

## Lesson 7.5 Workplace grievance and disciplinary procedures



This lesson is about typical grievance and disciplinary procedures used across the industry and how workplace problems are typically dealt with and resolved.

Often employees are unaware that they are not working to the procedures and standards set out by the company, and when they are made aware of the fault, things can be easily corrected.

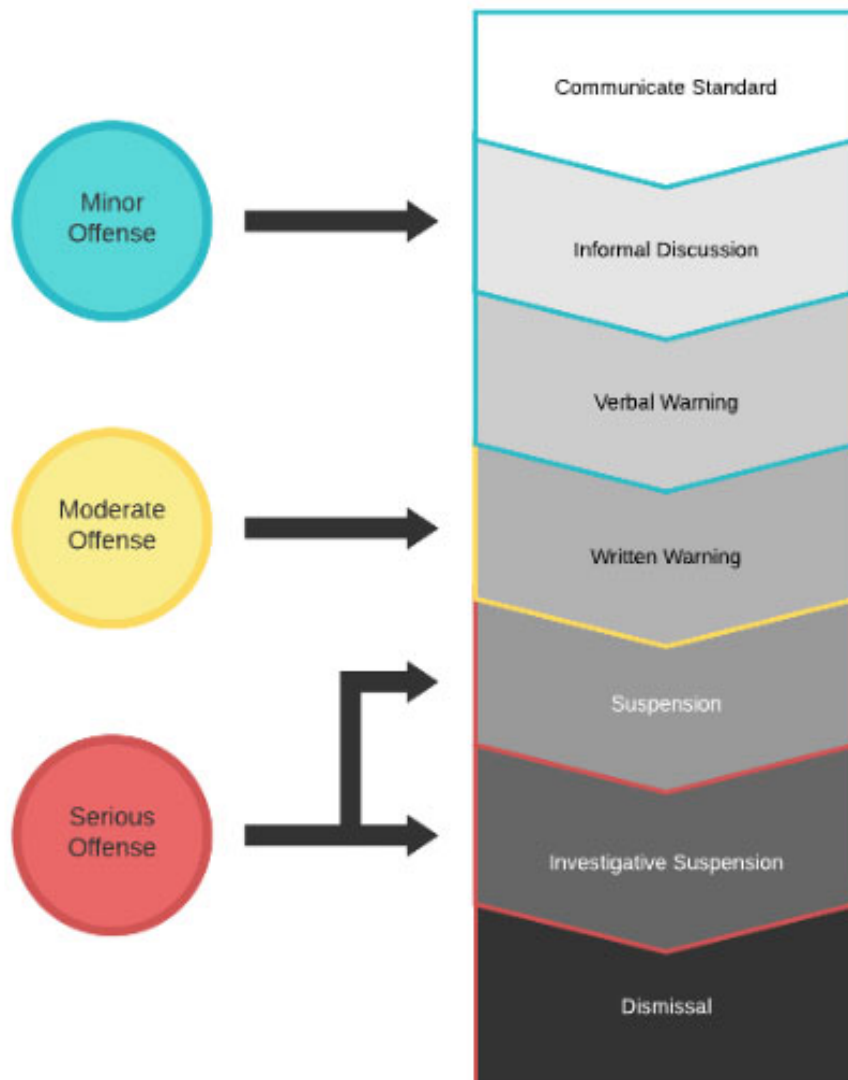
Your supervisor or manager will work hard with you to resolve any issues or matters of concern, but if the matter cannot be resolved and the problem persists, this may lead to an informal chat with a supervisor to discuss the issue and seek a resolution.

Whether the problem is a behaviour the company is not happy with or an issue you have with your company formal procedures should be in place may be followed. These procedures are there to deal with problems that cannot be dealt with and resolved via a normal day-to-day working relationship.

A disciplinary procedure is the process that deals with behaviours that the company is not happy about. For example, if you behave irresponsibly or in a dangerous way in the work place you could face disciplinary action. The type of action will depend on the companies' procedures and the severity of the behaviour.

After the informal communications there is usually a step-by-step disciplinary process as detailed below. There may be more than one verbal warning, this depends on the company procedure. The written warning will say what will happen where you to 'offend' again. This usually results in the behaviours correction and eliminates the last three stages.

## DISCIPLINARY PROCESS



If you fail to alter behaviour and put things right, you could face suspension leading to dismissal. This means an interview with management, with the option of being accompanied by a friend or trade union official. To give an opportunity to state your case, but if dismissed a notice of dismissal with reasons will be received with the right to appeal against the decision.

