



E-NEWS

FDRC  金融糾紛調解中心
FINANCIAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTRE



FDRC Panels of Mediators and Arbitrators: Role, Eligibility and the Broader Context for Financial Dispute Resolution in Hong Kong

Hong Kong's role as an international financial centre depends not only on capital formation and market infrastructure, but also on credible, accessible and fair mechanisms for resolving disputes. Under the national policy to strengthen Hong Kong's position as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre, alternative dispute resolution (ADR) — including mediation and arbitration — plays an important role in boosting confidence, managing risk and supporting cross-boundary commercial activities.

Within this landscape, the Financial Dispute Resolution Centre (FDRC) maintains panels of mediators and arbitrators to support the Financial Dispute Resolution Scheme (FDRS) in Hong Kong. The panels bring together dispute resolution practitioners with relevant training and experience to assist in handling financial disputes with financial institutions.

Here is a helicopter overview of what the FDRC does, why the panels matter from a system perspective, who may apply etc.

What does the FDRC do?

The FDRC administers an independent dispute resolution scheme for monetary disputes between eligible individuals or small enterprises and financial institutions, such as banks and other licensed financial entities.

Financial disputes affect consumers and, in aggregate, market confidence. The FDRS provides a structured ADR pathway— with a “Mediation First, Arbitration Next” approach —that aims to resolve eligible disputes without requiring parties to go through litigation and the court system:

- Most cases begin with mediation, where a mediator facilitates communication and negotiation towards settlement.
- If mediation is unsuccessful and the claimant chooses to proceed, the matter may move to arbitration, resulting in a final and binding award.

Panel mediators and arbitrators are practitioners who deliver mediation and arbitration services under the FDRS. Since financial disputes involve regulated financial services and technical product features, the FDRC applies admission standards intended to ensure panel members meet baseline

competency and integrity requirements. The admission standards and application procedures are set out in the *Standards and Procedures for Admission to the FDRC List of Mediators and FDRC List of Arbitrators*.

Why do the Panels matter?

From a broader perspective, specialized panels support the credibility and capacity of ADR for financial disputes. For individual practitioners, panel membership can provide a structured way to apply dispute resolution skills in a regulated context based on a well-defined scheme viz. FDRS.

Panel membership provides a channel for mediators and arbitrators to contribute to the operation of the FDRS and to apply their expertise in the resolution of financial disputes, by:

- serving the public by helping resolve financial disputes fairly
- applying mediation or arbitration practice to disputes involving financial products, sales processes and regulatory frameworks
- working within a defined scheme and procedures designed for financial disputes
- boosting confidence and trust in Hong Kong's dispute resolution ecosystem.

Who can apply to join the Panels?

Applications to join the Panels are assessed against the FDRC's admission standards. In general, applicants are expected to have:

- A recognized background as a mediator and/or arbitrator
- Relevant training and practical experience
- Professional integrity and a commitment to ethical practice.

Applicants must already be on the panel or list of a professional body or institution recognized by the FDRC. The panels or lists of professional bodies or institutions that are currently recognized by the FDRC can be found at the official website of the FDRC.

Training: Understanding Financial and Regulatory Context

Applicants are required to have "satisfactorily completed" an FDRC-approved training programme, which focuses on areas commonly arises in financial disputes, including:

- The regulatory framework governing financial institutions
- How the FDRC and the FDRS operate in practice
- Common financial products, their sales processes, and potential disputes
- Practical insights and experience sharing relevant to financial disputes.

This training is intended to ensure that panel members understand not only dispute resolution processes, but also the financial and regulatory setting in which those eligible disputes arise.

Applicants should meet the attendance and assessment requirements of the above training in order to be considered as having “satisfactorily completed” the training.

Experience Matters

Applicants are expected to demonstrate relevant experience within the 3 years preceding the application. This typically includes experience in:

- Financial product disputes; or
- Commercial contract disputes involving corporates and/or individuals

Documentary support, for example reference letters, is generally required as part of the application process.

How does the Application Process work?

Applications are submitted using the prescribed application form together with supporting documents. Applications are considered by the FDRC Appointment Committee, which assesses whether the admission standards are met.

The assessment focuses on the applicant’s skills, experience, and professionalism relevant to handling financial disputes under the FDRS.

Ongoing Responsibilities after Admission

Panel membership involves ongoing professional responsibilities. Panel members are expected to:

- comply with the FDRC Ethics Code, including duties of independence, impartiality, and confidentiality
- complete Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities on a regular basis
- stay updated on developments in dispute resolution, financial products, and relevant regulations.

Ethical and continuing professional development requirements are relevant to renewal and continued inclusion on the FDRC panels.

Full details of the admission standards, procedures, application forms as well as empanelment trainings are available on the FDRC website.

**Dated: May 2026
Issue 08**

Note:

- i. This newsletter is provided for general information only and does not constitute any advice. No representation whatsoever is made or intended to be made by the FDRC in relation to such information. The FDRC shall not be responsible or liable to any party who relies on the information provided in this newsletter.
- ii. FDRC is a non-profit company limited by guarantee. With the support of the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the Securities and Futures Commission, the FDRC independently and impartially administers the Financial Dispute Resolution Scheme to assist financial institutions and their customers to resolve monetary disputes.