

Acas annual report 2019 to 2020

14 July 2020

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Introduction

This document provides highlights from the [Acas annual report and accounts 2019 to 2020](#) (HC 451), presented to Parliament on 14 July 2020 pursuant to Section 253(1) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

Our year in numbers

Infographic showing the highlights of the Acas year in numbers

Acas year in numbers

- 15 million web user sessions
- 800,000 helpline calls (50% more daily over lockdown)
- 16,000 webinar delegates, including joint webinars with partners
- 140,000 early conciliation notifications (77% avoiding employment tribunal)
- Doubled Twitter followers, one third more Facebook fans
- 1,300 conference delegates
- 65,000 delegates trained
- 13,000 new elearning registrants

Our response to coronavirus (COVID-19) in numbers

Graphs showing the percentage of staff working from home, the number of unique web users and the number of helpline calls each week between

Tables showing our response to coronavirus in March 2020

Percentage of Acas staff working from home each week

Week	Percentage of staff
2 to 6 March	4.9%
9 to 13 March	4.9%
16 to 20 March	4.9%
23 to 27 March	100%
30 March to 3 April	100%

Number of web visits each week

Week	visits
2 to 6 March	426,634
9 to 13 March	400,196
16 to 20 March	1,018,960
23 to 27 March	1,177,751
30 March to 3 April	787,614

Helpline calls each week in March 2019 and 2020

Week	Calls answered 2019	Calls answered 2020
2 to 6 March	17,427	17,060
9 to 13 March	17,154	17,701
16 to 20 March	16,785	22,130
23 to 27 March	17,108	23,183
30 March to 3 April	17,317	20,260

Foreword from the chair and chief executive

As Britain's workplace expert, we provide an essential and necessary service to businesses, employees, trade unions and others, particularly in times of upheaval.

Acas is trusted and impartial, working with millions of employers and employees every year to make working life better in Britain. At no time are we needed more than at times of economic and workplace uncertainty – and the last quarter of the reporting year underlined just how vital our services are.

The first three quarters of the year saw Acas responding strongly to emerging issues, for example with new guidance on non-disclosure agreements and the menopause; and a full go-live of our new website (including updates of over 40 sections of guidance). By January, we had trained over 65,500 delegates, and our conference programme had reached over 1,300 people. We had taken steps to improve the speed at which our dispute services were able to resolve conflict and to reach agreements in the thorniest of

disputes. Internally, we had introduced a new Mental Health Action Plan, run an awareness campaign on sexual harassment and revised our discipline and grievance and bullying and harassment policies.

Then everything changed. The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has impacted every area of our personal, professional and social lives. And has caused uncertainty and anxiety to workforces up and down the country.

Following government advice, we quickly moved to full home working to support and protect our people. We were able to ensure our service was maintained and teams had the tools to do their jobs remotely. Line managers quickly moved to new ways of engaging teams to maintain morale and respond with resilience to the emerging challenging situation. We refigured our priorities to make daily website updates, providing the most up to date and relevant information.

We have had overwhelming positive feedback from businesses, lawyers, human resources professionals and employees that Acas offered the most authoritative accurate advice.

Our frontline services quickly responded to the demand. Our helpline saw a spike on one day of around 15,000 calls, 5 times our average daily call rate; and over the final weeks of the reporting year, we were dealing with around 50% more calls per day. Our website advice on coronavirus reached 3.6 million customers up to the end of March. These channels were supplemented by employer-facing webinars and employee-facing Twitter Live sessions.

We were supported in reaching out by our partners in the business and trade union community. CBI, TUC and FSB, sector trade bodies and trade unions, MPs, LEPs and Growth Hubs, lawyers, HR professionals and other business advisers were quick to see the value of the support we were offering and quickly disseminated and promoted it amongst their members and constituents. And calls on our expertise from many of these partners, as well as commentators, news outlets and others illustrated that we were a trusted source of knowledge and advice.

