

# UK Certification Whistle Blowing Policy



## Introduction & Purpose of this Policy

This policy sets out our approach to receiving information from those who wish to make certain disclosures to us on matters relating to UK Certification approved assessment centres, learners or the public that have the potential to adversely affect UK Certification qualifications, products or services.

This policy is designed to encourage the whistle-blower to feel confident to raise concerns and to provide an avenue for doing so. UK Certification is committed to responding to such concerns and these can be made without fear of reprisal or victimisation. If you have a genuine concern then your disclosure should be made in the reasonable belief that it will tend to show malpractice or impropriety.

We would encourage you to first raise a concern internally within your organisation, however, if you remain concerned or if your concern has not been appropriately addressed, please contact UK Certification and follow the procedure outlined in this policy.

UK Certification is committed to high standards of openness and accountability and we encourage centre staff, learners and any other interested parties to come to us and voice their genuine concerns.

## What is Whistle Blowing

Whistleblowing is a term used when an individual raises a genuine concern relating to wrongdoing or suspected malpractice and/or covering up of a malpractice or wrongdoing occurring in an organisation. The alleged malpractice may be classified in many ways, for example, a violation of a law, rule, regulation and/or a direct threat to public interest such as fraud, health & safety violations and corruption.

Whistleblowing is distinct from both complaints and employment disputes or grievances that an individual may have. A complaint can be defined as an expression of personal dissatisfaction. Please refer to the UK Certification Complaints Policy for further information.

An individual may decide to make a disclosure to us to prevent harm or to hold an organisation to account, but if the breach is regarding their own employment contract then it will be precluded as the company grievance procedure should be utilised for this. UK Certification cannot look into any concerns of employment positions, contracts, or grievances of this nature.

## How to make a disclosure

To raise an allegation under this policy, please contact UK Certification using the contact details found at the rear of this policy.

Please provide as much information and supporting evidence that is relevant as possible. It is important to note that it is not essential that you have clear evidence of wrong doing but you must be able to explain as fully as possible the nature of the allegation and the circumstances of your concern. Once you have disclosed your concerns, we have a duty to pursue it even if you withdraw the allegation, as we are required by the regulators to investigate any allegations that may impact on our standards and/or the integrity of UK Certification's products or services.

## Whistle Blowing Process

We will ask you to provide us with sufficient information over the phone or via email to enable us to effectively follow through on your disclosure, asking you to provide as much information/evidence as possible.

We will consider each disclosure sensitively and carefully, and decide upon an appropriate initial response. We may share with third parties information received in the disclosure where we consider it necessary to do so.

We will base any investigation on the disclosure given at the time. Any new information received after an investigation has commenced will be treated as a separate investigation.

There may also be occasions where it is not appropriate for us to investigate due to circumstances, such as the disclosure falling outside of our remit. In this case we may recommend another course of action.

Due to the varied nature of whistleblowing disclosures, timescales for investigations may vary considerably. If you choose to make a disclosure to us, provided you have given your contact details, we will send you an initial acknowledgement within two working days. We will write to you again to confirm how your disclosure will be addressed.

We reserve the right to cease corresponding with a whistle-blower where we believe, in our reasonable opinion, the disclosure may be vexatious.

## Getting Advice

If you need independent advice about a whistleblowing issue you can telephone Public Concern at Work on 020 7404 6609 who offer free, confidential advice to people concerned about crime, danger or wrong doing at work.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 exists to ensure that any worker who discloses information, will be legally protected from being disciplined, dismissed or victimised by the employer as a result of their action. Protection under this legislation is a matter between the employer and worker and this Policy does not cover that relationship.

## Privacy

It is necessary for us to collect and hold personal information about you in order to investigate your concern(s). We will hold the information you provide to us securely and use it to help us handle and process any request. For more information please access our privacy statement.

## Review Arrangements

We will continually improve our Whistle Blowing Policy through regular reviews of our activities and revise it in line with any feedback from customers, learners, regulatory authorities or external agencies, or changes in our practices.

## Contact

If you have any queries about this Whistle Blowing Policy, please send an email to [info@ukcertification.co.uk](mailto:info@ukcertification.co.uk)