

How to raise a problem at work

If you have a problem at work it's normally better to raise it informally with your employer first.

You may feel nervous about raising an issue, but employers are often open to resolving problems quickly without going through a formal procedure.

For some very serious issues, an informal chat may not be the best approach. You may want to [raise a formal grievance to your employer](#).

Have an informal chat with your employer first

You should approach your line manager first. If you do not feel comfortable doing that, try and find someone else you feel comfortable talking to, such as another manager or someone in HR.

An informal chat with your employer can range from a quiet word to a more structured meeting.

If you need more support, some workplaces have trained members of staff you could speak to, for example fair treatment ambassadors, mental health first aiders or health and wellbeing representatives. Your workplace may have an employee assistance programme (EAP) you can use.

You might want to talk to a trade union representative, if you're a member of a trade union.

Preparing for an informal meeting

If an informal meeting is set up, it's a good idea to:

- check the Acas website for information about your problem and how it might be dealt with
- prepare what you want to say, for example how to explain what you're unhappy about
- think about what you'd like your employer to do

You can ask someone to go with you, for example:

- a work colleague
- a trade union representative
- an official employed by a trade union

You can ask to bring someone else for extra assistance or support, for example a translator or carer.

It's up to your employer to agree if you want to bring anyone with you. It might say in the written terms of your contract, so it's a good idea to check.

At the meeting

At the meeting you can:

- explain what the problem is and what you think should happen
- show your manager evidence if necessary, for example your payslips and contract if you think your holiday pay was wrong
- take notes if you want to remember what was said

Resolving the problem should be a two-way process. Your manager should allow you to explain the problem. You should also listen to what they have to say.

It may not always be possible to solve the problem in the way you'd like, but hopefully you can find a solution that works for both of you.

Raising the issue formally

Sometimes an issue cannot be resolved informally. If this is the case you can [raise the issue formally](#). This is known as raising a formal grievance.

If raising a formal grievance does not resolve the problem, you might be able to [make a claim to an employment tribunal](#).