

Workplace investigations

A three-part virtual session

Overview

This three-part virtual session is designed to introduce participants to the knowledge and skills required for conducting investigations in the workplace. It will benefit all those, managers and HR professionals alike, who may be involved in a range of investigations, including:

- Disciplinary investigations
- Investigations into allegations of harassment / bullying
- Grievance investigations, etc

The first session (90 minutes) focuses on the key principles of investigations and sets the foundation for an effective, fair and robust investigation. The second session (also 90 minutes) focuses on planning and conducting an investigation and gives practical guidance on a range of complex situations that may arise during an investigation. The final session (three hours, with a break) is a highly practical case study-based simulation session.

Audience

Anyone likely to be involved in advising on, or conducting, disciplinary, grievance, or bullying / harassment investigations, including:

- HR / employee relations advisers
- Line managers

Special feature

This programme can be tailored to particular settings.

Virtual session one

Learning objectives

On completion of this introductory session you will:

- Understand the purpose of investigations and the importance of conducting a robust investigation in line with best practice, organisational policies and employment law
- Know when and how to launch a workplace investigation
- Be clear on key investigation principles including the role of the investigating manager, maintaining objectivity and ensuring confidentiality

- Know what to consider in more complex investigations, eg, safeguarding, potential criminal proceedings, and harassment

Virtual session outline

1 Welcome, agenda, overview

- Objectives and agenda

2 Robust investigations

- Following best practice and organisational policies
- Ensuring a fair and reasonable investigation, underpinned by case law

3 Knowing when to investigate

- Key factors to consider, including the value of a preliminary investigation

4 Launching the investigation

- Scoping the investigation, and appointing an investigator
- When to suspend

5 Investigation principles

- Purpose and outcomes
- Roles and responsibilities
- Objectivity and confidentiality

6 Challenging situations

- Complex investigations, eg, potential criminal proceedings, safeguarding, etc
- Other challenges

7 Action plans and next steps

Virtual session two

Learning objectives

On completion of this highly practical session you will know how to:

- Plan an investigation effectively and prepare yourself
- Gather evidence – including investigation interviews and taking statements
- Use a structured approach to evaluate evidence and document your recommendations
- Use key investigator skills and understand your own strengths and development areas
- Deal with a range of challenging scenarios, eg, counter-allegations, sickness, etc

Virtual session outline

1 Welcome, agenda, overview

- Objectives and agenda

2 Planning an investigation

- How to plan your investigation
- Importance of mind-set

3 Gathering evidence

- Sources of evidence
- Investigation interviews and statements
- Key challenges, eg, reluctant witnesses and requests for anonymity

4 Evaluating evidence and making your recommendation

- How to weigh up evidence and mitigating factors
- Dealing with conflicting versions
- The investigation report and next steps

5 The skills of an investigator

- Identifying skills and self-assessment

6 Challenging situations

- Mini case scenarios to highlight challenging situations, eg, counter-allegations, sickness, etc

7 Action plans and next steps

- Participants reflect on how they will transfer this learning into the workplace and further development as appropriate

Virtual session three

Learning objectives

This highly practical three-hour session (including breaks) uses practical case studies to help you build knowledge, skills and confidence in conducting investigation interviews.

The session builds confidence gradually: participants work together initially in a 'fishbowl' exercise with the trainer taking the part of the interviewee. In the following case studies you will work in smaller groups to plan for and conduct an investigation interview, with fellow participants playing the roles of the interviewee and observer. The roles will be reversed for the second case study.

Alternatively we can supply actors to play the parts of the interviewees.

And when this programme is run on an in-house basis, the scenarios can be tailored to ensure maximum relevance to the organisation.

Virtual session outline

1 Welcome, agenda, overview

- Objectives and agenda

2 Investigation interviews

- Best practice review
- Structuring the interview
- *Whole group exercise*

3 Case study 1

- Planning to conduct an investigation interview
- *Practical exercise*
- Debrief of learning

4 Case study 2

- Planning to conduct an investigation interview
- *Practical exercise*
- Debrief of learning

5 Open forum

6 Action plans and next steps

- Participants reflect on how they will transfer this learning into the workplace and further development as appropriate

For a no-obligation discussion about running this three-part virtual session for your organisation on an in-house basis, just give us a call on **01582 463462**.