

A WORD ABOUT REASONS

If the DO fails to provide clear, understandable reasons for the findings and recommendations, they may find that people ask for further explanation, or complain. They may also doubt the fairness of the investigation.

Provide reasons that are clear, and aim to be thorough enough – as brief as you can while providing enough information for the reader to understand the rationale for the conclusion.

Reasons should:

- Describe what evidence was considered and how and why it led to the decision
- Demonstrate that the decision-maker heard and considered the information provided by the parties to the case
- Summarize any credibility assessment of witnesses that were made and how this impacted the consideration and weight given to the witnesses' evidence, particularly where conflicting evidence was presented
- Be responsive and understandable to the parties receiving them. Reasons are the primary way the DO demonstrates that as the decision-maker they have listened to the arguments and evidence and considered them when making the decision

Ask these questions

When I explain the results of my investigation to them or they receive my written report:

- Will they understand why I made the decision?
- Have I demonstrated that I heard and considered the evidence they provided in my decision-making process?