

# Independent Conciliation Scheme for the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The CIMA Conciliation Scheme (the scheme) is an independent conciliation scheme designed to minimise costs and to encourage agreement between the parties. The scheme is provided by the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR) (the administrator) for clients in dispute with CIMA Members in practice (a CIMA member in practice is a CIMA member offering any accounting services to a person who is not their employer). The scheme takes four weeks from date of receipt of application by the administrator to confirmation of outcome to the parties.
- 1.2 Conciliation is a private and structured form of negotiation between the parties who are assisted by a conciliator who can propose a solution for the parties to consider to reach agreement.
- 1.3 This procedure applies where disputing parties seek assistance from an independent conciliator appointed by the administrator on the matters in dispute. The administrator has the exclusive right to appoint a conciliator under these rules.
- 1.4 The conciliator, who will be a qualified and accredited mediator, will work with the parties to try to find an agreed solution to the dispute. If the parties do not voluntarily reach agreement in the first instance, then the conciliator will propose a solution to the parties in an attempt to help them resolve the dispute.

## 2 Making an application

- 2.1 An application under the scheme must be made on the designated application form, available from CIMA.

### 3 Appointment of a conciliator

- 3.1 Upon receipt of a properly completed application form the administrator will appoint a conciliator and will inform the parties accordingly.

### 4 Procedure

- 4.1 The proceedings commence upon acknowledgement of receipt of the conciliation application form by the administrator.
- 4.2 Upon receipt of the conciliation application form the administrator will invite each party to submit a case statement, of no more than the equivalent of two pages of A4 paper, plus supporting documentation, in duplicate, within 7 days. The statement should include any information thought to be of particular relevance to the dispute.
- 4.3 The conciliator will speak to the parties by telephone or communicate in writing (including email) with the parties, either together or individually, to request further information or to explore possible solutions.
- 4.4 If the parties do not reach a solution between themselves after discussions with the conciliator, then he or she may suggest to the parties some opportunities for settlement.
- 4.5 If a solution is found, then the conciliator will record that solution in writing and send it to the parties in the form of a simple, Confirmation of Outcome Statement (the Statement), for signature. The parties must sign and return the Statement to the administrator within 7 days. Upon receipt of both signed copies of the Statement the administrator will advise the parties accordingly and they must then take action to comply with the agreed outcome.
- 4.6 The administrator will provide a copy of the signed Statement to the parties and a copy to CIMA (for its own private use) or confirm to CIMA that the Statement was not returned.

- 4.7 If either party does not sign or return the Statement to the administrator within 7 days, then it has no effect. The parties may then choose to go to arbitration or to the court. If the parties choose arbitration under the CIMA Arbitration Scheme, then the application form for arbitration must be submitted to the administrator within 28 days from the original issue of the Confirmation of Outcome Statement.

## 5 **Costs**

- 5.1 The administrator will invoice CIMA for the sum of £950 plus VAT upon receipt of the application. The fee is due to the administrator regardless of the signing of the Statement, and cheques should be made payable to CEDR Services Ltd.
- 5.2 The parties shall bear all their other costs of the conciliation, such as postage and copying, regardless of the outcome.

## 6 **Confidentiality**

- 6.1 The proceedings will be kept confidential except as required or permitted by these rules and the law.
- 6.2 The administrator may gather and retain details, in summary form, of individual cases. Whilst preserving the anonymity of the parties the administrator may make the summaries available to other conciliators as a resource in order to encourage consistency of practice under these rules. The administrator may also publish statistical and outline information on such disputes whilst preserving the anonymity of parties.

## 7 General

- 7.1 The administrator may appoint a substitute conciliator in the event of the original conciliator becoming incapacitated, or for any reason being unable to attend competently and / or expeditiously to his duties.
- 7.2 These rules are subject to revision and amendment from time to time. The edition of the Scheme Rules in force at the time the dispute arises shall govern any conciliation under the scheme.
- 7.3 Neither the conciliator nor the administrator shall be liable to any party for any act or omission in connection with the conciliation conducted under the Procedure.
- 7.4 If any party has a complaint about the Procedure, or the conciliator, or a member of the administrator's staff then the complaint should be made by following the administrator's complaints procedure. Copies of the procedure are available from the administrator.