

WHISTEBLOWING POLICY



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Our Mission Statement

Aim to deliver an engaging, positive learning experience every time.

Our Values

Our values encompass the achievement of all of our learners. Our values are HONESTY, INTEGRITY, SUPPORT, ETHICAL BUSINESS AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL. We support PREVENT, SAFEGUARDING, BRITISH VALUES, EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION and this policy is at the heart of and supports these core values in aiming to safeguard staff and learners.

Our Vision

To be the provider of choice for apprentices and clients, creating bespoke education and training that maximises opportunity and investment, both for now and in the future.

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1 - Introduction and Overview

The terms 'Whistleblowing' is often used to describe the disclosure of information about suspected wrongdoing or dangers identified at work.

Being constantly aware of activities that do not adhere to the legal or ethical requirements of the centre is vital. Staff should question unusual or troubling activity at all times. There is no expectation that staff should deal with these situations themselves but reporting any concerns about learners, colleagues, suppliers or employers is the responsibility of everyone.

Employees may have access to, or come in contact with, information of a confidential nature. Their terms and conditions provide that except in the proper performance of their duties, employees are forbidden from disclosing, or making use of in any form whatsoever, such confidential information.

However, the law allows employees to make a 'protected disclosure' of certain information. In order to be 'protected', a disclosure must relate to a specific subject matter and the disclosure must also be made in an appropriate way.

The centre is committed to be complaint with the Bribery Act 2010. The Company actively encourages a culture of honesty and openness and therefore all employees are required to bring up to their manager or other designated person any issue that, in the employees' opinion, might constitute bribery or corruption.

2 - Rationale and Scope

This policy covers all staff and students at the centre.

3 - Roles and responsibilities

Our SMT (senior management team) take overall responsibility for the provision of all policies within the centre. The directors, Mark Webber and Peter Carey, take overall responsibility for this policy, its application and sharing of appropriate information.

4 - How this Policy will be Communicated

- Our SMT will review policies and update as required
- Our policy will be made available on our website if applicable
- Our policy documents will form part of the induction for all staff to the centre
- When suitable, policies will be uploaded to OneFile resources for access by all appropriate users
- Training for all staff will be implemented where required, with training matrix and CPD's updated accordingly
- We may email policy updates to staff as required or use OneFile system announcements
- Staff should also review the employee handbook in relation to staff behaviour.

5 - Complaints

Any complaints in relation to this policy or relating to this policy or conflicts of interest should be made to the SMT or the Directors, who can be contacted via our Head Office on 08452235020 or email info@apprenticeship-centre.co.uk.

6 – Complaints that are Classed as Whistleblowing

You're protected by law if you report any of the following:

- A safeguarding concern about a staff member
- A criminal offence, for example fraud
- Someone's health and safety is, or is likely to be, in danger
- Risk or actual damage to the environment
- A miscarriage of justice – previous, currently, or likely to occur
- The company is breaking the law, for example does not have the right insurance
- You believe that information relating to any of the above points is being deliberately concealed.

In some cases, a protected disclosure may be investigated under a separate policy where appropriate, for example, an allegation of sexual harassment is likely to qualify for protection, as it will be with reference to an unlawful or potentially criminal act.

7 – Complaints that Do Not Count as Whistleblowing

Personal grievances (for example bullying, harassment, discrimination) are not covered by whistleblowing law, unless your particular case is in the public interest. Report these under your [employer's grievance policy](#).

While these may not have the same legal protection, The NVQ Training Centre takes these seriously and will investigate with a view to resolving these concerns in line with our relevant policies.

Contact the [Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service \(Acas\)](#) for help and advice on resolving a workplace dispute.

8 – Disclosure Procedure

Information which an employee reasonably believes, tends to show, one or more of the above classed as whistleblowing should promptly be disclosed (this can be anonymously) to the Managing Director or SMT, so that any appropriate action can be taken.

If any employee believes reasonably and in good faith that malpractice exists in the workplace, then we would encourage them to report this immediately to their line manager or one of the directors. Any disclosure will be treated confidentially and investigated as per the time scales set out below. Any investigation will be independent, proportionate, objective and evidence-based to ensure that all reports are focused on identifying and rectifying any issues to prevent further occurrences.

When a concern is reported, acknowledgement of receipt of this will be made within 3 working days. Upon receipt, we will make initial enquiries and decide whether an investigation is appropriate, or whether the concern should be investigated under a different centre policy/procedure. Initial discussions may be arranged away from the workplace, with your manager or colleague accompanying you for support, should you wish. Consideration will be made to whether concerns can be resolved in alternative ways such as; training, mediation or any other form of dispute resolution.

We aim to respond to all concerns and allegations in writing within 10 working days following receipt acknowledgement confirming the following:

- How we propose to deal with the matter
- Whether any initial enquiries have been made and the outcome of this investigation
- How long we estimate the timescale of the final response to be
- Any support mechanisms that have been put in place for the reporting individual.
- If no further investigations will be undertaken, why this is the case.

Employees will suffer no detriment of any sort for making a disclosure in accordance with this procedure. However, failure to follow this procedure may result in the disclosure of information losing its 'protected status'

For further guidance in relation to this matter or concerning the use of the disclosure procedure generally, employees should speak in confidence to the Managing Director or SMT.

9 – Government Guidance Relating to Whistleblowing

You're a whistleblower if you're a worker and you report certain types of wrongdoing. The wrongdoing you disclose must be in the public interest. This means it must affect others, for example the general public.

As a whistleblower you're protected by law - you should not be [treated unfairly or lose your job](#) because you 'blow the whistle'.

You can raise your concern at any time about an incident that happened in the past, is happening now, or you believe will happen in the near future.

<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

10 – Reporting contacts

Reporting directly to The NVQ Training Centre:

Managing Director* – Mark Webber – mark@apprenticeship-centre.co.uk

(SMT) Head of Apprenticeships* – David Gardner – david@apprenticeship-centre.co.uk

(SMT) Funding and Compliance Manager* – Joanne Ross – joanner@apprenticeship-centre.co.uk

(SMT) Operations Manager* – Kirsty Ryan – kirsty@apprenticeship-centre.co.uk

Alternative contacts:

Finance Director* – Peter Carey – peter@nvq-centre.co.uk

Office Manager* – Jo Wright – Jo@nvq-centre.co.uk

External Centre Governing Body – Lead Governor – Kevin Pound – kpound@qtsglobal.co.uk

* The NVQ Training Centre
Wood Lane
Erdington
Birmingham
B24 9QR

Ofsted:

The Chief Inspector – whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Ofqual (Office of Qualifications and Exam Regulations):

Complaints Investigation Manager – email: whistleblowing@ofqual.gov.uk

Online form: complaints.ofqual.gov.uk/new-concern

Whistleblowing and malpractice
Complaints investigation manager
Ofqual
Earlsdon Park
53-55 Butts Road
Coventry
CV1 3BH