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**Decision Making Checklist**

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| **Are you Decision Ready?** | |
| Are you able to make your decision freely and without undue influence from others |  |
| Check for and declare any conflicts of interest |  |
| Reflect on your thinking throughout the investigation to check for biases |  |
| Do you have the right experience and where can you get help otherwise |  |
| Give yourself ample time and opportunity to reach your decision |  |
| **Step 1 - What questions are you answering** | |
| Read through (or listen to) the complaint and write down a list of all the issues you found |  |
| Contact the complainant in person   * Share your list of questions and check if you have properly understood the issues. Ask if there are any other issue, they haven’t mentioned already. * Check what impact all this has had for them * Explain to the complainant in person any limitations on what you can look and why * Ask the complainant what outcome they are looking for. Explain what outcomes are possible and what is not. If the complainant doesn’t know, you can make some suggestions: for example, “when we find problems, we might arrange staff training or an apology or a change of policy” * Summarise your understanding on the phone/in the meeting |  |
| Explain what outcomes are possible and what is not |  |
| Summarise your understanding on the phone/in the meeting |  |
| Send a written summary to the complaint confirming the discussion |  |
| If you can’t make personal contact, send a written summary and ask the complainant to let you know if they have queries |  |
| **Step 2: Planning and Information Gathering** | |
| For each issue decide what information you already have and make a note of it |  |
| For each issue decide what information you need and how to find it |  |
| Keep checking back with your plan and revise it as you get in new information |  |
| **Step 3 Evaluating the evidence** | |
| Test the information to evaluate how useful it is to you as evidence |  |
| **Step 4 Reaching a decision** | |
| Decide on balance what did happen and what should have happened |  |
| Compare what did happen to what should have happened |  |
| Determine where you are responsible for the difference |  |
| **Step 5 Communicate your decision** | |
| Use a structured template letter to ensure consistency in communicating decisions   * Review your letter using the tips for good communication |  |
| **Step 6: Remedy Learning and Improving** | |
| Check for any relevant remedy the complainant was seeking, any further fixes identified in your investigation and also whether any apologies are due |  |
| Assess whether there are systemic issues which need to be addressed |  |
| Decide what systemic changes are needed |  |
| Create an action plan including a process for management review of completion |  |
| Check whether you have achieved the desired outcomes and share information about the improvement achieved |  |
| Maximise the improvement from a complaint by sharing the learning across the organisation |  |
| Reflect the impact of the situation on the complainant and the outcomes they were seeking |  |