As we emerge from the crisis, we will continue to work with these partners to address how GB Plc can rebuild a strong labour market using trusted business models, explore any learnings from the lockdown and address areas of unfairness, or perceived unfairness. We will in particular continue to offer support through our priority areas of:

- good work and productivity
- mental health and wellbeing
- reducing conflict and resolving workplace disputes

In all of the above, we have been overwhelmed by the resilience, commitment and professionalism of all our people. They have truly stepped up to the challenge. We have also been immensely grateful to the Acas Council for their strategic direction and challenge during this period – their insights, impartiality and independence have been critical.

We are proud of the positive difference we make to workplace relationships and the economy. This annual report sets out how we have delivered against our strategic plan during 2019 to 2020, and indicates our ambitions for the year and years ahead.

Susan Clews adds:

Finally, I would like to thank Sir Brendan personally for his outstanding service and valuable input and insight in driving forward Acas since 2014. I would also like to welcome Clare Chapman as the new Chair of Acas. Clare takes up office at the end of July 2020 bringing enormous valuable experience to the role. She will be warmly welcomed.

Sir Brendan Barber, Chair and Susan Clews, Chief Executive

Our vision

Acas exists to make working life better for everyone in Britain, and our strategic aims support that vision.

- Strategic aim 1: Advising on good practice in everyday working life
- Strategic aim 2: Resolving disputes and managing conflict
- Strategic aim 3: Influencing employment policy and debate

What we do

We provide free, expert and impartial information to individuals and organisations about workplace good practice, rights and obligations and we help them to find solutions when things go wrong. This is done through a unique combination of practical and expert services – we offer dispute resolution for individuals, employers and representatives; face to face, online and telephone advice; practical guidance and expert training; and in-depth tailored support - to help build thriving workplaces and working lives.

We evaluate the experience of our customers and research what they need. We use our findings to spearhead thinking on how to improve the world of work, and focus on interventions where we can make a substantive difference to people's lives. We also use our research to help us develop our services and increase the reach and impact we can have on those who could benefit from our work.

Highlights

1. Launched our new website – offering clear advice to customers to solve employment problems quickly and easily and make a difference to their working lives.
2. Extended our webinar programme to over 16,000 delegates, including in partnership with NHS Employers, Companies House and Equality Advisory Support Service.
3. Answered 800,000 helpline calls, and added an employer callback service to support organisations during the early weeks of the coronavirus pandemic.
4. Delivered record levels of training to more organisations alongside more in-depth advisory visits and calls to respond to the most complex challenges.

Aim 1: To advise on good practice in everyday working life

We help organisations to get it right and improve performance. We provide phone and online advice, practical tools, clear guidance, good practice and expert training.

As the trusted authority, our role is to raise standards of work practice, reduce the causes of conflict which can lead to disputes, and make British workplaces more productive. We believe that the most effective way of doing that is to improve line management skills and help people understand and respond to employment legislation and regulations.

We do this through a range of channels: helpline, online and face to face, depending on customer need.

Acas helpline

Acas helpline advisers are the frontline of support for employers and employees facing a problem at work, who need quick, impartial advice on what the law says, information and support to address issues and fix problems, or signposting to more detailed help. This year we answered nearly 800,000 calls, and had a further 370,000 interactions through our other helpline services. Our customers told us what a positive impact our people have had.

Customer feedback: helpline

"The service of advice and guidance provided by Stacey (Acas Newcastle) had lifted so much weight off my shoulders, in terms of

stressing about what the next step is. Honestly an amazing individual, you guys should be glad to have her on your team." ?
Employee

"I have spoken to Acas on many occasions, and I was particularly impressed by the adviser on my most recent call. He was very polite and informative and helped break down my problem for me to understand better. I am very glad I phoned; keep up the good work!"
Human Resources Manager

Customer feedback: helpline satisfaction survey

A recent audit of the helpline was positive, praising in particular training of advisers and our quality monitoring.
Government Internal Audit Agency

During the height of the coronavirus crisis, the Acas helpline was receiving 3 times as many calls as normal (from an average of less than 5,000 per day, of which we answer around 3,000, to a peak of 15,000 incoming calls on 23 March), of which we managed to answer around 4,000 to 5,000 per day. To maximise the number of calls we could take, we made some temporary internal staff changes, and repositioned some of our senior advisers to respond to calls from businesses who were facing significant challenges.

