



Q And A

Part-time work request turned down: ask the expert

I returned to work as a teacher earlier this year, but my head teacher had earlier told me he could not accommodate a part-time teacher in my subject and would have to employ another part-time teacher to make up the hours. I met again with him once I was back and made the request verbally again, but immediately followed it up with a formal letter. He verbally said that he would consider it, but made no written decision. There are a number of part-time teachers in the school, including in core subjects such as mine. I feel very unfairly treated and at the same time am very hesitant to rock the boat by seriously challenging my head on these issues. I know they have not kept to the timetable for flexible work requests. Can I take them to an employment tribunal?



Answer by Sandra Beale

Your next step would be an appeal. As part of the appeal try and respond to the reasons they have rejected your request and think of ways to overcome their objections.

If it fails you would have the right to go to an employment tribunal whether you remain employed or decide to resign, but you need to seriously consider whether the claim you would make would be discrimination as there is little else you could rely on. Please be aware that from Monday 29 July employment tribunal fees are implemented which means you will have to pay a fee to lodge your claim then another fee to request a hearing. The fees are not cheap so it would be best to try and resolve the situation with your employer.

**Sandra Beale is Workingmums.co.uk's newest HR expert and can respond to questions on employment law from both employers and employees. If you need advice with a maternity or pregnancy issue call her on 07762 771290 or contact her via www.sjbealehrconsult.co.uk.*