

**GUIDANCE TO ACCOMPANY UK DISCIPLINARY, GRIEVANCE AND BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICIES**

**INVESTIGATORY MEETINGS AND ACCOMPANIMENT**

1. Under the ACAS Code of Practice, whilst there is a right to be accompanied at formal hearings, there is no right to be accompanied at investigation meetings.
2. The investigation meeting is a “fact-finding” meeting where the individuals being interviewed are asked for their personal and factual recollection of events or factual account of how something normally works in practice, what processes should be followed, etc.
3. However, the university recognises that if you are the employee “under investigation”, it can be stressful. We therefore propose, that:
   1. Where the individual is the one under investigation (i.e. the Respondent), they may(where practicable), if they wish, be accompanied by a union representative or work colleague The work colleague should not be a witness in the case who may be require to be interviewed separately.
   2. Witnesses are not entitled to be accompanied
   3. The companion cannot answer on behalf of the employee – this is particularly important in an investigation meeting as the person being interviewed is being asked about their view or recollection of events and processes.
   4. The companion cannot advise the employee not to answer, nor can they answer on their behalf but they are free to ask for a short adjournment to offer support to the employee.
   5. In all cases, it is in all parties’ best interests that the whole process is held as soon as practically possible
   6. Whilst we will make every attempt to hold a meeting at a date and time that the individual and chosen companion can attend, there may be occasions where it is not possible to accommodate this given the time restrictions on calendars and the desire to carry out the investigation in a fair and timely way.
   7. Requests to postpone or delay a meeting will be considered but will not be an automatic option if to do so would lead to a lengthy delay and/or additional stress on all parties.

This Guidance is to be used alongside the current UK Policies and Procedures on Discipline, Grievance and Bullying and Harassment and will be built into the revised policies in due course.

**Human Resources**

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