We continue to work in partnership with enforcement bodies: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority and Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate. Where a caller to the helpline wishes to make a complaint about their employer, we can provide immediate advice and guidance, and where appropriate transfer them to the relevant agency.

Online advice and guidance

Acas switched over to a new website in December 2019. The new site provides information and good practice advice written in plain English. We regularly update it with what our users tell us is important and can help prevent workplace problems. It has been built using open source technology and is one of the first government sites to be fully compliant with the new accessibility regulations.

Last year we published new advice on non-disclosure agreements and the menopause, as well as completely rewriting advice across 40 different topics.

In February 2020, Acas published a guide to coronavirus for employers and employees, followed swiftly by updates to statutory sick pay and redundancy. The coronavirus advice was updated almost daily to respond to evolving legislation and advice, and had around 2 million user sessions and 3.6 million unique page views by the end of March.

Across both the old and new websites there were almost 15 million user sessions this year.

New channels for advice and learning

Webinars

We have continued to expand our range of webinars to customers, and in 2019 to 2020 delivered 15 webinars to over 12,000 delegates. These were on managing fair disciplinaries, a special winter webinar and in March 2020 we launched a webinar on the workplace aspects of the coronavirus pandemic. After the reporting period, we continued to run these webinars, and developed others on topics including on furlough and mental health in a time of crisis, in order to meet customer needs.

Customer satisfaction remains high with 96% of customers satisfied and 98% of customers likely to recommend Acas webinars to others.

Separately, we have run a series of partner webinars with other organisations:

- with Companies House, on managing sickness absence with over 1,300 registrants and 200 video views
- with the Employment Advisory Support Service, 'Did my boss really just do that? An employee's guide to discrimination'; where

we had over 1,000 registrants and 250 video views

- with NHS Employers, 'Top 10 tips for managing investigations' and 'Top 10 tips for managing sickness absence' for which we had over 1,000 registrants and 300 video views

Customer feedback

"Really useful to have questions answered during the seminar and to have the chance to download the list of questions and answers afterwards. Thank you very much, Julie and Amy, for your time on this."

"Really the best webinar I have sat through since the lockdown - thank you!"

"Always trust the advice given by Acas."

Elearning

Our elearning continues to be popular with over 13,000 new registrations in 2019 to 2020. In addition, employers regularly ask to download the elearning packages onto local intranets for employees. This year 30 employers downloaded online training, with a potential reach of 53,000 employees from sectors such as construction, local government and pharmacies.

This year we are updating our elearning platform which will result in an improved customer experience and a new look product.

Social media

We have a strong presence on social media, with increasing numbers of people accessing information and advice from Twitter (nearly double the number of followers from last year to 143,000), Facebook (nearly one third more fans to 20,000), Instagram (doubled to 1,200 followers) and YouTube channels (342,000 views of Acas videos and more than 2,000 subscribers).

These channels also enable us to share topical news and updates with a wider audience, as our partners and stakeholder supporters are regularly willing to help us promote new guidance, commentary or tools.

Social media is changing workplace communications and challenging traditional systems for effectively involving employees. We are supporting innovative ways of helping employers and employees to work together to improve business growth. During the coronavirus pandemic, we launched a weekly Twitter Live Q&A which allows our followers to engage with us directly and get their questions answered. For the 2 sessions we ran during the reporting period, we had over 2,500 engagements on this platform.

