

**TCM** GROUP™



# Quality Standards

for Workplace Investigations



Ensuring our investigations are fair, thorough, impartial and robust

# Investigations: Right the first time

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## ABOUT OUR QUALITY STANDARDS

At The Investigation Company, our aim is to get our workplace investigations right the first time. Our robust quality standards ensure that we consistently deliver these to the highest level of excellence.

These standards provide a quality framework which is adhered to by all of our investigators, ensuring our investigations are fair, impartial, thorough and robust. At all times, investigators will conduct themselves with professionalism, impartiality and represent TCM at the highest standards.

These investigation standards are in addition to current employment legislation and Acas guidance on conducting workplace investigations.

# World-class Investigations

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## PLANNING THE INVESTIGATION

The investigator will meet with you prior to undertaking any work. This enables them to clarify objectives, gather initial information and foster trust.

They will fully complete and submit a detailed Investigation Delivery Plan within two days of the introductory call for your agreement and sign off. Before you receive this, it is quality assured by TCM HQ. The Delivery Plan ensures that expectations are clear, the parameters are set and keeps the process focused, structured and transparent.

The Delivery Plan clearly defines:

- a. The Terms of Reference and scope of the investigation
- b. The specific details of the allegations or complaints to be investigated
- c. The policies and procedures pertinent to the investigation
- d. The persons to be interviewed as part of the investigation
- e. Provisional timescales and key milestones for each

## COMMUNICATION & REPORTING

All of our investigations are conducted in a timely and professional manner, with the investigator ensuring that both yourself and TCM HQ are updated regularly. The investigator will provide updates at least bi-weekly unless another agreement has been made with you. Case updates also include time spent to date and expected time remaining.

Any impact on the investigator's ability to meet agreed timescales will be highlighted to both yourself and TCM HQ immediately, as will any changes to the estimated total number of days spent.

Investigators will be considerate of how they present their case updates via email correspondence to TCM HQ or the referrer, being mindful that any communication they have made may be disclosable in a Data Subject Access Request.

# A psychologically safe space

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## MEETINGS WITH PARTIES

Our investigators always conduct interviews with an open mind and reflect best practice interviewing techniques to create a psychologically safe space.

They will ensure that each interview is framed by explaining their role as an independent investigator, the purpose of the meeting and confirmation of right to be accompanied where applicable. They will make sure the party is happy to proceed with the meeting and will maintain a professional, unbiased interview process.

All calendar invites sent will be marked as private. Notes captured from the interviews are shared with the interviewee to agree accuracy and/or make minor amendments. The investigator will review the amendments made to ensure these are acceptable and will include a copy of interview notes with any changes visible alongside the final report.

The investigator will set clear timescales for review of interview notes to avoid unnecessary delays to the process. Interview notes are password-protected, with the password sent separately to the interviewee and the email should be marked; 'Private and Confidential, interview notes for the recipient only'.

The investigator will inform the party of how their notes will be used and referenced within the final report and any further processes following the investigation. The investigator will send the final report and appendices bundle to you securely via OneDrive, so that you can download and securely save all necessary files.

## SPECIALIST ADVICE & GUIDANCE

The investigator will adhere strictly to legal and regulatory requirements, ensuring investigations are conducted in line with current legislation, best practice, industry standards and your internal policies and procedures. Where appropriate, the investigator will seek specialist advice and guidance.

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## SAFEGUARDING

The investigator will always consider and prioritise the health and well-being of all parties. This might include pausing an interview if the interviewee displays signs of distress or discomfort, providing breaks and other offers of support or adjustments where needed.

The investigator will also refer to your internal support services, depending on severity, and your organisation's policies, or employee assistance programmes. If there are potential risks to the party's health, safety or wellbeing they will notify you while being respectful of the party's privacy.

The investigator will objectively document concerns within the report and highlight if/where additional support for the party was sourced.



# Independent & fair investigations

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## REPORTING

The investigator will review all evidence, documents, policies, and procedures gathered and base conclusions on the information provided. They will do so in an impartial and unbiased manner.

The investigator will present their findings based on the civil standard of proof, *the balance of probabilities*:

**The *balance of probabilities* requires an investigator to decide whether an incident or misconduct is more likely to have occurred than not, by evaluating witnesses and evidence. It's about making a fair and objective assessment rather than certainty.**

The investigator will compile the report detailing their findings, referring to the relevant evidence using in-text citations and, where no evidence was provided, present their conclusions based upon the principles outlined above.

The investigator will also include any recommendations identified through their investigation, explaining why they have identified these recommendations and the benefits they may provide to your organisation.

The report will always reflect the investigators own conclusions. While they may seek specialist advice or guidance throughout the process, conclusions remain the investigator's own.

Investigators provide the draft investigation report to TCM HQ for internal Quality Assurance and await our instruction before they release this to you. When releasing the report, they will offer you a debrief call to discuss the findings and recommendations with you. They will try and schedule this within 5 working days of sharing the draft report with you.

Once you have signed off the report, the Investigator will rerelease this as a final version of the report.

# Confidential & secure

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## DATA SECURITY

The Investigator will inform you of the 30-day period to download all documents, before these are deleted from OneDrive.

The investigator will:

- a. Share the report and supporting documents via their TCM OneDrive account. If It Is not possible to use OneDrive, the Investigator should send this Password protected to you with the password sent separately.
- b. Copy in TCM HQ.

Please note, for any further formal processes, including attendance at Employment Tribunals, the customer, as the data controller, is responsible for providing any evidence packs that may be required for the investigator to fully carry out their role.

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

We are committed to providing opportunities for professional development, staying up-to-date on best practice, evolving legislation and industry trends to ensure we are delivering the best possible service.

We also actively seek feedback from our clients, and at the end of the investigation you will be invited to a Project Impact Meeting with TCM HQ so we can gather your insights and continually improve our processes.

Complaints are rare and we hope you never need to let us know you are unhappy with our service. However, we want to encourage you to tell us if something did not meet your expectations, or if you are concerned about an ongoing service. We urge you to do this at the earliest possible point and most of the time an informal conversation with your investigator will be able to resolve any issues. However, if you wish to make a complaint to TCM HQ, please do so and we will monitor and investigate this internally, ensuring we do everything we can to make things right and continue to improve our service.

For our full complaints handling procedure, please contact TCM HQ.

# Internal quality standards

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TCM INVESTIGATORS SHOULD ADHERE TO THESE QUALITY STANDARDS, ALONGSIDE THEIR 'TCM WORKPLACE INVESTIGATION GUIDEBOOK'.

TO ENSURE THAT THESE STANDARDS ARE ACHIEVED, TCM HQ UNDERTAKES THE FOLLOWING:

- 1 An initial scoping call with you before allocating the case to the Investigator, to understand case context and any specialist knowledge that will be required
- 2 Quality assurance of Delivery Plans
- 3 Full oversight throughout the investigation process with robust lines of communication with investigator
- 4 Double quality assurance of investigation reports before submission to the customer
- 5 Supervision and mentoring for investigators
- 6 We'll arrange a Project Impact Meeting with you once the investigation has concluded
- 7 A post investigation debrief/review with the investigator, where needed
- 8 Ongoing continuing professional development (CPD) for our investigators