

Managing Attendance at Work (Sickness Absence) Procedure



Contents		Page
1. Introduction		3
2. General	Advice and support	3
	Confidentiality	3
	Fairness and objectivity	3
	Managing sickness absence	4
	Representation	4
	Records	4
	Monitoring	4
3. Roles and Responsibilities	Employee's responsibility	5
	Manager's responsibility	5
	Employee supervision	6
	Absence Reviews	6
	Absence Hearings	7
	Occupational Health	7
	Reasonable adjustments and Access to Work (ATW)	7
	Human Resources	8
	Head of Human Resources	8
4. Absence Process	4.1 Managing attendance and sickness absence	8
	4.2 "Trigger points"	9
	4.3 Absence Review	10
	4.4 Ill-health Retirement	12
	4.5 Absence Hearing	12
	4.6 Appeals	14
Appendices	Appendix 1: Managing Attendance at Work (Sickness Absence) Procedure - Flowchart	16
	Appendix 2: Details of support arrangements	17
	Appendix 3: Absence Hearing - Procedure	18

1. Introduction

Council Policy

The Council is committed to providing a working environment where individuals are treated with fairness, dignity and respect; the Managing Attendance at Work (Sickness Absence) Procedure is designed to ensure that there are fair and objective arrangements for managing sickness absence and attendance.

The Procedure follows the guidance in the ACAS statutory “Code of Practice for Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures” and “Managing attendance and employee turnover”, as well as “Best Practice”. It applies to employees directly employed by the Council only and is recommended to schools with delegated authority for staffing matters, as “Best Practice”.

The Procedure should be viewed primarily as a way of helping and encouraging employees to improve their attendance and/or to manage long-term sickness absence. It is intended to ensure that absence issues are dealt with promptly, fairly and consistently in accordance with the Council’s policies, employment legislation and “Best Practice”.

2. General

Advice and support

Human Resources will support and advise managers dealing with unsatisfactory attendance and/or long-term sickness absence and monitor all formal cases to ensure that they are dealt with in accordance with the Procedure, employment and equalities legislation, and “best practice”.

Employees are entitled to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a fellow work colleague at any meetings under the “Formal Process”. (See “Representation”).

Confidentiality

All those involved in the process will be required to maintain confidentiality at all times.

Fairness and objectivity

It is important to ensure that the absence review process is conducted in a fair and unbiased manner.

Advice must be sought from Human Resources where there any concerns as to the process being followed.

Managing sickness absence

The Council recognises that most sickness absence is genuine and will support employees who are genuinely ill and unable to attend work, but absence (both short-term and certificated) also needs to be managed effectively.

The Procedure is intended to help ensure that sickness absence is managed fairly and effectively, and appropriate support is provided to employees including those with a disability and/or long-term medical condition. This will help reduce the impact of absence on the employee, services and colleagues e.g.:

- higher levels of stress and low morale
- extra work for work colleagues, added pressure with impact on morale
- lost production, missed work targets and delays
- disruption to services and service users
- additional salary costs to cover sickness absence
- loss of competitive edge over other service providers
- failure to meet Best Value indicators and/or other performance targets

Any concerns as to employees abusing the sickness arrangements or failing to report absence may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Representation

Employees may only be accompanied / represented at meetings during the formal process (at 4.3-4.5) by a work colleague **or** a trade union official.

It is the employee's responsibility to arrange their representation and to inform their representative of the arrangements (time and dates) of meetings.

Records

Records should be kept of all Absence Reviews and Hearings, detailing the following:

- the employee's absence record;
- the employee's response and/or explanation;
- action taken and the reasons for it;
- whether an appeal was lodged and its outcome; and
- any subsequent developments

Records should be confidential and kept in accordance with the requirements of the Procedure and the Data Protection Act 1998.

Monitoring

The application of the Procedure will be monitored closely and reviewed annually in consultation with management and the trade unions.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Employee's responsibility

The Council, as part of the normal employment contract, expects the following from its employees:-

- that they attend work on the days and times they are contracted to be working and provide a satisfactory explanation for any absence from duty;
- compliance with the Council's absence procedures as detailed in the "Guidance on Sickness Absence and Reporting Arrangements";
- compliance with reasonable orders, instructions, requirements, and observance of Council practices, policies and procedures.

