

## How Acas mediators work

With Acas, mediation usually involves a separate meeting with everyone involved in the disagreement, followed by a joint meeting. This can take place remotely, at work, or at a neutral venue.

Important: Acas cannot provide mediation if you are in [early conciliation](#) or if a claim has been made to an employment tribunal.

### Preparing for mediation

When the mediation is arranged, you'll get more information so you can prepare.

Sometimes you'll be asked to write down:

- the problem you want the mediator to help with
- a short list of the main things that have happened

This is not always needed but it can help the mediator understand the problem and saves time on the day.

### Separate meeting

When you first use a mediator to resolve a disagreement at work, the mediator will meet everyone separately. This helps everyone tell their story and tell the mediator what they want from mediation.

You do not need to bring someone with you to the meeting. If you do want to, you should discuss this, or any other issues that you're concerned about, with the mediator.

The mediator will explain what happens in mediation so that you can decide if it's for you. They'll also explain some of the benefits of mediation.

Mediation is voluntary so you do not have to take part. If, after the first meeting with the mediator, you decide you do not want to mediate, they'll tell your employer that mediation is not possible.

### Joint meeting

In the next stage, the mediator brings everyone together for a joint meeting.

Together, you will agree how everyone will behave in a joint meeting. You can ask for a break at any time.

The mediator asks the participants to tell their side of the story, without any interruption, and then sums up the main areas of agreement and disagreement and will talk about what will happen next.

Once the mediator knows the issues that need looking at, they'll encourage you to talk to the other participants. The mediator will work with everyone involved to help move your focus from the past to the future, and agree solutions to your disagreement.

## **If you reach an agreement**

The mediator will help check that any solution and agreement are workable and will discuss recording the agreement you reach.

Once you have reached an agreement, the mediator will end the mediation. The mediator will encourage you all to keep a written record of what's been agreed so that everyone is clear about the way forward. The mediator will explain each person's responsibilities for making the agreement work.

The agreement will only be shared with the parties involved in mediation and anyone they give consent to share it with.

## **If an agreement is not reached**

If an agreement is not reached, you might use other [dispute resolution services](#) to resolve the disagreement.