

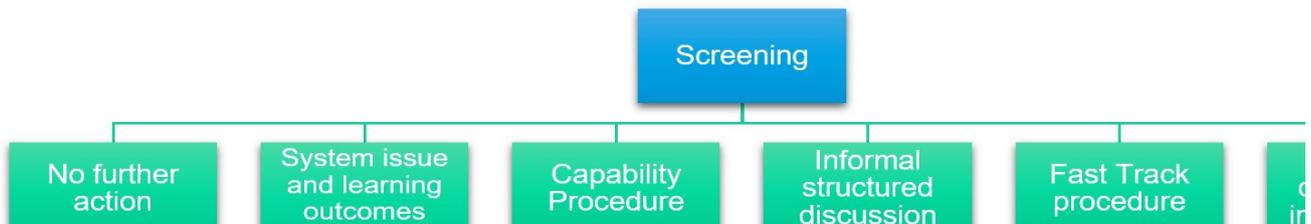


Supporting a Just and Learning Culture (4)

Disciplinary Policy - The Informal Structured Conversation

What is an Informal Structured Conversation?

In line with the new regional disciplinary policy following on from an incident, error, concern or complaint, an assessment incorporating a screening takes place. One of the potential outcomes of the screening is a determination that it is appropriate for an informal structured conversation to take place.



The new policy focuses on improvement and learning, given this new emphasis there is no mechanism for counselling or informal/verbal warnings in line with our new Disciplinary Policy.

Whilst these structured conversations are informal they should be documented (please see attached record of informal structured conversation template form).

When should an Informal Structured Conversation take place?

This should take place as soon as practicably possible following on from the assessment and screening of an incident, error, concern or complaint and the determination that an informal structured conversation is appropriate.

Who should undertake an Informal Structured Conversation?

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the immediate line manager should undertake the conversation. In circumstances where it not appropriate or not possible for the immediate line manager to undertake, then the next level manager should undertake the conversation or instruct a suitable deputy.

What should I do to plan and prepare for an Informal Structured Conversation?

It is important to set the right tone for the informal structured conversation. Before engaging in this conversation please review this guidance in conjunction with the <INSERT ORG> Disciplinary Policy, which focuses on a “Just and Learning” approach, please refer in particular to the Disciplinary Principles, HSC Values Approach to Disciplinary and also section 9 informal structured conversations.

Set the scene for the conversation and schedule this with the employee in advance, ensuring that this takes place in private, on a one to one basis (to ensure confidentiality can be maintained and an appropriate environment is in place).

Reassure the employee in advance of the purpose of the structured conversation emphasising that it is informal. It is not usually necessary for a trade union representative or work colleague to accompany an employee to this meeting however that does not preclude their attendance.

During the Informal Structured Conversation

Reassure the employee of the purpose of the structured conversation and of the informal nature. Focus on the incident, error, concern or complaint rather than the employee. Seek to understand what happened and any contributory factors. Engage with the staff member and explore together, actively listen, keep an open mind and provide them with the opportunity to offer their thoughts and suggestions. Adopting this approach will support learning and an open and honest conversation.

Encourage the staff member to reflect and identify any learning, equally the manager should also reflect and identify any learning that should be applied from a team or Trust perspective.

In light of reflection and learning, factor in any adjustments required to expectations going forward. Inform the employee of the standards expected by the <INSERT ORG> and the level of improvement needed within an agreed and reasonable timescale.

Emphasise your commitment in terms of supporting the improvement, identify any learning and explore any support required in going forward for example mentoring, training, professional development. Human Resources advice can be sought as necessary.

After the Conversation & Follow up actions

Use the record of informal structured conversation template form to document the conversation and retain this locally. Ensure the document is signed and dated by both line manager and member of staff / employee as an agreed record of the conversation. Provide the member of staff with a copy for their information.

Whilst Informal Structured Conversations do not expire, it is important to review the actions agreed and the timescales for this in order to determine if all actions have been completed to the agreed standard.

There may be a range of reasons the agreed actions have not been completed within the original agreed timescales, e.g. manager / mentor / employee is absent, or other operational reasons. The circumstances should be considered, recorded and where an extension is needed this should be agreed between the line manager and the member of staff.

The Informal structured conversation will be revisited at the end of the agreed timescales or as required for example in the event of incidents, errors, concerns or complaints or where the necessary improvement has not been reached. When revisited reassessment may be required in line with the Disciplinary Policy and consideration under another policy may be appropriate for example Capability or Attendance Management Policy in consultation with HR.

The new policy and associated guidance documentation is available from your local Human Resources Department.

Awareness sessions and clinics for line managers will also be provided.

Contact your HR Department on...



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RECORD OF INFORMAL STRUCTURED CONVERSATION WITHIN HSC DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Employee's Name: Band: Staff Number:	Date of Informal Structured Conversation:
Details of incident/error/concern/complaint: Please include the - date/s, or if appropriate, the time period and understanding of what occurred.	
Reflection and learning: Record any statement / reflections made by the staff member, also record any learning from team or Trust perspective.	
Clarify expectations: In light of reflection and learning, factor in any adjustments required to expectations going forward. Inform the employee of the standards expected by the <INSERT ORG> and the level of improvement needed.	
Actions: please record full and clear actions and the timescales associated ^ 1. 2. 3.	

We are satisfied that this is an accurate reflection of our Informal Structured Conversation today.

Line Manager Signature:.....Date:.....

Print Name:.....

Employees Signature:.....Date:.....

Print Name:.....

^This Informal structured conversation will be revisited at the end of the agreed timescales or as required for example in the event of incidents, error, concern or complaints or where the necessary improvement has not been reached. When revisited reassessment may be required in line with the Disciplinary Policy and consideration under another policy may be appropriate for example Capability or Attendance Management Policy in consultation with HR.



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