Employees must comply with arrangements detailed in this Procedure which are designed to ensure that concerns about sickness absence and/or attendance are dealt with fairly and objectively. Employees are required to:

- Fully co-operate with the sickness absence and reporting arrangements;
- Notify and speak to their line-manager/supervisor in person on the 1st and each day of uncertified absence and keep them informed as to the reason(s) and likely duration of absence as required by their manager;
- Provide medical certificates ("Statement of Fitness for Work") on the 8th calendar day of sickness and to cover their absence from then or when they are hospitalised and/or as required by their manager;
- Participate in "return to work" interviews;
- Notify their line-manager/supervisor of any issues that may affect their attendance at work and of any reasonable adjustments to be considered;
- Attend any medical appointments/examinations organised by the Council;
- Maintain confidentiality;
- Attend meetings at the time and place designated;
- Give as much notice as possible when they or their representative cannot attend formal meetings and be reasonable when suggesting alternatives, (which must be within 5 working days of the original date).

Manager's responsibility

Managers must ensure that their employees are made aware of the standards expected and that:

- Employees are aware of the sickness absence arrangements and for reporting absence to their line manager/supervisor;
- Employees enter their sickness absence on Oracle HR Self Service (where they have access to this);
- Employees are aware of the support that is available including the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and Access to Work (ATW);
- Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are made for employees

Managers must comply with arrangements detailed in this Procedure which are designed to ensure that concerns about sickness absence and/or attendance are dealt with fairly and objectively. Managers are required to:

- Manage absence levels within their own service areas and take appropriate action when the “trigger points” are reached;
- Ensure that sickness absence is entered on Oracle HR Self Service, the line manager is responsible for entering this where employees do not have access to Oracle or on the 4th consecutive day of absence;
- Carry out a “return to work” interview for every sickness absence and record this on Oracle HR Self-service;
- Ensure that medical certificates are provided as required and forward copies to Payroll promptly to avoid any over/underpayments of salary;
- Maintain regular contact with employees on sick leave, especially those on long-term absence and ensure that the employee is aware of their responsibility to keep in touch and at what intervals;
- Notify the employee of any concerns about their sickness absence and/or attendance;
- Maintain confidentiality;
- Try and resolve concerns about sickness absence and/or attendance or as they arise with the employee through informal discussion and advice, (this may include referral to Occupational Health) before the “triggers” are reached;
- Ensure that any actions and/or reasonable adjustments agreed following referral to Occupational Health or Access to Work (ATW) are implemented;
- Consult the Human Resources Employee Relations Team before proceeding to the formal stages of the Procedure.

Employee supervision

Any concerns should be raised and investigated by the employee’s immediate supervisor/manager at the “return to work” interview and as part of the normal supervision process. This includes identifying with the employee any issues that may affect the individual’s attendance.

Absence Reviews

The purpose of the Absence Review is to formally review with the employee their sickness absence and any underlying causes; why the absence is causing concern and the impact on the service and work colleagues; and how to reduce the level of absence. It is intended as a supportive not a “disciplinary” process and will be conducted by the employee’s line-manager. HR will also attend the meeting and the employee may be represented.

Advice should be sought from the Human Resources, Employee Relations Team if there are any concerns as to arrangements for the Absence Review.

Absence Hearings

Hearings where sanctions e.g warnings or dismissal may be considered will be conducted by a Corporate or Divisional Director or Group Manager with the authority to chair a hearing and to issue any sanctions.

In the case of JNC officers, a Member Panel consisting of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council (as Chair and Deputy Chair respectively), the relevant port-folio holder, plus at least two other councillors:

- i) will make decisions in respect of the dismissal and consider disciplinary action in respect of all JNC Officers with the exception of the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer), whose cases will additionally require the involvement of an independent person, and
- ii) in the case of dismissal, be subject to recommendations to the Assembly.

Occupational Health

Employees should not be automatically referred on reaching the “trigger points” unless there is a specific need for Occupational Health advice e.g. is there any need to refer an employee whose absence is due to a broken limb?

Line managers may, after discussion with the Human Resources Employee Relation Team, refer employees to Occupational Health at any time when there is a concern as to the individual’s health or reason(s) for absence.

Where employees submit a medical statement giving stress, (including anxiety or depression), as the reason for absence, they should be automatically referred by the manager to Occupational Health after 2 weeks continuous absence.

Occupational Health will seek the employee’s consent if they need to contact the individual’s doctor or an independent medical practitioner; if consent is refused, Occupational Health will advise managers on the information available to them.

