

GRIEVANCE AND HARASSMENT

Grievance

Ministry of Defence (MOD) employees who wish to raise a grievance are entitled to raise their concerns and have them considered properly. MoD Managers must respond to a complaint made by an employee whether it is raised in person or writing. The aim at all stages of the grievance procedures is to achieve resolution of those concerns if reasonably possible. Grievances are considered at the lowest appropriate level in the management area in which the action, decision, omission or policy that is the subject of the complaint has been made. Employees and Managers are strongly encouraged to seek to resolve grievances informally however, employees are entitled to move directly to the formal procedure if they have reason to believe the informal process will not be appropriate or if they choose to do so. The final level of internal resolution is to the individual's senior line manager or to an Independent Grievance Appeal Board. Grievances will be recorded on the Defence Business Services (DBS) Human Resources case management system (Remedy) and on the Human Resources Management System (HRMS) if DBS are notified. Grievance paperwork should also be sent to DBS to be included on an individual's personal file.

Harassment

The harassment process enables any employee to raise concerns relating to Bullying or Harassment to their Manager. In general, where an allegation of bullying and harassment has been made, the Complainant and Respondent(s) should make every effort to try and resolve the allegation informally. However, every allegation of bullying and harassment is serious and will be treated as such. Any formal complaint must be submitted to the appropriate Deciding Officer (DO), this is usually the Complainant's Senior Manager. The DO will conduct investigative interviews with the Complainant and Respondent and if the Respondent denies the complaint, the DO will appoint an Harassment Investigation Officer (HIO) to carry out an independent investigation. Once the HIO has completed their investigation, a report is provided to the DO who will then evaluate the evidence and draw conclusions from it, The DO must decide, on the basis of careful consideration of the evidence provided in the Final Investigation Report, whether all or some of the incidents complained about are more likely to have occurred than not and, therefore, whether the formal complaint is upheld in full or in part. Specifically, the DO must decide on the balance of probabilities whether there is sufficient, insufficient or no evidence to substantiate the allegations made and whether these amount to bullying and/or harassment. Harassment and Bullying complaints will be recorded on the Defence Business Services (DBS) Human Resources case management system (Remedy) and on the Human Resources Management System (HRMS) if DBS are notified. Harassment paperwork should also be sent to DBS to be included on an individual's personal file if appropriate.

Current issues on Harassment include the provision of Harassment Investigation Officers to a case, which has on occasions resulted in a delay on the progress of an investigation. It is proposed that a Fee Earner Cadre of HIOs (who will be ex Civil Servants) will be recruited and appointed by DBS to provide the Department with a pool of more readily available HIOs. The proposal for a cadre is currently undergoing TU Consultation.