Whistleblowing Policy to enable employees to report illegal activities, wrongdoing or malpractice. However, where you are directly affected by the matter in question, or where you feel you have been victimised for an act of whistleblowing, you may raise the matter under this Grievance Procedure. The Whistleblowing Policy is available in the Employee Handbook.

If you have difficulty at any stage of the Grievance Procedure because of a disability or because English is not your first language, you should discuss the situation with your line manager as soon as possible.

Written grievances will be placed on your personnel file along with a record of any decisions taken and any notes or other documents compiled during the grievance process.

Informal Resolution

If you have a question or grievance about anything at work that concerns you personally and directly and which requires to be resolved, you should first discuss the matter informally with your line Manager or the Human Resources department. Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion.

Formal Procedure

If a matter cannot be resolved informally, and you wish to raise a formal grievance, then you must set out your grievance in writing to your line Manager or the Human Resources department indicating that it is a formal grievance.

You must inform us of the basis for your grievance – what you are unhappy about and why – in your letter. The written grievance should contain a brief description of the nature of your complaint, including any relevant facts, dates, and names of individuals involved. In some situations we may ask you to provide further information.

It may be necessary for us to carry out an investigation into your grievance. The amount of any investigation required will depend on the nature of the allegations and will vary from case to case. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from you and any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents. The investigation may be carried out by your line manager, Human Resources, or someone else appointed by us.

You must co-operate fully and promptly in any investigation. This may include informing us of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents to us and attending interviews, as part of our investigation.

We may initiate an investigation before holding a grievance meeting where we consider this appropriate. In other cases we may hold a grievance meeting before deciding what investigation (if any) to carry out. In those cases we will hold a further grievance meeting with you after our investigation and before we reach a decision

You have the same legal right to be accompanied at a grievance hearing as you have at a disciplinary hearing. Your companion may be either a trade union representative or a colleague. You must tell the person holding the grievance meeting who your chosen companion is, in good time before the meeting.

At the meeting, your companion may make representations to us and ask questions, but should not answer questions on your behalf. You may talk privately with them at any time during the meeting.

Acting as a companion is voluntary and your colleagues are under no obligation to do so. If they agree to do so they will be allowed reasonable time off from duties without loss of pay to act as a companion. You and your companion (if any) should make every effort to attend grievance meetings. If you or your companion cannot attend at the time specified, you should inform us immediately and we will try, within reason, to agree an alternative time. If your chosen companion is unavailable at the time a meeting is scheduled and will not be available for more than five working days afterwards, we may ask you to choose someone else.

We will arrange a grievance meeting as soon as reasonably practicable, following receipt of your written grievance. The purpose of a grievance meeting is to enable you to explain your grievance and how you think it should be resolved, and to assist us to reach a decision based on the available evidence and the representations you have made.

After an initial grievance meeting, we may carry out further investigations and hold further grievance meetings as we consider appropriate. Such meetings will be arranged without unreasonable delay.

A decision will be made and given to you in writing within 14 working days of the final grievance meeting or otherwise as soon as is reasonably practicable. The letter will inform you of the outcome of your grievance and any further action that we intend to take to resolve the grievance and it will remind you of your right to appeal. Where appropriate we may hold a meeting to give you this information in person. The decision letter will be recorded on your personnel file.

Appeals Procedure

You have the right to appeal against a grievance decision, arising from the procedures set out above whether formal or informal.

You must put your appeal in writing, setting out why you want to appeal and what you disagree with in the original decision, and send it or deliver it to the Director stated in your appeal letter. It must be received within 5 working days of the next working day after you receive written confirmation of the decision.

There will be an appeal meeting held as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of your appeal letter, normally within 5 working days. The appeal will be dealt with impartially by a manager who has not previously been involved in the case (although they may ask anyone previously involved to be present). You have a right to bring a companion to the meeting.

The result of the appeal will usually be confirmed in writing within 10 working days of the hearing.

The decision at the appeal stage is final and there is no further right of appeal.