Training and in-depth support

We offer training in all aspects of employment relations, providing employers with essential information to comply with legislation and equipping managers with the key skills and confidence to manage people. During the year around 11,600 people attended our open access events, and we have provided in-house training, tailored to an organisation's needs, to over 38,000 people, across 1,700 organisations. Both types of training receive positive feedback from delegates with 99% satisfaction ratings.

We also offer organisations tailored in-depth support which goes beyond training, working closely with employers, employees and employee representatives/trade unions to diagnose potential issues within the workplace and tailor support to address the challenges they face. We have helped organisations manage change, resolve conflict and improve relationships and have assisted with requests for trade union recognition.

We continue to enhance and add to our training programme, events launched this year include on gender identity in the workplace and on menopause and the workplace. We have also started to offer our training digitally through online platforms. This has been key

in enabling us to continue to meet customers' training needs during the coronavirus pandemic.

Partnership work

We have collaborated with partners on joint programmes to reach a wider audience and increase the impact of our messaging bespoke to user needs. For example, in September and October we ran 2 joint webinars with NHS Employers, and in November delivered the 'Building the best place to work' conference designed specifically for the health sector which covered topics such as; mental health, diversity and inclusion and bullying and harassment. All of these events were delivered wholly in partnership to ensure the lived experience of delegates and expertise of NHS Employers was reflected.

While the events themselves were hugely successful, the real win for Acas was the benefit of having our partners at NHS Employers advocating our work across their networks.

Case study: health sector joint programme

"One of the best Acas courses I've attended!"

Delegate

"Partnering with workplace experts Acas to deliver a series of events enabled us to pool our collective expertise and provide delegates with insight, shared learning and workable solutions to the key challenges facing the NHS workforce today. Feedback from our colleagues working across the health and care sector has been extremely positive and I look forward to exploring future opportunities where we can jointly further the ambition of making the NHS the best place to work."

Danny Mortimer, Chief Executive of NHS Employers

Aim 2: To resolve disputes and manage conflict

We help individuals and their employers to find solutions to disputes which would otherwise result in legal action.

We also conciliate to help employers and employees' representatives (usually trade unions) to reach agreement on disputes affecting groups of employees on issues such as pay and job design.

Most people know us for our work when things go wrong. While conflict is inevitable, when it is allowed to escalate into a dispute, it can impact on an organisation's ability to fulfil its objectives, and on every member of staff. We work with individuals and organisations to help them find early solutions to conflict and avoid some of the long term impacts this can cause.

Resolving disputes involving individuals

Anyone who wishes to take a case to an employment tribunal must first notify Acas. After receiving the notification, we offer parties free, impartial and voluntary support to resolve the dispute and avoid the anxiety and costs associated with a tribunal hearing.

In 2019 to 2020 we received nearly 140,000 early conciliation notifications (approximately 2,700 notifications a week), an increase of 5% on the previous year. Conciliation officers have worked incredibly hard to be available and responsive to claimants, respondents and their representatives while dealing with this increased workload. This has meant that 77% of the notifications handled by Acas did not lead to an employment tribunal claim (because a formal or informal agreement was made, or the claimant decided not to proceed).

Our services remain available after an employment tribunal claim has been lodged, right up to the day of the hearing. We saw a slight increase last year with 41,000 cases reaching this stage. Of the 18,000 finalised this year, Acas conciliation resulted in settlement in 58% (10,000) of cases, with a further 20% (3,500) being withdrawn by the claimant before the hearing.

Despite a year-on-year increase in case receipts since the abolition of ET fees in July 2017, we continue to receive positive feedback

to the service from claimants, respondents and their representatives. Nevertheless, we continue to explore ways to better manage our cases and maximise efficiency. In the last year, we have trained 40 new conciliators, and explored new models of service delivery. We created a new notification form and rolled out a new case management system to improve the way people notify Acas of a potential claim, and offer faster more efficient communication and case management.

