



The Reviewing Officer- The Line Manager

As a line manager you may become a reviewing officer on a reflective practice process for a breach of the standards of professional behaviour referred to your PSD/DPS and assessed as not sufficiently serious to warrant formal disciplinary proceedings to. Your AA will consult you over this but once it has been agreed you will oversee all the stages. This should be regarded as no more than basic supervision and as such forms part of your normal duties. Your force may well have a hard copy or digital proforma to assist. There are no sanctions or other outcomes more than learning for both individual and the organisation.

The officer- (participating officer), will be notified that the matter will be deal with by way of reflective practice and will be invited to provide an account in writing of what they did/did not do. This response needs to be returned within 5 working days. Participating officers are encouraged to be open and reflective and to consider what they could have done better.

Upon receipt of this account you may undertake fact finding to satisfy yourself that you fully understand the issues and that the matter is still suitable to be dealt with by reflective practice.

If in the unlikely event during your fact finding you discover or suspect that the breach if far more serious than initially thought and that it would justify formal disciplinary action you should stop your fact finding and refer the matter back to the appropriate authority. If the matter is referred and upgraded to formal discipline any statement made by the participating officer is inadmissible in such proceedings and you should not pass on the account nor its contents under any circumstances.

On most occasions, following your fact finding you will need to arrange a meeting with the officer concerned- the discussion stage. As reflective practice in “informal” (not formal misconduct), there is not right for the officer to have a federation friend present, but this does not stop the officer nor you from seeking advice from anyone who may assist, and this could be a Federation representative. This discussion should be arranged as soon a practicable and be a constructive dialogue, reflecting of what happened, why, lessons learnt and actions to prevent a recurrence. Learning points can be established at stage for both the officer and the organisation.

After the discussion stage you will need to write this all up- on the proforma or however your force decides to record the matter. This report will close the reflective practice and should summarise all actions taken if any. Identifying the shortfall, the remedial actions taken to date, if appropriate remedial actions still to be taken along with basic time scales.

In certain circumstances two other approaches may be to consider a purely welfare centred response. Equally there may be occasions where an apology may be the most appropriate course of action and this could be from the officer or from the force.

Once you are happy and have submitted your report that is the end of the matter and apart from reviewing any outstanding action plans both you and the officer can and should move on.

In all cases this is simply about doing the right thing, being proportionate, constructive and focussed on learning the lessons and being better in the future.

Reflective practice is not to be confused with the informal (pre stage 1), of UPP which can be dealt with by way of management action for poor performance. In a similar vein there will be low level conduct issues that as a supervisor you are expected to deal with as part of your normal line management of officers.

You will always be allowed, and you are encouraged to, deal with low level conduct and performance issues that do not even justify notification to the AA. Think of the pen test- if it can be dealt with by words of advice then that is your job. If you need to sit down with some one and make notes and plan remedial correction, then you need to ask the following questions.

1. Under normal circumstances should I be able to deal with this?
2. Is this a one off or part of a series of behaviours?
3. Have I tried to resolve this to no avail?
4. Has the officer engaged sufficiently?

If the answer to 1 is yes, then if the officer works with you and 2 & 3 do not apply then you should be able to deal without referring up. The more difficult to deal with it becomes the more likely you are to refer up. Then and only then will consideration be given to Reflective Practice and all actions recorded.