Stages in an Arbitration Hearing

Introduction
- The case and party details are put on record
- The parties introduce themselves
- The process and rights are explained
- The possibility of reverting to conciliation is explored

Preliminary issues
- The commissioner checks jurisdiction
- The commissioner hears any preliminary point or application for postponement
- The commissioner hears and decides on legal representation

Narrowing the issues
- The parties may make opening statements
- The commissioner asks for background information
- The commissioner narrows the issues by identifying what is in dispute and what is not

Hearing the evidence
- The parties hand in bundles of documents with copies for each side, the commissioner, and the witness
- Each party calls its witnesses
- The other side asks questions in cross-examination
- There is a chance for re-examination on anything new raised in cross-examination

Closing arguments
- The parties summarise what was proved
- The parties give reasons why the commissioner should accept one version over another
- The parties indicate what outcome sought

Arbitration award
- An award is issued within 14 days
- The award is final and binding