

says that it is not fair. Sometimes employees **consult** me because although the employer followed the correct grievance procedure, the employee feels they were not treated in a fair way. The employee has the right to make a claim against the employer in a special employment court called a **tribunal**. Most towns and cities in the UK have a Tribunal Office where an employee can file a claim. When an employee makes a claim to a tribunal he or she must state the **grounds** for the claim. Here are some of the reasons that employees give to a tribunal:

- **Discrimination.** To discriminate against someone at work means to act towards that person in a different, more negative way from other employees. Employees often claim that they had a bad experience at work because of their age, their sex, the colour of their skin, their nationality, or because they have some physical or mental **disability**.
- **Harassment.** To harass someone means to act towards someone in a way that makes that

person feel uncomfortable or distressed. Sometimes it is the employer who harasses the employee. Sometimes it is other employees who do it. In this case the employer has a duty to stop the harassment. If the employer does not stop the harassment and the employee leaves work, it is **constructive dismissal**. The employee can make a claim against the employer if this happens. Harassment is sometimes called **bullying** in the workplace. In Europe the word 'mobbing' is sometimes used. This word is not used in the UK.

- **Unfair dismissal.** If an employer unfairly dismisses an employee, it means that the employer fired the employee without a good reason. Most employers do what is called an **appraisal** of an employee's performance every year. An appraisal is an evaluation or a judgement of how the employee is doing. If an employee gets two or three bad appraisals the employer might not want to continue employing that person. The problem is, employees often think their appraisal was unfair.'

What is a grievance? (1)

What is a procedure? (2)

What is an employment tribunal? (3)

What does discrimination mean? (4)

What does harassment mean? (5)

What is constructive dismissal? (6)

What is unfair dismissal? (7)

What is an appraisal? (8)

- a** It is a special court. It hears employment cases. It is less formal than a normal court but it has its own rules, which people must obey.
- b** It is when an employee leaves a job because he or she is very unhappy and the employer is doing nothing to help the situation.
- c** It means treating someone in a different way at work. It may be because that person is a woman or has a disability, for example.
- d** It is the accepted, correct way of doing something.
- e** It is a type of assessment of someone's performance, especially at work.
- f** It is when an employer fires an employee, and the employee thinks that there was not a good reason for it.
- g** It means behaving in a way that makes someone feel very unhappy or uncomfortable.
- h** It is a complaint.