Reasonable adjustments and Access to Work (ATW)

Under the Equality Act 2010, there is a duty to make “reasonable adjustments” to enable disabled employees to remain in employment; examples may include:

- Special equipment, aids and adaptations
- Altering working hours and times
- Making provision for additional absence for disability related treatment
- Adjustments to premises or changing the actual place of work
- Transfer of some duties to another post
- Transferring or redeploying the employee to a suitable alternative post

Guidance on reasonable adjustments and ATW is available on the HR Intranet site at: <http://lbbdstaff/HR/Pages/equality.aspx>

Human Resources

Procedural advice must always be sought from Human Resources. A Human Resources Adviser will attend all formal Absence Reviews, Absence Hearings and Appeals (at 4.3-4.5), to ensure a thorough and fair process for all concerned in line with the Council's procedures and "Best Practice".

Human Resources will be available to give appropriate support and advice during the process; this will include:-

- talking through the process to be followed
- where to go for further help and support

Head of Human Resources

The Head of Human Resources and his/her named representative, has the overriding authority to ensure that concerns about sickness absence and/or attendance are dealt with appropriately and in accordance with this Procedure, employment legislation and "Best Practice".

4. Absence Process

It is essential that any concerns as the employee's sickness absence and/or attendance are raised with the individual as soon as possible; this will normally be done through the "return to work" interview or regular supervision meetings.

In accordance with the principles of natural justice, employees will be advised at each stage, by their manager of the precise nature of the concerns about their absence or attendance and given the opportunity to respond before any decision is made. The individual will also have the right of appeal against any action taken e.g. warnings or dismissal, after a Hearing.

Employees will not be dismissed before the matter has been discussed at an absence review meeting where the employee will be given an opportunity, to reduce their sickness absence and/or to return to work, and other alternatives considered e.g. reasonable adjustments or redeployment if appropriate.

4.1 Managing attendance and sickness absence

The intention is to try and resolve concerns about the employee's sickness absence and/or attendance informally where possible, and to help them improve their attendance record and/or to return to work where possible. It is important to try and identify whether:

- i) there are any underlying reasons for intermittent or short-term absence;
- ii) there is any support that may be provided to employees on long-term sickness and to help them back into work (See Appendix 2);
- iii) reasonable adjustments have been considered for employees including those with a disability or long-term medical condition.

Managers also need to ensure that:

- the employee has been made aware of the absence reporting arrangements and support available to staff e.g. Staff Welfare Line;
- the employee has had “return to work” interviews, and regular supervision / 1-1 meetings;
- where appropriate reasonable adjustments have been made for employees (and that these are being used and supportive);
- the employee has been made aware of any concerns and given a reasonable opportunity to reduce their absence and/or return to work.

The employee should be kept informed of the nature of the concerns, the level of improvement required and the time limit for achieving this. They should also be advised that failure to reduce their sickness absence and improve their attendance may lead to formal action being taken.

In long-term sickness cases, managers should maintain regular contact with the employee and obtain medical advice as early as possible as to the prognosis and what support may help them return to work.

4.2 “Trigger Points”

The “trigger points” are those where managers are required to take appropriate action according to the circumstances of the case i.e.:

- Meeting the employee to discuss
 - their sickness absence and attendance and the impact at work
 - support that may be available e.g. Staff Welfare line or parental leave see Appendix 2
- Encourage the employee to contact Access to Work (ATW) or refer them to Occupational Health (after discussion with the Human Resources Employee Relation Team)
- Progress to a formal Absence Review

Managers should take into account the reason(s) for sickness absence and the employee’s attendance record i.e. if they have not taken any sickness during the previous three years and a certified period of absence e.g. for flu, then takes them past the “trigger points”, it may not be appropriate to progress to a formal Absence Review on that occasion but it may be if there is any further absence.

It is important to note that the “trigger points”:

- i. are not for referrals to Occupational Health and managers should only refer employees where they need specific medical advice;
- ii. excludes absence agreed under the “Arrangements for Special Leave and Time-off” as a reasonable adjustment for time-off taken to attend appointments or rehabilitation specifically related to disability, (or whilst waiting for agreed adjustments to be implemented).

The amount that may be allowed as a reasonable adjustment will depend on the individual circumstances of the case and the needs of the service.

- iii. will exclude absence specifically related to maternity or pregnancy but advice must be sought from the Human Resources, Employee Relations Team in these cases.

