

Grievance Policy

1. Overview

1.1 This policy helps the Company ensure that complaints, concerns, and problems to do with employment are dealt with fairly and consistently.

1.2 This policy applies to all employees, but does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend this policy at any time.

1.3 You should only use this procedure to raise a grievance connected with your employment. Complaints made against you are dealt with under our Disciplinary Policy or Performance Improvement Policy as appropriate.

1.4 You should also look at our Harassment and Bullying Policy and our Whistleblowing Policy, both of which might be relevant.

2. Taking informal action

2.1 You should approach your manager before doing anything else, as we find most grievances can be resolved informally. If your grievance is about your manager, or you do not want to raise it with them for some other reason, you must instead notify HR.

2.2 Should taking the informal approach not resolve your problem, you must use the formal procedure.

3. Taking formal action: First stage

3.1 You will need to set out the details of your complaint in writing. Include dates, names of individuals involved, and any other relevant facts, and tell us clearly that you want to lodge a formal grievance. It is helpful if you can set out any steps you have taken to resolve matters informally.

3.2 You must also explain clearly what you want to see the Company do. You could for example say: 'I want you to issue a warning to (the name of the individual you are complaining about)', or: 'I want you to change your policy on overtime working'.

3.3 Send or hand your written grievance to your line manager or HR. If your line manager is part of your grievance, their line manager needs to receive your written complaint instead.

3.4 We will acknowledge receipt of your grievance in writing.

3.5 You must co-operate with us to ensure our investigation is fair and thorough. How we investigate will depend on the nature of your grievance. We will look at relevant documents and may interview you and/or take a statement from you and from other people able to provide information.

4. Taking formal action: Second stage

4.1 We will invite you to a meeting, usually within one week of you lodging your grievance. The meeting is your opportunity to explain your problem and how you think we should resolve it, and we ask that you make every effort to attend.

4.2 You can bring a companion with you to the meeting — this will typically be a work colleague (full details in paragraph 6 below). You must let us know as soon as possible if either you or your companion is unable to attend the meeting and we will try to reschedule.

4.3 We may record the meeting, but we will not do so without telling you. You are welcome to record the meeting if you wish, but please tell us as we think it is discourteous to the managers involved for you to make a covert recording.

4.4 After the meeting, we will take any steps to investigate further that we consider appropriate. Sometimes this will involve looking at documents, or interviewing other people. We will not normally allow you to participate in this part of the investigation (for example, you will not normally be allowed to question other people directly). Sometimes, we may ask you for more information or for another meeting. And sometimes, we may think there is no need for any further investigation.

4.5 Within a week of the final meeting (this may be the first or the second meeting, depending on the circumstances) we will write to you with our decision and let you know if we plan to take any action to address your grievance.

5. Taking formal action: Third stage

5.1 You can appeal in writing within a week of us giving you our decision. You must address whomever is named in the letter you received telling you of our decision, and you must explain clearly why you are appealing. You should also give us any new evidence you may have acquired since the initial investigation was completed.

5.2 We will invite you to a meeting, usually within two weeks of you lodging your appeal. Wherever possible, the appeal meeting will not be led by the manager who held the original grievance meeting. You may be accompanied by a work colleague, in line with the process outlined in paragraph 6 below.

5.3 The Company's final decision will be sent to you in writing. We try to do this within two weeks of the appeal hearing. You do not have any further right to appeal against our decision.

6. Your right to be accompanied

6.1 You are entitled to be accompanied by a colleague at any meeting called under this policy.

6.2 If you want to exercise this right, you should tell us as soon as possible who you want to accompany you. It is your responsibility to arrange for them to attend. If you choose a work colleague, we will not prevent them from attending, but we may rearrange the meeting if their absence from work causes operational problems.

6.3 Your colleague can, if this is your preference, explain the key points of your grievance at the meeting and can respond on your behalf. You can also confer with them during the meetings. They must not however answer questions put directly to you or try to prevent the Company asking questions or outlining its views.

January 2018, to be reviewed next January 2020.