

CASE STUDY | COMPLEX DISPUTES & TRIBUNAL PREPARATION

Turning a tangled dispute into a case that could stand up

How independent investigation, evidence control and tribunal-ready thinking replaced noise with a clear route forward.

By the time we were called, everybody had a version of events. What nobody had was one reliable chronology connecting the allegations, evidence, decisions and legal issues.

AT A GLANCE

THE CHALLENGE	OUR RESPONSE	THE OUTCOME
A long-running workplace dispute had expanded into overlapping complaints, appeals and potential legal claims.	A litigation-grade chronology, independent fact-finding, issue mapping and a controlled resolution strategy.	A clean evidence base, realistic options and a case that decision-makers and legal advisers could use.

The situation

A workplace disagreement had developed over time into multiple allegations and competing accounts. Some points concerned ordinary employee relations; others raised potential whistleblowing, discrimination, employment-status, contractual or data-protection issues. An earlier internal process was itself being challenged.

Relevant material sat across email, messaging platforms, informal notes, policies and meeting records. A subject access request and external deadlines increased the pressure. Strong feelings were understandable, but they were beginning to shape the case more loudly than the evidence. The organisation needed both independence and litigation discipline.

Why the file had become difficult to manage

- Allegations, evidence, interpretation and legal argument had become mixed together.
- Important records were spread across systems, devices and people, with gaps that needed to be identified early.
- Whistleblowing, equality, status and data issues required different legal tests and different evidence.
- Procedural decisions were being made while the underlying chronology was still unstable.
- Settlement needed to remain available without buying silence, conceding weak allegations or compromising an independent process.

What HR Support Group did

Built the case architecture

We created a master chronology, allegation schedule, evidence index and issues matrix. Every material proposition was linked to a document, witness account, agreed fact, disputed fact or identified evidential gap.

Tested the evidence independently

We reviewed the existing process, gathered missing material, interviewed relevant people and tested competing accounts. Findings were written clearly and proportionately, without stretching the evidence to fit the preferred outcome.

Protected fairness and legal position

We separated grievance, disciplinary and appeal questions; considered reasonable adjustments; managed subject access and disclosure material; and identified where specialist legal advice or representation was required.

Kept sensible resolution on the table

Mediation, without-prejudice discussion, ACAS conciliation and settlement options were assessed against the evidence and commercial risk. That allowed informed negotiation without allowing the prospect of settlement to distort the fact-finding.

Prepared for the possibility of tribunal

We supported ET1 or ET3 preparation as appropriate, refined the issues, organised witness and document schedules, prepared hearing materials and produced a concise brief for legal advisers. Lawyer time could then be spent on legal strategy and advocacy rather than untangling the file.

The difference

The dispute didn't become simple, but it became manageable. Every decision could be traced to the evidence, the relevant process and the risk it was intended to address.

- The strongest and weakest parts of each position were visible before more time and cost were committed.
- Missing evidence and procedural vulnerabilities were identified early enough to address properly.
- An emotionally charged narrative was converted into clear allegations, issues and particulars.
- Witnesses, documents and decision-making records were organised for hearing or tribunal use.
- Settlement choices were made from evidence and commercial judgment rather than fear or fatigue.
- Decision-makers and legal advisers received a coherent file instead of a document dump.

Services brought together

Independent process	Investigation; grievance; disciplinary; appeal; hearing packs; independent chairing
Rights & status	Whistleblowing; equality; reasonable adjustments; employment, worker and volunteer status
Evidence & data	Chronologies; evidence schedules; subject access; disclosure review; witness preparation
Resolution & litigation	Mediation; settlements; ACAS; ET1 and ET3 support; bundles; legal-adviser instructions

When the next letter matters, get the file under control first.

No template theatre. No legal fog. Just clear, evidence-led action that you can implement and defend.

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Confidentiality note: This case study is based on real HRSG assignment themes. Identifying details, sequence and certain non-material features have been changed or combined to protect confidentiality.