In the coming year we will deliver further enhancements, including speedier allocation of cases to conciliators; quicker contact with customers over a range of channels; and simplified group claims.

Customer feedback: individual conciliation

From a claimant:

"Dear Clare, thank you so very much for your professionalism, care and humanity when dealing with my case... The words 'thank you' do not seem big enough as you (and Acas) have really helped me to draw a line and move on with my life."

From a claimant, formerly a rep for companies:

"Unusually I found myself working through Acas from the claimant's perspective as my day job is in HR. After experiencing both, I am flabbergasted at how balanced and diligent you guys actually are. I have been thoroughly impressed by the team there, especially when you all cover each other's work loads and pick up seamlessly from where the other left off. Credit where credit is due, impressed. Keep it up."

From an employer:

"We received the countersigned COT3 today, so all done and dusted. Thank you very much indeed for all your help. This result could not have been achieved without your assistance. The service we have received from Acas has been excellent and amazingly efficient. Our position has been improved immeasurably in a way that we simply could not have achieved on our own. You have provided a great service."

Unrepresented claimant:

"Regards and many thanks for your positive interventions and your patience. It's a shame people don't sometimes stand at their doorsteps on Thursdays and applaud Acas... I would!!!"

From the parent of a claimant:

"All in all, a pretty faultless public service."

Resolving disputes involving groups of employees

Our collective dispute resolution work is wide-ranging, from resolving conflict between trade unions and employers after a workforce has been balloted about potential action, to encompassing situations where there is no formal trade union recognition and fewer formal mechanisms for resolving disputes.

Our work to resolve collective disputes behind the scenes is vital to help avoid industrial action wherever possible. Our conciliators help increase employer understanding of employee concerns and discontent, and facilitate discussions about ways of working together, better communication and improved productivity. In most cases we are successful in finding a solution before the dispute escalates into industrial action.

But where the dispute has escalated, we are able to help parties find a solution in most cases. Requests for our involvement come from private, public and voluntary sectors. The most common cause of collective disputes was pay or pay-related matters. However, we are seeing increasing numbers of disputes which relate to change: around increased efficiency, working practices, and reviews of terms and conditions. We have also seen a steady flow of cases around trade union recognition.

Mediation services

Acas offers a mediation service to help resolve workplace conflict before it escalates. Mediation can be used in situations where work relationships have broken down, with adverse impacts on employee engagement, effectiveness and absence rates. Acas mediators help employers and employees to jointly find more constructive solutions to their issues. Of the 258 mediations Acas was involved with in 2019 to 2020, 76% reached full or partial agreement.

One of our most popular training packages is an in-depth intensive accredited Certificate in Internal Workplace Mediation (CIWM) course. Last year we trained 240 people from organisations which recognise the need to manage conflict proactively, and think strategically about how they can address challenges within their own organisations.

We have not yet seen significant increases in dispute resolution caseloads since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. However, we are carefully tracking the impact on business and workplaces; and using insight from our helpline to inform planning on expected areas of dispute so we are well prepared to respond.

Aim 3: To influence employment policy and debate

We use the insight gathered from research and from working with millions of people, employers and stakeholders every year, to inform and influence employment policy and debate.

Acas's impartiality is embedded in our governance through the Acas Council, whose membership ensures that we benefit from employer, employee, and independent academic and legal perspectives (see below). Our council sets Acas's strategic direction, contributes to specific areas of work, such as developing Codes of Practice and new guidance, and supports and challenges the Executive Board in delivering our strategic aims.

Our credibility and reputation as impartial experts mean that we are regularly approached by partners, government ministers, policy makers, influencers and others for our insight and views. Our close working relationships with others also helps build our reach and impact, as we are advocated by partners and are able to engage directly with their customers, networks and members.

Informing and shaping the debate

We use our insight to contribute to the broader public policy debate, to shape and inform thinking and practice on employment issues, and to promote understanding of how well-managed, efficient and innovative workplaces can improve both productivity and working lives.

