

Employee Relations: Grievance Procedure

Acuiti Labs adheres to local law requirements and codes of practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures, which set out the standard for handling these matters fairly and legally in country.

Grievance Procedure

This Grievance Policy sets out Acuiti Labs approach to handling problems raised by employees (referred to in this policy as 'grievances'), both informally and through our formal procedures.

This policy doesn't apply to complaints about the action of dismissal, whether because of disciplinary action, dismissal for poor performance, the non-renewal of a fixed-term contract or redundancy. Nor does it apply to any sanction imposed under the Disciplinary policy or the Reaching Performance policy (RPP).

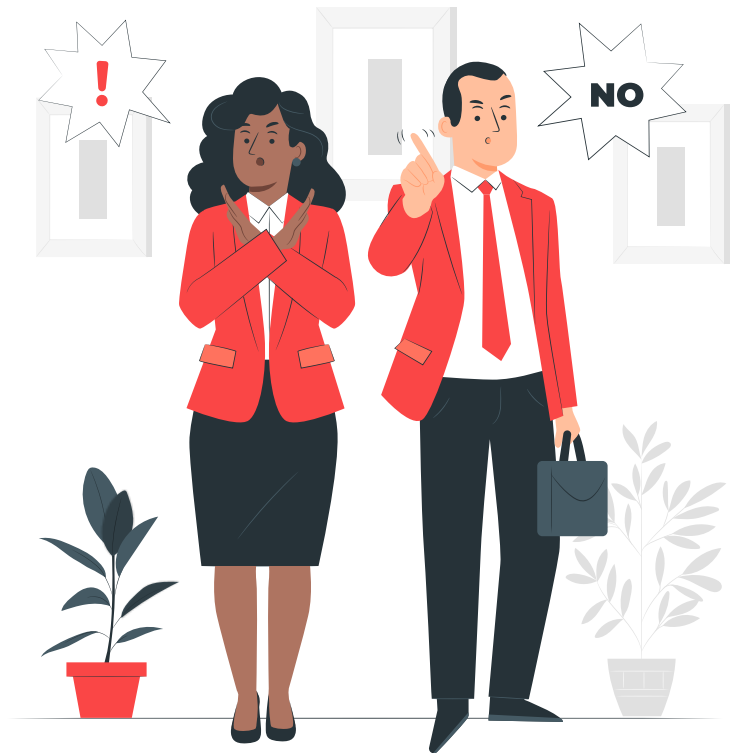
If you have a grievance that you wish to raise with Acuiti Labs, you can do this through our grievance process. We encourage colleagues to raise and address grievances informally. However, if that's not possible or appropriate, you can use our formal grievance procedure.

How to raise a grievance

Raising an informal grievance

Acuiti Labs encourages you to raise your concerns promptly with either the individual(s) involved or, if this is too difficult, with your senior leader or your HR contact so that the matter can be resolved quickly and informally where possible.

It's important that you set out your concerns in sufficient detail for your senior leader or HR contact to fully understand the matter. The senior leader or HR contact will act sensitively and consider the most appropriate way to resolve the matter.



If informal steps have not been successful or are not possible or appropriate, you should follow the formal process set out below.

Raising a formal grievance

If you're considering raising a formal grievance, you should discuss the matter with your HR contact to consider whether the informal process has been exhausted or is inappropriate, and what to expect from the formal process.

If you wish to raise a formal grievance, you should do this without unreasonable delay by writing to your HR contact and you should include the following information:

- Details of your grievance, including all relevant facts, the names of the parties involved, the names of any other relevant individuals, and relevant dates.
- What you would like to achieve via the formal grievance procedure and your preferred outcome.

The formal grievance process

Investigation

Complaints made through the formal grievance process will be investigated in a timely and confidential manner using an independent investigating officer or officers. Individuals not involved in the grievance or the investigation shouldn't be told about it.

The nature and extent of the investigation will depend on the nature of the grievance and will vary from case to case.

Acuiti Labs reserves the right to determine the most appropriate investigation process and procedure for all cases. Acuiti Labs reserves the right to combine several grievances for investigation by the same investigator or investigators and, where relevant and appropriate, to be heard by the same panel. There is no right to be accompanied to any investigatory meeting.

The grievance panel meeting

If you have raised a formal grievance, a panel meeting will be scheduled to consider your grievance as soon as reasonably practicable. You will be asked to attend this meeting, which will be held at a Acuiti Labs office (although not necessarily your base office), or remotely via Microsoft Teams or other similar means. You will (usually and where practicable) be given a minimum of 5 calendar days' notice together with a copy of the documentary evidence the panel will consider in either hard or electronic copy. You will be notified in writing of:

1. The date and time of the meeting,
2. The names of the panel members, and
3. Your right to be accompanied at the meeting by another employee or trade union representative.

The panel

The panel will be formed of 2 Acuiti Labs representatives including a HR representative, neither of whom will have previously been involved in the matter. However, the makeup of the panel will be determined according to the nature of the case and may differ if appropriate. A note-taker will also usually be present (in person or by phone or video link) for the duration of the meeting.

Notes and recordings

The notes of the meeting will not be verbatim but will reflect what Acuiti Labs considers to be the main points of the meeting. A copy of the finalised notes will be provided to you on request. There is no right to have the meeting recorded and you and your accompanying colleague (if any) are not entitled to make electronic recordings of any meetings unless the recording has been agreed in advance by Acuiti Labs to be a reasonable adjustment in the circumstances.

What happens if you fail to attend

Where you unreasonably fail to attend or repeatedly fail to attend the grievance panel meeting without good reason, Acuiti Labs reserves the right to hold the meeting in your absence and to reach a decision based on the available information.

