

How to Chair a Formal Hearing/Meeting



Introductions

- ✓ Welcome attendees.
- ✓ Introduce those present and their roles e.g. panel member secretary, note taker, management representative, support for management site etc.
- ✓ Confirm with the employee that they have received the letter notifying them of the hearing/meeting and the associated documentation providing advanced disclosure of the case.
- ✓ Confirm with the employee that they understand that it is a formal disciplinary/capability hearing or grievance meeting which will be conducted in line with the relevant University procedure.
- ✓ Ask that all communications go through you as the Chair during the hearing.

Outline Procedure

- ✓ Advise of the procedure or invite HR representative to outline the procedure.
- ✓ **Representation of Employee** – Confirm who the companion is and their role. If not accompanied note that the employee has been advised of his/her right to be accompanied but has chosen to attend unaccompanied.
- ✓ **Confirm Documentation provided** – Identifying if appropriate any other documentation the panel has at their disposal for reference purposes.
- ✓ **Adjournments** - Advise that should any party consider an adjournment necessary requests should be made via the chair. Identify the location of the rooms available to both management and employee.
- ✓ **Taking of Minutes** – Advise that a summary of the pertinent points will be taken for the panel and will be made available in due course upon request. Explain that any notes made by the panel are for their own reference and **will not** be made available to the employee; however both the employee and their representative would be welcome to make their own notes.
- ✓ Respond to any procedural concerns/queries that may arise.

Management Case

- ✓ Invite the management representatives to present the case against the employee and the evidence upon which this is based, which may include calling witnesses.
- ✓ Ensure the employee, their representative and the panel are given the opportunity to ask questions of the management representatives and any witnesses, and to query the evidence provided.

Employee's Case

- ✓ Invite the employee and their representative to present their case, which again may rely on witnesses.
- ✓ Ensure the panel and the management representatives are given the opportunity to ask questions of the employee and any witnesses.

Conclude

- ✓ Ask both the management representatives and the employee to provide a brief concluding statement.
- ✓ Close the hearing by explaining the next steps and anticipated timescales.

Adjournment & Decision

- ✓ Panel adjourn to decide whether it is possible to reach a decision or if further time or evidence is required to consider the case.
- ✓ Panel to advise of their decision.
- ✓ If a decision has been made, advise the employee of the outcome required e.g. what level of warning/improvement notice/action will be.
- ✓ If a warning or improvement notice is given, identify for the employee the life of the warning, the reason for the decision, any improvement required.
- ✓ If the panel is unable to make a decision as further information/time is required, inform the employee as to when they can expect written notification of the decision.
- ✓ Following the decision, it is important to inform the employee of their right to appeal.
- ✓ The outcome of the hearing/meeting should be confirmed to the employee in writing (**Template Letter**).

Record

- ✓ Ensure that notes/records of the meeting are compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998 and are stored appropriately.