Our governance arrangements, strong working relationships with stakeholders and evidence from research helps us make decisions about what areas we need to focus our resources on and where we can have most impact. For example, over the last year, we have focused on resolving conflict, improving good work and productivity and in improving workplace mental health and wellbeing.

Major areas of work included:

Positive mental health in the workplace

Our mental health framework and modular training programme has continued to expand, and we have trained around 250 companies. We have worked with particular well-known brands to support them to deliver changes. In May 2019 we published a [new paper exploring the impact of stress and anxiety at work](#).

Good work and productivity

We continued to work with partners to develop our offer of practical advice to businesses on delivering 'good work'. We have worked in particular with the London Mayor's office, Greater Manchester Mayoral Authority and North of the Tyne Authority on supporting them to offer local businesses advice and tools. We have also worked with a number of sectors including the supply chain sector on their plans on what good work looks like. We also contributed an essay to a collection published in January 2020 by RSA and Carnegie on ['Can good work solve the productivity puzzle?'](#)

Technological innovation

Technology continues to be a driver of new working relationships and productivity. This year we published a [paper looking at the impact of algorithms in the workplace](#). We followed this up with a think piece on some of the winners and losers that new technology will lead to in the workplace.

Conflict resolution

We published a paper on the evolving nature of the human resource function and its implications for workplace conflict.

These themes also offered considerable insight when the coronavirus pandemic took over our thinking, as they provide a lens through which Acas can offer to support business and employees. It also helps us look at the different stages of support we can offer:

- during lockdown and the panic which was being felt by many – we offered a rescue; our authoritative experience and expertise offered reassurance to many that we have the answers and are here to offer help and tools
- as we start to exit lockdown and understand more about what will happen next, we can assist with repairing the breakdowns in trust which have happened in many workplaces and offer practical tangible solutions to rebuild
- as we look to the future we can help with the recovery – we have experience in supporting organisations to restructure, taking their people with them, and thinking about new business models and ways to ensure productivity through times of change

The Acas Council has responded to a number of government consultations, including on:

- confidentiality clauses
- sexual harassment in the workplace
- the government's Good Work Plan on: addressing unfair flexible working practices; and establishing a new single enforcement body for employment rights
- 'Health is everyone's business: proposals to reduce ill health-related job loss'

Stakeholder engagement

We work closely with stakeholders and partners to horizon-scan, gather insight, share evidence and build consensus on a range of topical issues impacting on the world of work. This engagement helps us to increase the reach of our work as partners are willing to share and advocate to their networks and customers. Our key stakeholders include trade unions and other organisations who support employees, such as Citizen's Advice and Working Families; employer representative groups, such as CBI, Chambers of Commerce and FSB; government departments and agencies, such as the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the Government Equalities Office (GEO), Public Health England (PHE) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC); and other influential groups, including the CIPD, Investors in People, the Royal Society for the Arts (RSA), academics and the Civil Mediation Council.

We run high profile, expert led conferences to explore the future of work, share our insights and knowledge, and hear from others about their experiences. We host some of the most interesting and exciting speakers in the world of work and support HR

professionals, small employers and more. We ran over 1,300 events for over 13,000 delegates over the year, including regional network fora, conferences and various face to face group sessions.

Equality and discrimination

In July 2019, Acas received awards in 3 categories for the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (enei) awards. We received a highly commended for our work on Disability Confident, won the pay gap award and in addition gained overall winner for best public sector organisation.

We continued to work closely and collaboratively with colleagues in the GEO and EHRC. We have worked together to support the wider government agenda to tackle sexual harassment.

Case study: LGBT Action Plan across the Civil Service

We supported the government's workplace commitment in response to the LGBT survey and helped develop the LGBT Action Plan. We facilitated a number of roundtable sessions and fed into development of a elearning package to help employers and employees deal with LGBT discrimination in the workplace.

