

Sample standard items of an investigation report

The standard items that may be included in a formal written investigation report are set out below.

There are many ways to write your analysis and findings, and the level of detail will be determined by the seriousness of the allegations and the risks to your organisation.

- Cover page marked 'Strictly Private & Confidential' (and "Subject to Legal Professional Privilege", if appropriate) and dated;
- Executive summary of the allegations, investigation process and conclusions;
- The allegations;
- How and when the allegations came to the organisation's attention;
- The methodology for the investigation, including statements about:
 - If you were 'appointed' by another person in your organisation, how you were appointed and when;
 - Whom you interviewed, and how you did so (for example, in person);
 - How you recorded the interview;
 - What other evidence you collected and how;
 - Whether you did a site visit; and
 - Any other enquiries you made;
- What interviews were conducted, how the witness was considered relevant, for example, "*Van Nguyen, who was identified by the complainant as a witness to allegation 5*". Include here a list of any relevant witnesses who did not participate, why they did not, and what, if any, impact this had on the investigation;
- A description of the documentary evidence and other evidence you have considered, including the written complaint, written responses, transcripts of interview and documents provided by the parties and other documents you sought. If the material provided is voluminous, you can summarise such as '*Folder of documents provided by complainant as set out in Appendix A*';
- Any other evidence that was collected and considered; and
- A description of any 'issues arising' such as delay, parties' objections, or procedural issues you considered.

Then for each allegation:

- The allegation;
- Any agreed facts (such as *“The complainant and respondent agreed that the sum of \$4312.88 was withdrawn from the company’s cash account on 3 November 2019”*);
- Details of the evidence collected, including any responses to contradictory evidence;
- Analysis of the relevance, credibility, and reliability of the evidence, and the weight given to it;
- A finding of fact for each allegation (see more detail in Chapter 19);
- Where you make adverse findings against any person, confirmation that the person was given the opportunity to respond to the allegation, and fair inclusion of their defence; and
- A consideration and succinct conclusion about whether the proven conduct amounts to a breach of policy.

Things that should not be included:

- Unless specifically instructed to do so, the report should **not** contain any opinion about the motives of the parties.
- Any comment on matters that are outside of the scope of your investigation’s terms of reference.