

EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

A FU⁺UREPLUS GUIDE

WHAT IS AN EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE MECHANISM?

An Employee Grievance Mechanism is a written procedure that outlines the ways in which an organisation aims to deal with any **problems**, **complaints**, or **concerns** in a fair, timely and consistent way.

The mechanism should include details of how members of staff should raise both an **informal or formal grievance or complaint**, and how those grievances and complaints will be dealt with.

YOUR POLICY



What is a grievance?

A grievance is an official statement of complaint over something believed to be wrong or unfair, such as:

- Type of work, working conditions or hours, pay or benefits
- Discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic
- Harassment or bullying
- Health and safety breaches
- Instances of bribery or corruption
- Any other employment issues

Legal Obligations

Under UK law, all employers should set out a written grievance procedure and share it with employees, either as part of a staff handbook, or as a standalone policy.

The policy must include:

- Who the employee should contact about a grievance
- Who they should contact if the normal contact person is involved in the grievance
- How to contact this person

WHAT SHOULD THE POLICY COVER?

+ INFORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

An informal grievance mechanism is usually a discussion between an employee and a manager. The informal grievance procedure should outline:

- **Timeframe** - the timeframe within which informal matters should be resolved.
- **Record keeping** - although an informal process, both parties should keep a written record of the meeting including what was discussed and any proposed action.
- **What happens if the grievance is not resolved, or cannot be resolved informally** - i.e. a formal grievance procedure should be initiated.

+ FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If a grievance cannot be resolved informally, a formal 'grievance hearing' should be arranged. A formal grievance mechanism should set out a clear time frame for each stage of the process, as well as detailing:

- How to submit a **written grievance statement**.
- The **stages** of how the grievance will be investigated, including timeframes.
- How requests for **anonymity/ confidentiality** will be treated.
- How to **appeal** a grievance decision.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

1

Employees have the right to be accompanied to any grievance hearing by another colleague or a certified Trade Union Representative.

2

You do not have to include grievance procedure information in employment contracts, however, if you do, you must follow the procedure, or the employee could bring a breach of contract claim against you.

3

Where a grievance is raised during the disciplinary process, the disciplinary process may be suspended so the grievance can be dealt with first, but as an organisation you are not obliged to do this.

NEED MORE HELP?

As an additional service we can supply a structured template for an Employee Grievance Mechanism. We also offer consultancy services if you would like more comprehensive support.

Please let us know if you would like more information: team@future-plus.co.uk

