

Independent Investigations

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External support for internal challenges

When something serious goes wrong inside an organisation such as a bullying complaint, allegations of financial mismanagement, discrimination or whistleblowing claims, the response matters as much as the issue itself. People need to feel heard, and those involved need to have confidence in the process. At the same time, leaders need clarity they can rely on in order to make decisions, manage risk and protect the integrity of the organisation. A well-run, independent investigation provides the foundation for all of that.

We're often called in when concerns are serious, relationships are sensitive, or an internal investigation would not carry sufficient weight or credibility. That might be because the complaint involves senior figures, the board, or HR leadership, or because external stakeholders such as regulators, trustees or insurers expect an independent review. Whatever the context, we bring clarity, care and objectivity to situations that matter.

Who to contact

Our independent investigations work is led by a senior team with specialist knowledge across employment, safeguarding, regulation and governance. Please get in touch directly if you would like to discuss a potential instruction:



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Farrer & Co are always my law firm of first choice for the quality of the advice and service they provide.”

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Why independence matters - and what we bring

For an investigation to be effective, it must be - and be seen to be - impartial. That's what gives people the confidence to speak openly and trust the outcome. It's also what allows organisations to act on the findings, knowing the process will stand up to scrutiny.

In practice, this means asking the right questions, testing evidence fairly, and exercising sound judgement throughout, ensuring that findings are based on evidence, not assumptions, and that everyone involved feels the matter has been handled with professionalism and integrity.

At Farrer & Co, our team brings together significant experience in employment, safeguarding, regulatory and reputation work. We are also able to draw on expertise across the firm, for example in data protection and corporate law.

We understand the pressures decision-makers face, and how the outcome of an investigation can affect not just careers and governance, but culture, risk and morale. Our large team enables us to deliver the level of support you need, for as long as the scope and complexity of your investigation demand.

We tailor our approach to each scenario. Sometimes a narrowly focused investigation is right. Other times, we need to dive deeper, understanding the full context, identifying themes, and working with the organisation to support meaningful change. Either way, our work is rigorous, proportionate, and designed to withstand challenge.

The nature of our work

We are regularly instructed by corporates, professional organisations, financial services institutions, schools, charities, and public bodies to investigate:

- Bullying, harassment or discrimination complaints
- Whistleblowing concerns
- Safeguarding and misconduct issues
- Financial or regulatory issues
- Conflicts of interest or misuse of authority
- Grievances involving board members, senior staff or protected characteristics

Each investigation is different. We may be asked to conduct witness interviews, assess documents and correspondence, liaise with legal teams, or provide briefings to boards or trustees. We agree the scope at the outset and work discreetly, efficiently and with sensitivity to the people and culture involved.

In every case, we deliver findings in a format that is clear, careful and legally robust, typically through a written report. We can also provide guidance on possible next steps, supporting clients to move forward with confidence.

Examples of our experience

Carrying out a detailed whistleblowing investigation into potential regulatory breaches raised by an employee. This involved gaining the trust of the reporting employee before obtaining witness and documentary evidence to enable the company to respond to the serious concerns in accordance with its regulatory obligations.

Carrying out an investigation into allegations of racism and inappropriate behaviour following the departure of a senior leader to enable the company to ensure it had not missed anything in its compliance and controls and that there were no remaining underlying concerns within the organisation.

Investigating potential regulatory misconduct of a senior partner leading to clarification of processes and the finding that the relevant partner was not guilty of wrongdoing.

Conducting eight separate fact-finding investigations into serious and complex issues at a major university covering both staff and student misconduct and impact. Our thorough and carefully explained reports allowed the client to move forward to resolve these difficult issues via internal processes.

Acting as the independent investigator for a listed company whose CEO was under investigation for misconduct. Our report enabled the company to move forward with internal processes based on clear facts and findings.

“

Farrer & Co have a deep bench with the capacity to maintain quality and prompt response times.”

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