

Frequently Asked Questions



How do cases come to the DCS and why?

- All cases come via the DRC.
- Cases are an alleged breach of the DDA. Most could go to Court or Tribunal.

Do I have to conciliate?

- No. Conciliation is voluntary. Both parties must agree to conciliate.
- What are the benefits of conciliation?
- Conciliation is free to both parties. It is also quick.
- The aim of conciliation is to enable both parties to meet together amicably.
- It offers the opportunity to reach workable, agreeable solutions and avert legal action.
- The conciliation process ends with a conciliation meeting where parties discuss the issues and hopefully reach Agreements that settle the case.

How long will it take?

- We aim to complete cases within eight weeks of their arriving at DCS.
- Much of this time is spent in preparation.
- Depending on the nature of the case, the conciliation meeting will last between two and four hours. The Conciliation Coordinator will let you know how long your meeting is likely to last.

How much work is involved?

- Both parties need to actively prepare for their conciliation during this time, not just wait for the meeting. Good preparation makes for successful conciliation meetings. This might include reading the Code of Practice and any other relevant literature on the DDA, researching previous DDA cases etc or investigating the incident.

Who can attend a conciliation meeting?

- The Complainant is encouraged to bring along a supporter.
- The Respondent will send the appropriate personnel to the meeting.
- These will be people who can make decisions and authorise any changes relevant to the matters on the agenda. For example: Owner, Company Director, Operations Manager, Registrar, Local Senior Manager from the Education Authority.

What is the role of a supporter?

- A supporter does not usually participate in the meeting discussions. They are there to provide moral support to the Complainant or practical assistance.
- Any supporter participation in the meeting, (for example helping with paperwork or helping to put a point across) will be managed by the Conciliator.

Is the DCS impartial?

- Yes, the DCS provides an impartial service to both parties.
- The DCS can not make judgements or impose settlements.
- The DCS is a separate organisation from the DRC.
- How do I find out about the Disability Discrimination Act?
- Codes of Practice for Parts III and IV of the DDA are available from the DRC. You can either call their Helpline (0845 622633) or download a copy from their website (www.drc-gb.org).
- The DRC produces many other leaflets and booklets that give information and advice about the DDA.
- If you are having difficulty in getting information, the DCS can help.

What if conciliation does not work?

- If conciliation does not resolve the complaint, the Complainant may choose to take the case to Court. This must be done within the legal time frame.
- Conciliation is confidential. Information communicated during conciliation cannot be used in any future court proceedings without the permission of the person who disclosed it.