

Employee Resolution Toolkit

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When should I raise something under the Resolution Policy?

If you feel unable to resolve your concern following conversations with your manager, you can speak to Human Resources to understand your options.

The Resolution policy aims to bring complaints, conflicts or disputes to a resolution speedily and effectively. Wherever possible, the resolution policy places responsibility for the resolution of conflicts and disputes directly with the people involved.

You might decide to use the resolution policy if you have a dispute with a colleague. Another example might be if you have concerns over terms and conditions of employment; health and safety; new working practices; the working environment and/or equality of opportunity.

What do I do if I have the same issue to be resolved as a colleague?

Your resolution request is collective when you and your colleagues all have the same issue. No employee should be pressured into raising a collective resolution request.

A collective resolution request is applicable if you and your colleagues raising the request agree to do so (without any pressure put on others to join the collective process)

If you and your colleagues are all members of the same trade union, you can seek their support. Alternatively, you and your colleagues can agree to nominate one of you to act on behalf of all of you.

If there is not a nominated representative, you and your colleagues will be entitled to address concerns individually at the formal meeting, but you will have no additional right to be accompanied beyond having your colleagues present.

If you have raised a collective resolution request:

- You and your colleagues will have one formal hearing and one appeal hearing (if required).
- You and your colleagues will be notified individually of the outcome at each stage of the process.

If you or your colleagues wish to be represented by your trade union representatives on an individual basis, the “resolution request” will be treated on an individual basis.

Resolution Procedure

1. Employee raises a request for resolution
2. Assessment meeting takes place
 - a. Assessment meeting outcomes:
 - i. Coaching
 - ii. Facilitated conversation
 - iii. Team conference
 - iv. Mediation
 - v. Investigation – which could result in moving to a Formal Stage or another policy
 - vi. Request is accepted
 - b. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can request a formal meeting
 - i. A formal meeting will be arranged with an independent chair/facilitator to discuss your ongoing concerns and what outcome you are pursuing
 1. If you are not satisfied with the formal resolution outcome you can appeal to the HR Manager. An appeal meeting will be arranged. This is the final stage of the resolution procedure.

Informal Resolution Procedure

How do I make a resolution request?

This could be in writing by email or letter. An example can be found below. *Please delete the blue text as appropriate*

“To: *(your line manager or their manager if the issue is regarding your own line manager)*

Cc: *HR@scamb.gov.uk*

I am writing to request a resolution to the following issue(s):

I have tried to resolve this in the following way(s):

I am seeking the following resolution:

I would like to raise this request: *informally / formally (If formally please explain the reason for not addressing the issue informally in the first instance.)*

I *do / do not* require wellbeing support.

I have attached the following evidence:

I would like to suggest you to speak to the following people as witnesses to the issue:

I would prefer the assessment meeting to take place: *in person / on Microsoft Teams*".

What is an Assessment Meeting?

The resolution assessment meeting is an opportunity for a manager and/or the HR department to talk with you and identify the most suitable route to resolution. This should take place within 10 business days from receipt of your request. This is a meeting to get context around your concerns raised.

Your line manager/appointed manager will Chair and HR will be present. You can be accompanied by a TU Rep or work colleague.

This could take place in person or via Microsoft Teams. Please let HR or your line manager know your preference.

What can the outcome be of an Assessment Meeting?

A facilitated conversation

It's an informal meeting to identify and resolve a disagreement or conflict. This is an opportunity for everyone to get together and constructively find a way forward. It can be difficult to resolve concerns between colleagues without everyone present and hearing what each other have to say.

This is a confidential discussion between all parties. HR may be present.

The role of the Chair (facilitator) is:

- to remain neutral
- explain the conditions for dialogue
- actively listen

The meeting should be solution focused with the aim of reaching an agreed outcome. No HR record is kept of any facilitated conversations, only the agreed outcome.

Independent mediation delivered by a trained and accredited mediator

The mediator is an impartial third party who helps the parties have an open and honest dialogue. The mediator may be a trained line manager, HR professional, or an external mediator. The meeting should be solution focused with the aim of reaching an agreed outcome. Any agreement should come from the parties involved, not the mediator, they are not there to advise or judge. Mediation is a voluntary process, so all in attendance have to agree to be there. No HR record is kept of any mediation sessions, only the agreed outcome.

What is the difference between mediation and facilitated conversation?

[Click here to find a document which explains the differences.](#)

One-to-one coaching

We have trained up a team of workplace coaches who are now on hand to help you to gain greater awareness of yourself, your situation and your challenges so that you can discover new ways of working or behaving that will help you fulfil your true potential. Coaching can provide an opportunity to work on meeting these challenges whilst achieving your own goals and objectives. [Click here for information on coaching.](#)

A team meeting in the case of team disputes or collective “requests for resolution”

Where a dispute is within in a team, or a collective resolution request is raised team conferencing may be used. This can take place in person or remotely.

The four core principles to Team Conferencing:

- All affected parties should attend the conference
- It promotes a collaborative approach
- It's led by neutral facilitator(s) who manage the process
- It's confidential.

Investigation

The key purpose of the investigation is to discover all the relevant information in a fair, and objective manner. An investigation may include gathering evidence such as witness statements/interviews, photographic or video evidence, copies of communication. The length of an investigation will depend on the complexity of the concern but will always be dealt with as quickly as possible. If the investigation cannot be completed within 15 business days, you will receive an explanation as to why and an expected completion date.