Managers should take advice from the Human Resources, Employees Relations Team as to what absence may be excluded. Pregnancy related illness should not be included when using the trigger points.

The minimum “trigger points”, (which will be reviewed annually), for entry to the formal stages as follows;

- 3 separate occasions of sickness within any 12 month rolling period; or
- 7 days sickness absence within any 12 month rolling period or
- any absence or pattern of absence that causes concern *
- A points level (to be agreed) based on the number of days and periods of absence, using the “Bradford factor”

* this includes sickness immediately before or after annual/flexi leave, weekends or public holidays; or on days where requests for leave have not been approved; or during events e.g. Wimbledon or World Cup; or where employees reached the sickness absence trigger points in previous years)

4.3 Absence Review

Managers must consult Human Resources before proceeding to an Absence Review.

The Absence Review will be conducted by the employee’s line manager and a Human Resources Adviser will attend to provide procedural advice.

The manager may arrange for a note-taker to be present where they agree this is necessary, following discussion with Human Resources Employee Relation Team. (If notes are taken and the employee disagrees with these, they can ask for their version to be attached).

The manager will write and give the employee a minimum of 5 working days notice of the date and arrangements for the Absence Review including:

- a copy of their sickness record, including the dates and reasons given;
- their right to be represented;

The employee may be accompanied by a fellow work colleague or a trade union official and is responsible for arranging their representation. If the employee’s chosen representative is unable to attend, the Absence Review will be rescheduled to a mutually convenient time no more than 5 working days after the date originally proposed.

The employee will be notified in writing that if they fail to attend the re-arranged Absence Review without good reason, or to arrange representation, the review may be heard in their absence.

The purpose of the Absence Review is to:

- Confirm the dates and periods of sickness absence in the previous 12 month period and ensure that the records are accurate and up to date.
- Review the employee's sickness absence and explore any underlying causes.
- Give the employee an opportunity to explain the circumstances of their absence and to bring to their manager's attention any disability or any other circumstances that may affect their health or attendance at work.
- Explain and ensure that the employee understands the effects of any period of sickness absence on the work of the team, group, department and the ability of the Council to meet its service delivery objectives.
- Consider further options to help reduce the employee's level of absence. These include referral to Occupational Health or Access to Work following discussion with the Human Resources Employee Relations Team.
- Review the type of work that they do including exploring the option of reasonable adjustments for a defined period and/or where appropriate, redeployment.
- Explain why the absence levels are unacceptable and that formal action and dismissal under the Procedure is likely to result if they continue to breach the "trigger" levels or are unable to return to their substantive post.

The manager will notify the employee in writing of the outcome of the Absence Review within 5 working days, and inform them that any further absence during the following monitoring/review period of up to 12 months may result in a further review meeting or the convening of an absence hearing.

In long term sickness cases, a date should be agreed for another Absence Review meeting or an Absence Hearing depending on the circumstances of the case and likely date of return.

The outcome letter will include:-

- The period of absence(s)
- The employee's reason(s) for absence.
- The action plan, including arrangements for the monitoring/review period.
- Where dismissal may be considered i.e., if they fail to meet the required improvement, or, are unlikely to return from long-term absence.

A copy of the letter should be passed to Human Resources Employee Relations Team to place on their personal file.

Monitoring/Review Period

The manager must continue to monitor the employee's sickness absence and/or attendance during the review period and ensure that any support and training agreed is provided.

Where at the end of the review period, the employee has achieved the required improvement no further action will be taken.

4.4 Ill-health Retirement

If the employee is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) an application can be made to enable an Independent Registered Medical Practitioner (who in the case of new applications will not usually have seen them before) to provide the Council with a certified opinion on whether they fall within the LGPS criteria for ill-health retirement, to assist the Council in making its decision regarding their application. For further information please see the following link:- www.lbbdpensionfund.org and/or speak to a pensions advisor on ext 2607 or your employee relations advisor prior to dismissal.

4.5 Absence Hearing

The arrangements for the Absence Hearing follow the same process as for a Absence Review but will be conducted by a Corporate or Divisional Director or Manager with the authority to chair a hearing and to issue any sanctions e.g. issue warnings or dismissal (or Member Panel for JNC Officers).

The management case should normally be presented by the line manager who will arrange for the employee to be formally advised in writing of the date and arrangements for the Absence Hearing, including the right to be accompanied by a fellow work colleague or a trade union official.

