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**How to resolve disciplinary issues informally**

Wherever possible, disciplinary issues should be dealt with as quickly and informally as possible, especially when the issue is minor or a one-off. On issues of conduct of poor performance, managers should consider whether using informal or formal processes are appropriate, taking into account the seriousness of the issue.

The purpose of dealing with issues informally is to address any areas of concern and given the member of staff the opportunity to respond before matters escalate or there is a requirement for formal action.

In any informal discussions, consider the following:

* Ensure that the member of staff is aware of the reason for the meeting and outline any areas of misconduct / poor performance, using specific examples.
* Hold any meetings in a private place and ensure confidentiality.
* Keep a record of the discussions from the informal meeting. Provide a copy to the member of staff.
* Set objectives / agree action plans for improvement. Set review periods if appropriate.
* Ensuring that the member of staff is aware that if the matter is repeated / continued formal disciplinary action may result.

No sanctions will be applied as a result of informal discussions.

If, during informal discussion, anything comes to light that the situation is more serious than it first appeared and the informal approach is no longer suitable, inform the member of staff and adjourn the meeting.

There is no right to be accompanied during informal discussions.

Hold a follow up meeting with the member of staff at an appropriate time – let them know if there is to be any further action (if improvements have not been made) or if the matter is considered closed (where improvements have been sustained).

Where matters are more serious, such as potential serious misconduct, it would not be appropriate to deal with matters informally. See our separate guidance on managing disciplinary issues.