Future planning

As we move into 2020 to 2021, we are entering a period of unprecedented economic and workplace uncertainty. It is clear from the early months of this crisis, the essential nature of our services to business and employees in rebuilding and returning to normal. In order to respond to this call for our support, we have reviewed our programme of work for the year ahead.

Internally, we will be focussing on the balance between office and home working for our people, and considering how we can continue to deliver the essential training and in-house work that employers tell us make such a difference to their ability to deliver and improve effectively. We have been overwhelmed at the resilience, capability and flexibility of colleagues, who have shown how able they are to respond quickly to need.

Externally, we are reviewing our digital offering, developing plans to respond to the differing needs of our customers in the post-coronavirus world. This includes adapting our conciliation services to meet the anticipated uptake of demand and looking at improved joined up customer journeys, using insights gathered during the crisis to support people better so they can find what they need faster.

We are looking at what the future needs of the workplace are likely to be so we can respond quickly and effectively. We will continue to involve partners in our thinking as this work and the impacts of the situation evolves. But there are some clear topics which we will be addressing, including on safe workplaces and working practices; business survival, recovery and productivity; new ways of working; and issues around fairness, or perceived unfairness.

The Acas Council

Sir Brendan Barber (Acas Council Chair January 2014 to July 2020)

Sir Brendan was the General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) from 2003 to 2012. He is also Deputy Chair of the Banking Standards Board. Brendan is a Visiting Fellow at the Said Business School, Oxford University, and at Nuffield College, Oxford. Sir Brendan was knighted in the 2013 Birthday Honours for services to employment relations.

Clare Chapman (Acas Council Chair from 27 July 2020)

Clare previously served as Group People Director at BT Group and before that, Director General of Workforce at the Department of Health. She has a long track record of managing relationships between employers, workers and their trade unions, in both the private and the public sectors.

Neil Carberry (Acas Council since July 2014)

Neil is Chief Executive of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC), the UK's representative and professional body for recruitment and staffing. Previously he was a Managing Director at the CBI. Neil is a member of the Low Pay Commission and a Chartered Fellow of the CIPD. He sits on the World Employment Confederation board and is Chair of a Primary Academy Trust.

Mike Clancy (Acas Council since May 2016)

Mike is the General Secretary of the trade union Prospect. Mike was appointed as an Employment Appeal Tribunal member in 2002 and became member of the Central Arbitration Committee (CAC) in 2019. In March 2017 he joined the Nuclear Industry Council. He is also a member of the TUC Executive Committee and the General Council.

Professor Anne Davies (Acas Council since April 2018)

Anne is Professor of Law and Public Policy at the University of Oxford, and Dean of the Faculty of Law. She is a professorial fellow of Brasenose College. Anne is the author of 5 books and many articles in the fields of public law and labour law.

Mike Goodie (Acas Council since July 2014)

Mike is People Director for the Canal and River Trust. Prior to this he held a number of senior HR positions, including for Shell, British Airways, GNER, the BBC and Asda. He has held non-executive positions on the boards at Manchester Airport Group, Community Integrated Care and the York Archaeological Trust. He is Chair of the Acas Audit Committee and a member of the Remuneration Committee.

Jayne Haines (Acas Council since April 2018)

Jayne is senior Vice President Talent, Learning and Organisational Development at GlaxoSmithKline. She has worked at the European Commission in Equal Opportunities and the Royal Mail. Jayne is a member of the Business in the Community (BITC) Age Leadership Team, and Chair of the charity "Women in Sport".

Sally Hunt (Acas Council since March 2015)

Sally was the General Secretary of the University and College Union (UCU) since its formation in 2007. Prior to that, she was General Secretary of the Association of University Teachers. Sally was a member of the TUC Executive Committee and General Council, and acted as the international spokesperson. She was also President of the TUC 2017 to 2018.

