

The procedure consists of the following stages:

It's certainly not unusual to hear an employee complain about work, colleagues or their boss, justified or otherwise.

In fact such informal grumbles are part of everyday working life and probably do not require much attention.

However, when the complaint is a formal one managing, investigating and resolving it in the right way is vital. Such work-related complaints are treated as a formal grievance. (1)

A grievance is a concern, problem or complaint that an employee raises with an employer.

An employee can raise a grievance for a number of reasons and circumstances, including but not limited to, a change in their terms and conditions of employment, bullying or harassment in the workplace, wages and discrimination.

Employers should have effective measures in place to deal with a grievance.

The Acas Code of Practice on Discipline and Grievance Procedures (2) provides statutory guidance that all employers are encouraged to follow in regards to the grievance process.

A decision to raise a grievance is not one that is normally taken lightly by an employee, as they will not make a formal complaint for no reason.

In order to handle employee grievances, there should be a recognised, established and clear procedure in place which has been communicated to all employees.

Any complaint should be taken seriously, investigated without delay and the employee should get a fair hearing in order to avoid putting the business through a lengthy or costly employment tribunal.

An employer's failure to deal with an employee's grievances was highlighted in the case of an 88-year-old medical secretary, in which the tribunal said her dismissal was 'tainted by discrimination'(3). It was found that the employer did not address her formal complaints.

Stage 1:

The worker fills in a grievance form and submits the same to the shift incharge for information and consideration.

Stage 2:

In case, he is not satisfied with the decision, he goes to the departmental head for the settlement of his grievance.

Stage 3:

If the aggrieved employee is still dissatisfied, he forwards it to the appropriate chairman of the zonal works committee (ZWC). Each zonal works committee consists of five management and

five union representatives. Their decision is final and binding on both the parties. The individual grievances considered by the zonal committee pertain to promotion, suspension, discharge and dismissal.

Stage 4:

If the zonal committee either does not reach to a unanimous decision or the decision is not accepted by the employee, the grievance is, then, forwarded to the central works committee. This committee consists of representatives of top management and union officials. Here also, the unanimity of principle operators and the decision taken by the committee is binding on both the parties.

Stage 5:

If this committee also does not reach to an unanimous decision, the matter is referred to the Chairman of the company. His or her decision is final and is binding on both the parties.

The stage at which the grievance is settled indicates the climate or the spirit that prevails in the organisation. Obviously, lower the level of settlement, the quicker the redressal of a grievance. The concerned officer, be the supervisor or manager, remains in a position to “give and take” at initial lower stages such as stage 1. Gradually, he or she comes under the glare of publicity; his or her position becomes harder at the subsequent stages.

Viewed from an aggrieved employee’s point, the delay in the settlement of grievance would intensify his or her anxiety and dissatisfaction. Which, in turn would affect his or her morale and productivity. The colleagues would also get affected. For the organisation, the delay in settlement is a loss of goodwill and camaraderie that might have been built up over the period.

Grievance Procedure Flowchart

For details regarding the Grievance Process, please read [College Employees Personnel Policy Statement](#) [\[Link\]](#)

