

Guidance Document 4

Guide for Witnesses

If you have witnessed an incident or concern which is being investigated, then you may be required to participate in an investigation and asked to provide a statement.

As a witness you are encouraged to:

- Actively participate in the process to avoid delays
- Be open and honest with the investigation team to ensure facts are established

Investigation Meeting

You may be asked, as a witness, to attend a meeting with the Investigating Officer and HRR. You may be briefed either verbally or in writing (whatever method is most appropriate in the circumstances) regarding the allegations. You may be accompanied to the meeting by a Trade Union representative or a workplace colleague for support. If you are being accompanied by a colleague, they should not have had any prior/other involvement in the case.

Meeting Notes

During the meeting minutes may be taken; these will not be a word for word record. You will receive a copy of any minutes taken after the meeting and will be asked to confirm their content for accuracy. You cannot add new evidence or further explanation unless this was stated at the meeting. You will normally be given seven calendar days to confirm the accuracy of the minute. If you do not reply, they will be considered an accurate record.

You should be aware that the person(s) under investigation may be provided with all documentation which applies to the allegation(s), including your statement, as part of the investigation process. This information would normally be disclosed once the investigation has been concluded and moves to another stage, for example a Disciplinary Hearing. The HRR who is assigned to the investigation will keep you informed on all aspects of this including when and if your meetings minute will be disclosed and to whom.

If the issue proceeds to a disciplinary hearing the statement and / or minute you provided may be used as evidence.

On rare occasions witness minutes may be redacted, anonymised or withheld completely. The HRR supporting the Investigating Officer will be able to discuss the meeting minute and potential disclosure of these in more detail.

Further information and support

If you need further clarity on this Investigation Procedure, then you can seek confidential advice and support from:

- Your line manager
- Trade Union Representatives
- Human Resources

Confidentiality

All University Investigations are subject to strict confidentiality. You should not discuss the case with anyone except your representative or work colleague who is accompanying you

either before, during or after any witness investigation meetings. Any breach of confidentiality will be investigated. This may lead to action being taken under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Given the need for confidentiality as a witness you are not entitled to know the outcome of the investigation or any formal hearings.

Maintaining relationships

There is an expectation that individuals involved in an investigation will continue to work together during an investigation wherever possible. Support can be made available to enable this to happen.