

Step by step guide to dealing with an appeal against disciplinary action

1. An appeal against disciplinary action forms the final stage of a company's formal discipline procedure. Be familiar with the procedure and keep to any time limits it contains.
2. Read the minutes of the disciplinary interview, so that you are aware of the facts of the case.
3. Convene a convenient appointment with the employee. Allow his/her colleague or trade union representative to accompany the employee if requested. Also arrange for the line manager of the manager who carried out the disciplinary action or dismissal to attend the meeting.
4. Open the meeting by introducing all parties.
5. Take detailed notes of the proceedings.
6. Produce minutes of the disciplinary or dismissal interview and obtain the employee's agreement to them by asking him/her to initial them.
7. Allow the employee to put his/her case. Ask questions if you are unclear about the point, which is being made, but do not disrupt the employee's flow or express your own view.
8. Call the manager who carried out the disciplinary action or dismissal to put his/her case in the presence of the employee. Again, ask questions but do not interrupt unnecessarily or express your own opinion about his/her decision.
9. Call any other witnesses requested by the employee.
10. Take the decision. You may wish to adjourn for a short time while you consider the arguments you have heard from both sides. If so, explain the reason for the adjournment to the employee.
11. Deliver your decision. Explain the reasons for the decision but do not enter into a lengthy debate. The decision is yours and has been made.
12. If the decision has gone against the employee, advise him/her whether there is the right of appeal to another level of management or this is the final decision.
13. Confirm your decision and any provision for a further appeal to the employee in writing.