The burden of proof
Ensure that those investigating and reaching judgements are fully aware of the measure in use. The civil burden is on the balance of probabilities and the criminal burden is beyond reasonable doubt.

Giving reasons
Always give reasons for any decision made, accepting that they must be consistent with institutional policy.

Data privacy
Ensure all records of meetings are stored in accordance with relevant local legislation and are disposed of after an appropriate period of time.

Consistency
When dealing with a potential conflict, be consistent in order to avoid inference of bias or discrimination. Ensure you have a record of all decisions including the relevant facts for future reference.

Individual responsibility
Encourage students to submit authentic work at all times. Students should always be made aware of what the expected standards are and the verification process such as signing an authenticity statement. Also give clear guidance on group work and support students with training on referencing and academic writing. Personal responsibility is key.

Confidential chats
Where members of staff are seeking to resolve matters on an informal basis, they should be careful about committing to a guarantee of confidentiality. If such a guarantee has been given without any caveats, then it may be impossible to take forward any further action without the student’s consent.

Complex issues
Cases can involve relevant extenuating circumstances. Before looking at an incidence of plagiarism, you may need to deal with underlying factors first. Also where several issues are engaged in the same dispute consider running separate procedures.

Transparency
Everyone involved in a case should have access to the same documents and should be aware that all relevant documents may become discoverable.

Based on information provided by Adrian Slater, Head of Legal Services, University of Leeds, UK