



Grievance policy and procedure

Policy sections



1. Purpose



2. Introduction



3. Hearing



4. Appeal



5. Timelimits

1. Purpose

1.1 The Improvement Service is committed to ensuring fair and consistent treatment for everyone and creating an environment in which everyone feels valued, respected and supported. The IS recognises that on occasions employees will wish to raise concerns relating to their employment. The IS agrees that there is a need to provide a mechanism for raising such concerns with a view to resolving them, whenever possible, through discussion and agreement and as speedily as possible. The aim of this procedure therefore is to provide such a mechanism.

1.2 Whilst recognising the need for a formal procedure the IS adopts the policy and the general principle that grievances are best resolved informally and as close to the point of origin as possible.

1.3 The Improvement Service considers it essential that an organisation treats all employee grievances in the same fair manner and ensures that all managers are familiar with its grievance policy and procedure.

1.4 We encourage individuals to discuss day-to-day issues informally with their line manager, so that concerns can be heard and responded to as soon as possible.

1.5 Where this is unsuccessful, or circumstances make this route inappropriate, the IS may consider using mediation or some other form of alternative dispute resolution such as 'facilitated discussion'.

1.6 The IS is keen to encourage earlier resolution of conflict at work and we view formal procedures as the last resort.

1.7 However, if individual disputes can't be resolved by informal means, they should be raised formally through our grievance procedure, as set out below.

1.8 In accordance with this principle, formal procedure should not normally be used until attempts at informal grievance resolution, as described above, have been tried and have failed.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Improvement Service recognizes that the Acas Code of Practice from March 2015 on disciplinary and grievance procedures sets out the basic requirements of fairness that will be applicable in most cases; it provides the standard of reasonable behaviour for most cases. The Code will help employers, employees and representatives deal with disciplinary and grievance issues in the workplace.

2.2 The key procedural requirements for the IS are as follows. They should be read in conjunction with the ACAS Code on Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.

- The employee or their representative shall complete the formal complaint form in Annex 1 of this policy and submit it to the relevant Head of Service to be considered, together with any supporting documentation. Please contact the Business Support Team for a Word copy of the form;
- Following receipt of the complaint form and any supporting documentation, the appropriate officer shall arrange a hearing to consider the grievance; The person conducting the hearing shall ensure that all relevant information is presented and considered and may be advised by a Human Resources officer;
- The employee shall have the right to be accompanied/represented by a trade union official or a work colleague of their choice; and Where the issue relates to a group of employees, up to three spokespersons, together with their representative, if any, may attend the hearing.

3. Hearing

3.1 Following receipt of the complaint form, the Head of Service shall arrange a grievance hearing, which shall be held within ten working days of receipt of the complaint form.

3.2 Following the hearing, a written response shall be given to the employee, with a copy to their representative, if any, within five working days of the hearing.

3.3 In some instances, depending on the nature of the grievance, it will be inappropriate for the matter to be considered by a first-line manager and in the circumstances the matter shall be referred directly to a more senior (or, where not possible, an alternative) manager. A grievance shall not however be referred in this way solely on the grounds that the employee's line manager has already considered the matter informally.

4. Appeal

4.1 If the employee remains dissatisfied they may request an appeal hearing by referring the matter to the Remuneration, Appointments and Appeals Committee within ten working days of the employee being notified of the outcome initial hearing. The employee should set out their grounds for appeal in writing.

4.2 On receipt of an appeal, the committee shall arrange a grievance appeal hearing with a view to resolving the matter. The meeting shall be held within ten working days of receipt of the request.

4.3 Following the hearing, a written response shall be given to the employee, with a copy to their representative, if any, within five working days of the hearing.

5. Time limits

5.1 The time limits referred to in this procedure may be varied by mutual agreement.

