

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

This procedure was introduced prior to the reorganisation of the Post Office in 1986. The original language has been used so that nothing is lost in the interpretation, but please contact your local CWU representative for further clarification.

Introduction

1. 1. This instruction (apart from the appendix) details what action an employee should take if he wishes to pursue a grievance on a matter for which there is no laid down grievance or appeal procedure. In the context on this instruction a grievance refers to a dissatisfaction with some matter affecting the employee personally eg the application of nationally negotiated agreements (but not their content) or with some aspect of his working conditions.
2. 2. There are separate instructions on how to represent grievances concerned with discipline, irregular attendance, non-culpable inefficiency, pension and pensionable service, promotion or application for certain posts, redeployment and redundancy, retirement on age or medical grounds and termination of service on trial on first appointment. The rules and PIs on these particular matters are listed at the appendix to this instruction which also contains some general instructions in relation to those matters.

General procedure

3. First stage

An employee should, in the first instance, raise his grievance with his immediate supervisor, either orally or in writing. However if there is a good reason why the employee cannot take his grievance to his immediate supervisor, he may exceptionally approach his second line (in his absence third line) supervisor.

4. Second stage

If the employee fails to obtain satisfaction he should, if he wishes to proceed further, put his grievance in writing, signing and dating it, and showing his grade and office.

The written grievance should be addressed as follows: -

- (a) (a) to the Head Postmaster/Regional Engineer/RMTO or equivalent local manager, if the employee works in a local office;
- (b) (b) to the Head of Division/Controller, including Controller POID/CMTO or the appropriate local Controlling Officer if the employee works in or is out-stationed from RHQ/PHQ;
- (c) (c) to the Personnel Manager if the employee works in National Girobank.

5. Third stage

If an employee is not satisfied with the reply he may, provided this is done within 10 working days* of receiving it, refer the matter, via the manager who gave the reply, to the Regional Director or, in the case of an employee employed at PHQ or NGB his Departmental Director. The decision given at these levels will be final.

- • Working days refers to days at work and does not include Annual, Sick or Special Leave.

NOTE: On receipt of a grievance under the second and third stages, the Head Postmaster or Regional Director should decide, according to the nature of the particular grievance and the grade of the employee involved, which part of his organisation should deal with it. In no case however will the level at which the grievance is dealt with at the second stage be lower than PEB or equivalent.

Assistance of recognised unions

- 6. 6. Where the employee is a member of a recognised union written representations on his behalf may be made by his union.
- 7. 7. When the Headquarters of a union consider a point of principle is involved they may raise the matter – after the third stage has been completed – with the relevant Headquarters Department.

Form and time of reply to employees grievance

- 8. 8. A written reply should be given as soon as possible after a grievance has been submitted in writing to the appropriate authority. Under the first and second stage of the procedure a reply should normally be sent within three weeks, under the third stage within a month. If it is not possible to reply within these timescales the employee should be told the reason why the reply will be delayed.

Approaches to persons outside the Post Office

9. 9. Until an employee has exercised his right to pursue a grievance through this procedure, and a final decision on the matter has been made, he should not ask persons outside the Post Office (other than his union – see para 6 of this instruction) to take up the case on his behalf, although he may seek their advice.

9.19.1 This does not however prevent an employee from making a complaint, and seeking legal or other advice in respect of that complaint to a statutory body (such as the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Committee or an Industrial tribunal). Nor does it prevent an employee from seeking assistance in a legal dispute (such as one concerning his contract of employment, with the Post Office as his employer).

Official papers

10.10. Employees may pass to their union representatives any personal documents which they have received from official sources. If other documents are necessary to enable the union to advise or pursue the case, written application should be made to the local manager, or other controlling officer, who will consider whether copies of such documents or parts of documents may be released. Where it is not possible for a local manager to agree to release a particular document (ie copy) access to see the document rather than copy it should not be unreasonably be withheld. In reaching his decision the local manager should bear in mind that the aim is to ensure that, commensurate with the need to preserve confidentiality and security, the employee's grievance is dealt with fairly and properly. In no circumstances may registered papers or any original document be released from official control.