Adjournment and communication from the panel

The meeting may be adjourned as necessary, for example, where further information or clarification is needed, or where you or any other party to the meeting needs a break.

You should be informed of the likely duration of any adjournment and that the panel will reconvene at the earliest opportunity. The meeting will usually be adjourned for the panel to consolidate and consider all the information available before reaching a decision.

The panel will inform you of its decision in writing as soon as reasonably practicable and without unreasonable delay, usually within 1 week of the meeting. The panel may also be advised of the outcome and of any follow-up action required.

Possible outcomes

The panel will reach a decision based on all the circumstances of the case and all the information available to it. The panel may reject the grievance, uphold the grievance in part, or fully uphold it. The panel may make recommendations following the outcome of the grievance panel meeting, although it is not obliged to do so.

Any employee who deliberately provides false information or otherwise acts in bad faith during the investigation or any panel meetings may be subject to Acuiti Labs Disciplinary policy.

A copy of the letter confirming the outcome of a grievance meeting, any recommendations and other actions taken will be placed on the employee's personnel file.

The right of appeal

If you've raised a formal grievance, you have the right to appeal against the outcome of the panel meeting. If you wish to do so, you must write to the person named in the outcome confirmation letter (copied to your local HR contact) within 5 working days of the date of the letter confirming the outcome of the panel meeting,

setting out clearly the reason(s) for your appeal and including any supporting evidence. To progress matters as quickly as possible, it is helpful to indicate your availability and your accompanying colleague's availability for an appeal meeting in the letter.

Appeal meeting

You will be required to attend an appeal meeting with 2 independent Acuiti Labs representatives including an HR representative, who will have had no prior involvement in the case. As during the original panel meeting, a note-taker will also usually be present for the duration of the meeting (in person or by phone or video link) and a copy of the finalised notes will be provided to you on request. The appeal meeting may be held remotely over Microsoft Teams or similar where appropriate or necessary.

The appeal panel will review all matters and has the power to overturn the decision made by the original panel, impose a different outcome, or uphold the original decision, as appropriate.

The appeal panel will confirm its decision to you in writing as soon as possible and without unreasonable delay, usually within 1 week of the appeal meeting. Your RM may also be advised of the outcome and of any follow-up action required.

This will bring the formal grievance process to an end. There is no further right of appeal.

Right to be accompanied

If you've raised a grievance and have been invited to attend a grievance meeting or appeal meeting under this Grievance policy, you have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a Acuiti Labs colleague or a trade union representative. There is no right to be accompanied to any investigatory meeting.

It's your responsibility to arrange to be accompanied, and to consider whether your proposed accompanying colleague is suitable, willing and available to attend.

Acting as a companion is voluntary and a colleague is under no obligation to do so. If a colleague agrees to accompany you, they will be allowed reasonable time off from their work to attend panel meetings.

You may request a postponement if the accompanying colleague is not able to attend the meeting. This will usually be granted provided that the alternative date is within 5 working days of the original date set for the meeting, and subject to the panel members' availability.

At the meeting, the accompanying colleague may address the panel to put and/or sum up your case, respond on your behalf to any views expressed at the meeting and may confer with you during the meeting. They cannot answer questions posed directly to you on your behalf.

General principles followed throughout the grievance process

Confidentiality

Our aim is to handle grievance matters with due regard for the privacy of any individuals involved. Everyone involved in a grievance process must treat as confidential any information communicated to them in connection with a grievance, investigation, fact-finding or panel meeting. The unauthorised disclosure of such confidential information to a person not involved in the relevant grievance process will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary action under our Disciplinary policy.

Co-operation

If you're asked to take part in a grievance process, for example, by attending a fact finding meeting, providing potential evidence and/or by attending a panel meeting, you must do so without unreasonable delay. You must co-operate fully and honestly.

Acuiti Labs expects you to always act with honesty and integrity. If you're found to have deliberately made false allegations and/or fabricated evidence, you will be subject to Acuiti Labs Disciplinary policy and may be issued with a disciplinary sanction, up to and including summary dismissal.

If you are the subject of the grievance allegation

If you're accused of misconduct as part of another individual's formal grievance, you will be asked to attend an investigation meeting with the Investigating Officer. You may submit relevant supporting documentation to the Investigating Officer to be included in the investigation file and also have the right to request to speak directly

to the grievance panel before a decision is made. This request must be made in writing to the Investigating Officer. It is for the grievance panel to decide whether to speak directly to you. There is no right to appeal the raising of the grievance.

Access to data for investigation purposes

We reserve the right to access and view all electronic communications records, internet site records and building access records, email and all other electronic communication content including social and other networking sites as well as data stored on any Acuiti Labs information systems and/or Acuiti Labs property (including but not limited to, laptops and mobile devices or tablets) for the purposes of any Grievance investigation.

Withholding access to ACUITI LABS IT systems and equipment

In some cases to maintain the integrity of data, and/or to prevent loss or damage to Acuiti Labs IT systems and/or to facilitate an investigation, we may have to withhold your access to certain or all Acuiti Labs IT systems. It may also be necessary to retain your laptop, and/or mobile device and/or tablet or other Acuiti Labs equipment for the duration of the investigation. Where such action is taken it is not, in itself, disciplinary action.

Support for those involved

If you're involved in a grievance process, you may seek support and/or information regarding the process from your local HR contact.

If, because of a disability or long-term condition, you believe there is an adjustment that would reasonably assist you, it is important that you speak to your HR contact at the earliest opportunity to ensure that adequate support and adjustments that may be necessary are discussed.

Monitoring and compliance

The Grievance policy is subject to annual review and interim changes as and when necessary. This policy is not contractual and does not form part of an employee's terms and conditions of employment. Acuiti Labs has the right to amend or remove this policy at any time.