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**How to decide on a disciplinary penalty**

Before any disciplinary penalty can be applied, there needs to be an investigation and disciplinary hearing. Possible disciplinary penalties can be found in the University Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

When considering what sanction to apply, an employer must ensure that their decision is fair and reasonable in all the circumstances.

Before deciding on a penalty an adjournment should take place in order to fully reflect upon the issues. Consider the following:

* The nature and seriousness of the misconduct or under performance, and the circumstances in which it took place.
* Whether the act is a one-off or any misconduct has occurred repeatedly.
* The impact, or potential impact, of the misconduct or under performance, on colleagues, students or the University.
* The overall employment record of the member of staff, such as length of service, previous performance / conduct, current live disciplinary warnings, health / attendance records etc.
* Any relevant mitigating factors.
* The case / response to allegations put forward by the member of staff or their representative.
* What decisions the University has taken in similar circumstances. It is not necessary to apply the same sanctions in all cases – organisations are required to be consistent in their treatment of staff, but different circumstances can justify different treatment.

Remember that there are circumstances where it may be appropriate to issue no sanction at all.

Take advice from HR on appropriate disciplinary penalties where appropriate. Also review what the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure states about specific offences, especially in the case of potential gross misconduct.