## The Appeals Procedure

Typically, each stage of a disciplinary procedure highlights the right to appeal against action being taken. This could happen if you felt you are being wrongly disciplined. How the appeal happens depends on your company procedure, usually:

- The appeal must be submitted in writing within a given time
- The appeal will be heard by management
- Witnesses may be questioned

By law, an employee can bring a relevant person ('companion') with them to both disciplinary and grievance appeal hearings. This is called 'the right to be accompanied'. Having a companion can be helpful as it means they can:

- Give you support
- Be a neutral person to observe
- Speak for you if you need them to

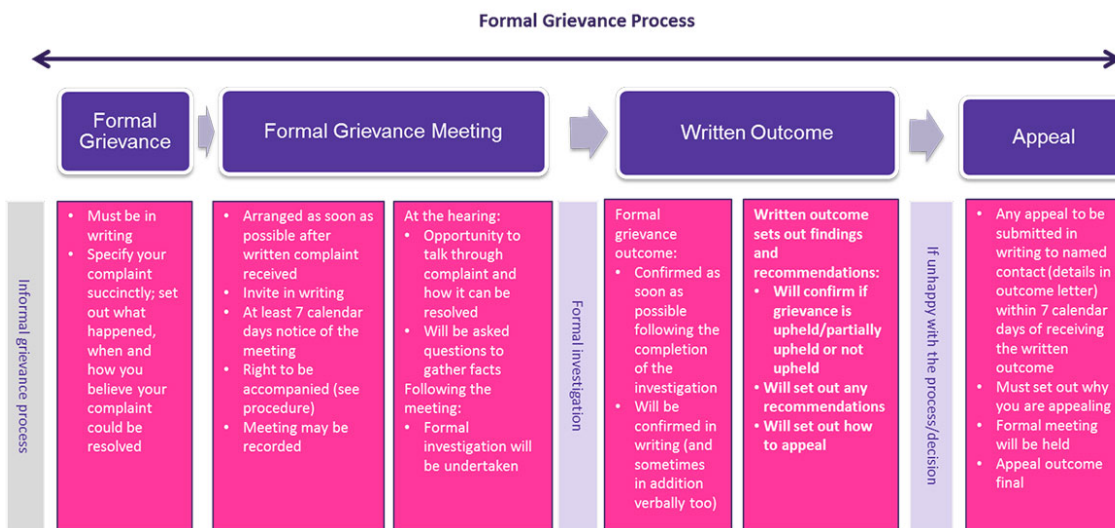
The matter will then be considered by management and a decision made. There is normally a further right to appeal within a certain period if the outcome is still not to your satisfaction.

## Grievance Procedure

The Grievance Procedure is the formal process for dealing with something in the workplace that you are not happy about. But remember it is the last resort. You must always attempt to resolve the problem informally.

Your companies Grievance Procedure will probably follow a similar sequence to the disciplinary procedure. When taking a grievance forward you are expected to go through your companies 'chain of command'

The aim is to settle the grievance fairly and quickly. There are usually four stages to the process with time limits set for each stage of the procedure. Typically, a formal grievance procedure and process will look like this:



**Often matters are resolved before they get to disciplinary stage. Remember it is in the interest of all to get any issue sorted at the informal stage.**

The Acas Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures is the minimum an employer should follow when handling these issues.

To see this code of practice, follow the link below:

**<https://www.acas.org.uk/acas-code-of-practice-on-disciplinary-and-grievance-procedures>**

## Knowledge Challenge 7.8

1. A grievance at work can be dealt with via formal and informal procedures, but a certain process must be followed. Put the seven actions below in order of priority

- Take part in a grievance meeting
- Appeal against the decision if required
- Take part in an informal chat and agree actions
- Receive the written outcome
- 1 Report the issue to your manager or supervisor
- Put the actions agreed into place
- Submit a formal written grievance if the agreed action does not resolve the issue

2. If the problem relates to behaviour that the company is not happy with, what rod ire will you company follow?

- A disciplinary procedure
- A grievance procedure
- An appeals procedure

3. Disciplinary procedures deal with issues at three levels minor, moderate, and serious. Match the action to the level of offence.

Action	Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigative suspension, suspension and dismissal</li> </ul>	Minor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written warning</li> </ul>	Moderate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate the problem, Informal discussion, and verbal warning</li> </ul>	Serious

4. Staff submitting an appeal will have 'the right to be accompanied' if attending an appeal meeting. Who may be involved in an appeal?

- A work colleagues
- A friend
- A workplace trade union representative
- A family member
- An official employed by a trade union