
Whistleblowing Policy

Definition

Whistleblowing is the name given to the act of the disclosure of information to the employer or the relevant authority by an individual who knows, or suspects, that the Company is responsible for or taken part in some wrongdoing.

Those making qualifying disclosures are protected against dismissal or detriment by The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Qualifying disclosures

Certain disclosures are prescribed by law as “qualifying disclosures”. A “qualifying disclosure” means a disclosure of information that the employee genuinely and reasonably believes is in the public interest and shows that the Company has committed a “relevant failure” by:

- committing a criminal offence
- failing to comply with a legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- endangering the health and safety of an individual
- environmental damage or
- concealing any information relating to the above.

These acts can be in the past, present or future, so that, for example, a disclosure qualifies if it relates to environmental damage that has happened, is happening, or is likely to happen. The Company will take any concerns that you may raise relating to the above matters very seriously.

Employees who reasonably believe that some form of illegality, injustice or breach of health and safety has occurred or is likely to occur, and the disclosure is “in the public interest” are encouraged to use the procedure to raise any such concerns.

Should the concern not meet the requirement to be a qualifying disclosure, you should raise this under the Company’s grievance policy. Where a concern is raised under the whistleblowing policy where it is not appropriate to do so, i.e. it relates to a personal grievance, the receiving manager will confirm that the matter will be addressed under the grievance policy.

The Procedure

In the first instance you should report any concerns you may have to your line manager, or to a senior manager where the concern relates to your line manager or it is not appropriate to make the report to your line manager. All concerns reported will be treated in the utmost confidence.

Following receipt of a disclosure made under this policy, an investigation meeting will be held with the employee. The purpose of this meeting is to gather as much information as possible from the employee regarding their concerns, including whether they have any supporting evidence or can identify any witnesses.

After this meeting, the investigating manager will commence a full investigation into the concerns raised. The investigation will aim to gather all relevant information including relevant documentary evidence or witness statements.

Once the investigation is complete, the investigation manager will write to the employee confirming the outcome within 10 working days.

If the employee is not satisfied with the explanation or outcome, they may raise the matter with the appropriate official organisation or regulatory body.

Formal action

Should formal action be required as a result of any disclosure made under this policy, this action will be carried out in accordance with the applicable internal policy. Any potential sanctions imposed will be fair and reasonable in line with the relevant policy.

Protection against detrimental treatment

Everyone who raises matters of concern under this policy are protected against detrimental treatment, up to and including dismissal, because they have made a disclosure.

Bullying, harassment or any other detrimental treatment afforded to a colleague who has made a qualifying disclosure is unacceptable. Anyone found to have acted in such a manner will be subject to disciplinary action.

Reporting to the Department for Education (DfE)

If your concern relates to safeguarding, governance, or other serious matters within an educational setting and you do not feel able to raise it internally, you can make a disclosure directly to the DfE.

The DfE accepts whistleblowing disclosures from employees and workers in education. You can contact them via:

- Email: whistleblowing@education.gov.uk
- Telephone: 0370 000 2288

Further guidance and information

Further guidance can be found at the following links:

- [Blowing the whistle to the Department for Education - GOV.UK](#)
- [Whistleblowing for employees: What is a whistleblower - GOV.UK](#)
- [Protect - Speak up stop harm - Whistleblowing Homepage](#)

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