The arrangements for the Absence Hearing are detailed at Appendix 3.

Outcome

The purpose of the Absence Hearing is to:

- Confirm the dates and periods of sickness absence and ensure that the records are accurate and up to date.
- Review the employee's absence record and the latest medical opinion.
- Give the employee an opportunity to explain the circumstances of their absence and to bring to the Hearing Officer's attention any disability or other relevant issues affecting their health or attendance at work and/or any mitigating circumstances.
- Review the type of work that the employee does and the impact of sickness absence on service delivery and work colleagues.

- Review the support that has been provided and any previous efforts to help the employee back to work and/or improve attendance, including reasonable adjustments.
- Where appropriate, consider the availability of suitable alternative work if requested by Occupational Health.

Each case will be considered on its merits and when considering an outcome the Hearing Officer should take into account:

- The overall attendance record;
- The latest medical advice which may include Occupational Health reports;
- The likelihood of an improved attendance record being achieved by the employee or the employee returning to work;
- The effect of the employee's ill health or absence on the needs of the service;
- The employees explanation and any mitigating circumstances;
- Consideration of adaptations to the work and/or working environment, including any further reasonable adjustments;
- Options for redeployment if suggested by Occupational Health ;
- Whether the employee has previously been advised that there is a risk to their continued employment and that they may be dismissed;
- Whether the proposed decision is reasonable in all the circumstances (talking into account the individual's service history and action taken in similar cases).

The Hearing Officer may decide from the following options:

i) Adjournment

To adjourn the Hearing pending further consideration/ investigation of issues raised before reconvening to decide on the outcome.

Where the employee wants to present additional medical reports, these must be submitted within 2 weeks of the date of the Hearing or the timescale agreed with the Hearing Officer and manager.

ii) Further Monitoring Period

The Hearing Officer should ensure that the employee is clear about the reasons for the further monitoring period , and the consequences of failure to meet and maintain the required attendance. The letter will set out the:

- details of the sickness absence and/or unsatisfactory attendance
- employee's explanation and/or reasons
- attendance improvement plan and monitoring arrangements
- arrangements for any support during the Review Period
- timescale for the Review Period

The duration of the Period will depend on the circumstances of

each case and is normally up to 12 months, starting from the date of the letter notifying the employee of the outcome. The employee should be informed that any further absence during the review period will normally result in the matter being referred directly to an Absence Hearing where dismissal could be a possible outcome.

Note: Managers must ensure that any support agreed is provided as it will be unfair to progress the case back to an Absence Hearing if they themselves have not complied with the outcome.

iii) Dismissal

If it is considered that all agreed support mechanisms have been put in place and/or the employee cannot confirm a return to work date, the Hearing Officer may decide to dismiss; the employee will be paid in lieu of notice. There is no entitlement for employees to exhaust their sick pay before dismissal on the grounds on capability/incapacity.

The Hearing Officer will notify the employee in writing of the outcome of the Hearing within 5 working days, including any recommendations, along with the right to appeal.

4.6 Appeals

Employees have the right to appeal against dismissal and if they wish to do so, they should write to HR Manager, Employee Relations within 10 working days of receiving the letter confirming the outcome of the Review or Hearing, stating the grounds for the appeal.

Appeals against dismissal will be heard by the Personnel Board.

The Officer/Panel hearing the appeal may vary or confirm the decision made at an Absence Hearing but cannot increase the sanction.

Note:

- i) A Director or Head of Service with the responsibility to chair an Appeal Hearing will hear appeals against sanctions against officers up to and including LSMR posts. Appeals against final warnings and dismissal will be heard by Members at a Personnel Board.
- ii) A Member Panel consisting of at least two Cabinet Members, one of whom shall be appointed as Chair, plus two other councillors, subject to none having participated in any previously appointed Panel relating to the case in question, to:
 - (i) consider appeals in respect of dismissal and disciplinary action from JNC Officers;
 - (ii) consider, with the involvement of a separate independent person, appeals in respect of disciplinary action against the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer); and

- (iii) in the case of dismissal, this will be subject to recommendations to the Assembly

This is the final stage; there is no further right of appeal.
Human Resources will automatically update the Procedure to comply with any changes to legislation and / or ACAS guidance and notify employees of the amendments.

