Please refer to this checklist to make sure you’ve covered all the necessary investigation steps.

Please fill in all sections of this form

**Investigation checklist**

**When should I use this checklist?**

As an investigator you’ll need to follow Girlguiding procedures when you conduct an investigation. Use this checklist to make sure you’ve got every stage of the investigation procedure covered.

If for any reason you can’t complete everything on the investigation checklist please ask another commissioner to investigate the case, or parts of it. You can talk to the safe practice teams at HQ or your country/region leads for any support you need.

**What type of case should I use this checklist for?**

You should follow this checklist for red and amber complaints, compliance and safeguarding cases which need a formal investigation. You’ll find information about how we use traffic light colours to categorise safe practice cases in the risk triage section of [the toolkit](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/policies/complaints-policy/investigation-procedure/investigators-toolkit/).

**What policies and procedures should I follow?**

Before you start a safe practice investigation get up to date with our [investigation procedure](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/policies/complaints-policy/investigation-procedure/) as well as any policies and procedures relevant to the case. You’ll find the [complaints procedure](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/policies/complaints-policy/complaints-procedure/), [managing concerns about adult volunteers procedure](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/policies/managing-concerns-about-adult-volunteers-policy/managing-concerns-about-adult-volunteers-procedures/), [safeguarding procedure](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/policies/safeguarding-policy/safeguarding-procedure/) and [whistleblowing procedure](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/policies/whistleblowing-policy/whistleblowing-procedure/) on the Girlguiding website.

**Investigation details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Safe practice team | Complaints and Compliance  Safeguarding |
| Member of HQ staff overseeing the case | Type here |
| Case reference number | Type here |

**Checklist**

* Read through the case details and check you have all the information you need.
  + When you are given a case by HQ they should include an outline of the concern, the contact information of who you need to speak to and the details of the individual(s)  
    under investigation.
  + If you’re looking into a safeguarding case, or a more complex complaints or compliance case, HQ should give you a terms of reference. If you feel like you’re missing anything at all, get in touch with the relevant safe practice member of staff.
* Ask yourself if you’re the most appropriate person to investigate this case, - and if you have  
  the capacity to take this work on.
  + For example, if the concern relates to a close friend of yours, or a volunteer you’ve had a disagreement with in the past, it may make it difficult to be unbiased. Please get in touch with HQ and/or the country/region leads if you feel it may be better for someone else  
    to investigate.
* Within five working daysof receipt let the HQ team know that you’ve received the case and whether or not you’re able to carry out the investigation.
  + If you’ve passed the case onto another commissioner for investigation, please let us know at HQ. If you need help reallocating the case we can also support this.
* Keep a record of any steps you take with the investigation. This will be your case history evidence. You might find it helps to use the investigation timeline template.
* Speak with the person who raised the concerns before you contact other parties involved with the case. Discuss how you plan to carry out the investigation and when they can expect to hear from you next. You must make contact within five working daysof receipt of the concern.
* If a volunteer’s conduct is being investigated it’s important their commissioner informs them of the situation as soon as possible. If you’re not the volunteer’s commissioner then you must check this conversation has happened.
  + This should preferably happen in person, but if that’s not possible don’t let this delay  
    the conversation.
* If a unit has been affected by an investigation (for example the unit leader has been suspended), you need to create a contingency plan of what will happen with the unit. Consider if it’s possible to have other volunteers stepping in, to keep the right unit ratio of volunteers to members.
  + Confidentiality is vital. You must keep matters confidential during an investigation, and also deal with the situation sensitively. It may help to plan ahead what to tell parents or other volunteers who ask about the situation.
* Gather information and evidence to help you get a best understanding of the situation.
* Speak with all relevant parties, so you can get a perspective from all sides.
  + You must take notes in all meetings you have. This will give you the most accurate record in your case evidence. Ideally another volunteer should be present to act as the note taker.
* Keep HQ and the region team up to date with any steps you take.  
  This should happen every two weeks following the date we passed the case to you.
* Produce a report using Girlguiding’s report template.
  + This template is in the report template section of [the toolkit](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/policies/complaints-policy/investigation-procedure/investigators-toolkit/).
* Share your report with the relevant HQ teams and country/region leads.
* Once you hear back from HQ and the country/region team, send an outcome letter to the  
  relevant parties.
* If appropriate, let the complainant or volunteer know that they have 28 days to appeal the investigation outcome.
* Report back to HQ, and once they’ve confirmed the case can be closed, delete all information  
  you have referring to the case.

Please remember to ask for support if you need it during the investigation.

The HQ and country/region teams are also happy to arrange a debriefing meeting if you feel this would benefit you once a case has closed.