Susan Jordan (Acas Council since April 2018)

Sue was previously Vice President HR DHL Supply Chain. She is a Non-Executive Director of Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, Employer Member of the CAC and Chair of the Trustee Board for Citizens Advice – Bromsgrove and Redditch. She is a Fellow of the CIPD.

Christina McAnea (Acas Council since March 2017)

Christina is Assistant General Secretary of Unison. She has lead responsibility for the development and implementation of Unison's

collective bargaining, negotiations and equalities strategy, including health and safety, pensions and procurement.

Jane McNeill QC (Acas Council since July 2014)

Jane is a member and former Head of Old Square Chambers. She has been involved in many important and test cases in the fields of employment and discrimination law. She has been a Queen's Counsel since 2002, a fee-paid employment judge since 2000 and has sat as a recorder in the County Court since 2006. She is an accredited and practising mediator.

Paul Nowak (Acas Council since November 2011)

Paul is Deputy General Secretary of the TUC. He has responsibility for public services and transport, and for the TUC's organisation in the English regions and Wales, union organising, interunion relations and the organisation of the TUC's annual Congress. He is a member of the government's Strategic Trade Advisory Group.

Ben Summerskill (Acas Council since March 2017)

Ben was Chief Executive of Stonewall from 2003 to 2014, and then Director of the Criminal Justice Alliance. Prior to this, Ben was Assistant Editor and Chief Leader Writer at The Observer. He is a member of the Honours Committee for Community and Voluntary Service and the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, and a trustee of Switchback.

Performance against key indicators

Key performance indicators for the service level agreement

Acas service	2019 to 2020 target	2019 to 2020 outturn	2018 to 2019 target	2018 to 2019 outturn
Conciliation in collective disputes				
The promotion of a settlement in disputes in which Acas were involved	80%	95%	80%	88%
Individual disputes referred for conciliation				
Percentage of early conciliation notifications which result in a conciliated settlement between parties	20%	17%	20%	20%
Percentage of early conciliation notifications which result in a conciliated settlement between parties or other positive outcome	30%	26%	30%	32%
Percentage of employment tribunal cases which result in a conciliated settlement excluding those which have been struck out by the courts	55%	59%	55%	55%
Percentage of employment tribunal cases which are positively resolved following Acas conciliation	70%	80%	70%	74%

Acas service	2019 to 2020 target	2019 to 2020 outturn	2018 to 2019 target	2018 to 2019 outturn
Acas training services				
Percentage of open access customers reporting they were satisfied with the course	97%	99%	97%	99%
Percentage of workplace training customers reporting they were satisfied with the course	97%	99%	97%	98%
Percentage of open access customers reporting that the training met their learning needs*	90%	86%	n/a	84%
Telephone helpline advice on workplace problems				
The percentage of users who were able to take clear action following their call to the Acas helpline	85%	89%	70%	88%
Digital advice on workplace problems				
Number of interactions where the user solved their problem or were reassured of a course of action**	3.1 million	5 million	6.48 million	7.59 million

* This is a new measure so there was no target for the previous year.

** This measure is calculated by multiplying service user volumes against the latest impact evaluation survey results.

Volume indicators

Volume	2019 to 2020	2018 to 2019
Number of early conciliation notifications	138,837	132,711
Number of employment tribunal claim forms (ET1s) received	40,978	36,531
Number of re-employments	101	94
Number of collective conciliation requests received	566	607
Number of workplace projects started	131	175
Number of requests for trade dispute arbitration	20	16
Number of calls answered by national helpline	798,552	730,550
Number of helpline online user sessions	295,612	417,258
Number of advisory visits and in-depth phone calls	5,090	4,340
Number of training sessions delivered	3,033	2,955

Cost of key services

Unit cost	2019 to 2020	2018 to 2019
Cost of a helpline enquiry (voice or webchat answered)	£8.91	£7.84
Cost of processing an individual conciliation case	£114	£120
Cost of a collective conciliation case	£1,220	£1,203
Cost of an arbitration hearing case	£2,132	£2,132