

GRIEVANCE



When dealing with grievances it is essential to follow a clear and proper process to ensure that objectivity, consistency, fairness, and compliance with employment law are maintained.

Depending on the issues and circumstances, the process may be implemented at either an informal or formal stage.

What you need to know...

Issues that may cause a grievance:

- Terms and conditions of employment
- Health and safety
- Work relations
- Bullying and harassment
- New working practices

What you need to do...

Ensure you have a robust procedure

- A written procedure should be in place to ensure consistency, transparency, fairness and compliance with the law and any relevant Codes of Practice.
- Your procedure should encourage employees to try to resolve matters informally before raising a grievance.
- State the process for raising a formal grievance – usually in writing to an appropriate manager, director or HR.
- The policy should have recommended time limits for the implementation of each step and required action (e.g. five working days from receipt).
- Ensure all people managers are aware of the procedure and **follow it**.



Considerations during the process

- It is essential that the desired outcome of any grievance is clearly stated at the outset *and* is actually achievable/deliverable
- Remember that employees have the right to be accompanied/ represented at formal grievance meetings
- Mediation should be considered at every stage where appropriate
- Copies of meeting records should be given to the employee.

HR Now's
Grievance
flowchart:

Informal Stage

Where an employee makes a complaint relating to a workplace or employment issue it is normally advisable to attempt to resolve this through informal discussion with an appropriate level of management to attempt to find a workable resolution. Where appropriate it may be useful to engage in mediation, which can be considered at **any** stage of the process.

Formal Stage

Where an informal approach is unsuccessful or an issue is so grave that an informal approach is inappropriate, the matter should be raised formally, in writing, setting out the nature of the grievance, and the desired outcome.

Employers should arrange for a formal meeting/hearing within a timeframe identified in their policy.

Grievance Hearing and Appeal

The hearing should be chaired by an appropriate senior manager, empowered to deliver the stated desired outcome if necessary. The hearing will adjourn before any decision is made with such decisions being in writing. The employee will have the right of appeal. Any appeal hearing should be arranged as per the original hearing but chaired by a different manager with no previous involvement **and** the authority to vary the original decision.