



Grievance Procedure

The primary purpose of this grievance procedure is to enable staff to air any concerns that they may have about practices, policies or treatment from other individuals at work or from the Company, and to produce a speedy resolution where genuine problems exist. It is designed to help all employees to take the appropriate action, when they are experiencing difficulties, in an atmosphere of trust and collaboration.

Although it may not be possible to solve all problems to everyone's complete satisfaction, this policy forms an undertaking by the Company that it will deal objectively and constructively with all employee grievances, and that anyone who decides to use the procedure may do so with the confidence that their problem will be dealt with fairly.

This grievance procedure is not a substitute for good day-to-day communication in the Company where we encourage employees to discuss and resolve daily working issues in a supportive atmosphere. Many problems can be solved on an informal footing very satisfactorily if all employees are prepared to keep the channels of communication between themselves open and working well. This procedure is designed to deal with those issues that need to be approached on a more formal basis so that every route to a satisfactory solution can be explored and so that any decisions reached are binding and long lasting.

This grievance procedure is **entirely non-contractual** and does not form part of an employee's contract of employment.

Procedure

If you cannot settle your grievance informally, you should raise it formally. This procedure has been drawn up to establish the appropriate steps to be followed when pursuing and dealing with a formal grievance.

Stage 1

In the event of your having a formal grievance relating to your employment you should, in the first instance, put your grievance in writing and address it to your line manager, making clear that you wish to raise a formal grievance under the terms of this procedure. Please use RMR 4240. Where your grievance is against your line manager, your complaint should be addressed to an alternative manager or to the human resources department. This grievance procedure will not be invoked unless you raise your grievance in accordance with these requirements.

A manager (who might not be the manager to whom your grievance was addressed) will then invite you to attend a grievance meeting to discuss your grievance and you have the right to be accompanied at this meeting by a trade union official or a fellow employee of your choice. Every effort will be made to convene the grievance meeting at a time which is convenient for you and your companion to attend. If this means that the meeting cannot be held within a reasonable period (usually within five working days of the original date set), we ask that you make arrangement with another companion who is available to attend. Any employee who is chosen to accompany another in a grievance hearing is entitled to take paid time off for this purpose.

You must make every effort to attend the grievance meeting. At the meeting, you will be permitted to explain your grievance and how you think it should be resolved.

Following the meeting, the Company will endeavour to respond to your grievance as soon as possible and, in any case, within five working days of the grievance meeting. If it is not possible to respond within this period, you will be given an explanation for the delay and be told when a response can be expected. You will be informed in writing of the Company's decision on the grievance and notified of your right to appeal against that decision if you are not satisfied with it.

Stage 2

If you feel your grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, you may then appeal in writing to a Director or Partner of the Company within the specified timescale detailed on the of the grievance decision letter. You should also set out the grounds for your appeal.

On receipt of your appeal letter, a different or more senior manager / Director (who again may not be the person to whom your appeal was addressed) shall make arrangements to hear your grievance at an appeal meeting and at this meeting you may again, if you wish, be accompanied by a trade union official or a fellow employee of your choice.

You must make every effort to attend the grievance appeal meeting.

Following the meeting, the senior manager or Director/Partner will endeavour to respond to your grievance as soon as possible and, in any case, within five working days of the appeal hearing. If it is not possible to respond within this period, you will be given an explanation for the delay and be told when a response can be expected. You will be informed in writing of the Company's decision on your grievance appeal.

This is the final stage of the grievance procedure and the Company's decision shall be final.

Disciplinary issues

If your complaint relates to your dissatisfaction with a disciplinary, performance review or dismissal decision, you should not invoke the grievance procedure but should instead appeal against that decision in accordance with the appeal procedure with which you will have been provided.