The outcome of the investigation at this stage may result in:

- Moving to the formal meeting stage
- or for the matter to be transferred to the disciplinary and/or dignity at work policy.

Your request is accommodated.

Your request may be able to be resolved and accepted during the assessment meeting. You will receive a written copy of the assessment meeting within 5 business days.

Formal Resolution Procedure

What happens if I don't want to raise a resolution request informally?

If you feel your issue cannot be resolved informally, you can request to have a formal resolution meeting. This request should be included in your initial resolution request to your line manager which includes a reason for not addressing informally.

Formal Resolution Meeting – what is it?

A new independent manager will chair the formal resolution meeting. There may be a delay to holding the formal resolution meeting if an investigation is required.

You will be given 5 business days' notice of the formal meeting.

Any previous documentation will be shared with the Chair. You should provide any additional evidence 3 business days prior to the meeting. You should also inform the Chair if you are intending to bring a witness to the formal resolution meeting.

Outcome of a Formal Resolution Meeting

The outcome of a Formal Resolution Meeting will be a formal recommendation for resolution. This is usually agreed by the attendees in the meeting. The purpose of a formal resolution meeting is to find a mutually agreeable solution to resolve the issue.

Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the Formal Resolution Recommendation, you can write to the HR Manager to request an appeal meeting.

Your appeal should include the reason you are appealing and your desired outcome. Your reason must fall into one of these categories:

- New information has come to light which was not considered at the previous formal meeting.
- Incorrect application of procedure at earlier stages.
- The Manager chairing the earlier meetings did not consider all of the resolution options available to them.
- The outcome does not resolve the problem.

You will then be invited to attend a meeting with the nominated Head of Service.

The nominated Appeal Meeting Chair will supply a written reply to your appeal within 5 business days of the meeting. If there is a delay, the Chair will write to you to confirm an expected date of outcome.

You will receive 5 business days' notice of an appeal meeting.

FAQs

When will HR be present during this process?

HR will normally be present at any meetings to support the Chair to advise on procedure, take notes and ensure the procedure is followed. HR won't be present at mediation meetings.

When can I be accompanied?

You can bring a Trade Union Rep or work colleague to an assessment meeting, formal meeting or appeal meeting. You should arrange this support and notify the HR team of the name of your companion or Trade Union Rep. The role of the companion or Trade Union Rep is to support you, they cannot answer questions put to you.

My request for resolution involves an issue with my manager, I don't feel comfortable raising it to their manager.

If you are uncomfortable raising your request to your line manager's manager, you can send your request to HR and they can appoint an independent chair for the assessment meeting.

What happens if I have raised a resolution request whilst I'm going through a disciplinary process?

If you raise an issue while you are subject to disciplinary proceedings, if appropriate (depending on the nature of the issue(s) raised), the disciplinary proceedings may be temporarily suspended pending the outcome of your resolution request.

The organisation may also follow both the disciplinary and resolution processes concurrently. If you feel that the disciplinary action taken against you is wrong or unjust, you should appeal against the decision under the Disciplinary Policy.

What happens if I raise a resolution request and I've handed in my notice or left employment?

Employees are encouraged to raise any issues at the earliest opportunity. If a former employee of the Council makes a complaint about an issue related to their employment, they should write to the HR Team as soon as possible after leaving, but within three months of the last incident. The complaint will be managed under the Council's Resolution Complaints Policy.

An appointed manager will investigate and provide recommendations for next steps. You will receive a written outcome, with limited detail due to confidentiality.

For example:

The outcome recommends another employee required a Performance Improvement Plan. The outcome letter you receive wouldn't include this information.

What is my role under the resolution policy?

- To fully engage in respectful dialogue to resolve issues at the earliest possible stage of conflict.
- To work together to find mutually acceptable, win/win outcomes to conflict.
- To be courageous and take steps to pro-actively resolve conflict in a solution focussed manner.
- To approach all conversations respectfully, constructively, and non-judgementally.
- To raise any matters in a timely manner, so that they can be resolved fairly and quickly.
- To maintain confidentiality and deliver on any agreements reached throughout the process.
- To take ownership and responsibility for resolving any conflicts or disputes.

What is my manager's responsibility?

- They should seek advice from Human Resources in a timely manner.
- To promote constructive and collaborative conversations and respectful dialogue.
- To listen actively, non-judgementally and with sensitivity.
- To act with compassion, impartiality, integrity and without taking sides.
- To raise the profile of the Resolution Policy and the approaches available to effectively manage conflict.
- To maintain an open culture where people can speak up about their experiences.

What is HR's responsibility?

- Ensure provision of training, support, and guidance for managers.
- Regularly review and monitor the operation and effectiveness of the policy and toolkit.

Reasonable Adjustments

In the application of the resolution policy, the Council will make reasonable adjustments for employees who are unable to deal with written correspondence and requirements due to disability, as well as any other reasonable adjustments that may be required to enable an employee to fulfill their obligations as part of this Policy. Employees who need assistance with interpreting this policy can contact the HR team for guidance and support.

Absence During the Resolution Process

If you are involved in the Resolution Process and are unfit to attend work due to illness, the manager will contact you. If appropriate, medical advice will be sought.

If possible, the Resolution Process will continue and you will be invited to attend meetings as necessary, or alternative arrangements will be made to engage with you, for example setting questions in writing. If it is not possible for the Resolution Process to continue during your absence, this will be reviewed upon your return to work.