



Just culture decision aid

Five questions, in order, before any action against a person

Work through the questions in order and stop at the first yes. The sequence follows the NHS just culture guide (2018), which builds on Reason's work. Use your own organisation's policy where one exists.

Event reference

Reviewer

Date

The five tests

Test	The question	If yes
1 · Deliberate harm	Was there any intention to cause harm?	Follow organisational guidance; this is outside a learning response
2 · Health	Are there indications of substance use or of physical or mental ill health?	Occupational health and support; action on a person is rarely appropriate
3 · Foresight	Were there agreed protocols or accepted practice, and were they workable and in routine use? Did the person knowingly depart from them?	If protocols were unworkable or not in use, the system is the cause
4 · Substitution	Would a peer with the same training, in the same situation, have done the same?	If yes, action on the individual is not appropriate; fix the system
5 · Mitigating circumstances	Were there significant mitigating circumstances?	Action directed at the individual may not be appropriate

What the system must change

Support offered to the staff involved

