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**How to carry out an investigation**

Before any decision is taken that disciplinary action should be taken against any member of staff, a full and thorough investigation must take place. The purpose of an investigation is fact finding, not decision making.

A good investigation will include:

* a clear definition / scope of the allegations to be investigated
* an explanation of the process to the member of staff, including potential next steps
* consideration of the evidence that needs to be collated
* identification and interview of relevant witnesses
* review of relevant policies / precedent
* regular updates to those involved
* a summary of the investigation and any conclusions made
* a summary of what information could not be gathered
* formal notes of all discussions / interviews agreed by the parties
* confidentiality.

During the investigation consider the following:

* ensuring the member of staff is fully aware of the nature of the allegations
* the account given by the member of staff and any relevant mitigating circumstances
* seeking relevant evidence that supports the allegations, or contradicts them
* determining what facts can be established or cannot be established (and why)
* asking relevant and probing questions (HR can support on drafting these)
* a review of relevant documentation, which may include reference to the staff members personnel record.

After the investigation is concluded, the member of staff much be notified of the outcome. Where disciplinary action is recommended, a full pack of information to be considered at the disciplinary hearing should be collated and provided to the member of staff.