

Model grievance procedure for a co-operative

1. Introduction

The purpose of a grievance procedure is to enable employees to raise grievances relating to their employment in order to seek satisfactory solutions and to enable the employer to try to resolve grievances as quickly as possible in a timely fashion. The aim is also to ensure that the co-operative's services are maintained and effective while all staff are treated fairly and equitably.

This procedure deals with individuals as employees of the co-operative and in this instance it is important to distinguish between the role of an employee and that of a member of the co-operative. A separate policy should be drawn up that deals with breaches of a co-operative's membership agreement.

It is essential to have grievance procedures written down so that everyone is clear about what is required. All new employees should receive a copy or know where they can get a copy of the procedures within 8 weeks of starting their employment.

This grievance procedure does not need to be part of the contract of employment, which makes it easier to change it over time according to the needs of the co-operative. However, it is important to refer to the existence of this procedure and where a copy can be obtained – if not attached as an appendix to the contract.

Grievance procedures should be regularly reviewed to make sure they are relevant and effective and for the governing body and managers to receive training on how the procedures should be followed. Employers should comply with the ACAS Code of Practice for grievance procedures which can be downloaded from www.acas.org.uk/dgcode2009 failing to comply with these procedures could result in the employer having to pay an increased award at an employment tribunal.