Appendix 1: Managing Attendance at Work (Sickness Absence) Procedure – Flowchart

Supervision (Informal)

Employee Supervision
(Return to Work Interviews / Monthly supervision / “1-1’s”)

Line Manager carries out return to work interviews immediately after each absence and records this on Oracle
 Line Manager raises any concerns as to employee’s attendance with them as soon as possible at the return to work interview or during the supervision process; managers should

- ensure employees are aware of the EAP and other support arrangements
- consider reasonable adjustments for disabled employees

Employee reaches the “Trigger Points”

Line-Manager must meet with the employee to discuss their absence and take action as follows:

- i) Make sure that the employee knows what support is available;
- ii) Refer to Occupational Health if appropriate (after discussion with HR Employee Relation Teams); **and**
- iii) Decide that no further action is required at this time and record the reason(s) why; **or**
 Progress to a formal Absence Review

Absence Review (Formal)

Absence Review

Line Manager explains concerns, including details of attempts to resolve these, with the employee and sets revised targets and timescale (up to 12 months) for improvement and/or review.
 In long-term sickness cases, a date should be set for another Absence Review (or an Absence Hearing) depending on the circumstances of the case and likely date of return.

Review / Monitoring Period

Line Manager continues to monitor employee’s sickness and/or attendance, and ensure that any support and/or training agreed is provided and being followed and/or used.
 Note: The Line Manager does not have to wait to the end of the review period to reconvene an Absence Review or progress to an Absence Hearing where the employee is not meeting the targets or using the support provided.

No Further Action
 where the employee reaches and maintains required improvement

Absence Hearing (Formal)

Absence Hearing
 Where employee has not met and maintained the required improvement or is unlikely to return to work

Further Monitoring Period.

Dismissal

Appeal

Appeal

Appendix 2: Details of Support Arrangements

i) OHS&W support

<http://lbbdstaff/HR/Pages/OHandHS.aspx>

ii) Staff welfare line

<http://lbbdstaff/HR/Pages/Employee-Welfare-Line.aspx>

iii) Links to guidance on reasonable adjustments and the BDF practical guides

<http://lbbdstaff/HR/Pages/equality.aspx>

iv) Access to Work

Further information

- www.gov.uk/access-to-work
- [Access to Work Factsheet](#)
- [Employer's Guide to Access to Work](#)

Contact:

Telephone: **020 8426 3110**

Textphone: **020 8426 3133**

Email: atwosu.london@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk

v) Special Leave and Time-off Arrangements

<http://lbbdstaff/HR/Pages/Holidayleave.aspx>

Appendix 3: Absence Hearing - Procedure

1. Introduction

- The person hearing the case at the Hearing (the “Hearing Officer”) will; clarify the roles of those present; check both sides have copies of the documentation (and where appropriate, details of any witnesses to be presented); and outline the process to be followed.
- The Hearing Officer will not normally allow any further documentation, (or witnesses), to be presented unless both sides agree.
- The manager presenting the case, the employee and their representative will be present throughout the Hearing except for any adjournment and when the Hearing Officer is considering their decision.
- Any witnesses will only be present when they are called to give their evidence and to be questioned by the Hearing Officer, the management and staff sides.
- The Hearing Officer and HR Adviser can ask questions of the manager, the employee and/or their representative (and witnesses) at any time.

2. Management case

- Management will present their case and call witnesses and refer to documents as appropriate
- After the presentation, the employee and/or their representative can ask the management questions
- Management will then have the opportunity to clarify any points raised during questioning.

3. Employee case

- The employee and/or their representative will present their case and call witnesses and refer to documents as appropriate.
- After the presentation, management can ask the employee and/or their representative questions.
- The employee and/or their representative will then have the opportunity to clarify any points raised during the questioning.

4. Summaries

- Both sides, starting with management, will have the opportunity to **summarise** their case if they wish. This is not a rehearing of the whole case and neither side will be allowed to ask any further questions.
- Both sides will then withdraw whilst the Hearing Officer considers their decision. If it is necessary to recall the employee, manager or a witness to clarify points of uncertainty as to the evidence presented, this must be done in the presence of both parties who will be called back together.

5. Outcome

- The Hearing Officer will recall both sides together to notify them of the outcome. If further time is needed to consider the matter, both sides will be recalled and given an indication as to when a decision is to be made and allowed to leave.
- The Hearing Officer will confirm the decision and any recommendation(s) in writing within 5 working days.

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