

Whistleblowing Policy v1

Version	Date	Policy Author (s)	Review Date
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Version	Page No.	Paragraph / Bullet	Changes

Signed:



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Job Title: Managing Director

Date: 5th July 2024

The Whistleblowing Policy aims to create a culture of openness, accountability, and transparency by providing a mechanism for individuals to raise concerns about serious wrongdoing or malpractice within the college. This policy outlines the procedures for reporting and addressing such concerns, ensuring that whistleblowers are protected from any form of retaliation.

Policy Statement

- a. We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, ethical conduct, and responsible practices. It encourages all individuals associated with the college, including staff members, students, contractors, and other stakeholders, to report any concerns regarding serious wrongdoing or malpractice.
- b. This policy aims to protect whistleblowers from any form of reprisal and ensures that all reports will be thoroughly and impartially investigated.

Scope

This policy covers any concerns related to the following areas:

- Fraud, theft, or misappropriation of funds
- Corruption or bribery
- Discrimination, harassment, or bullying
- Health and safety violations
- Unlawful activities
- Serious breaches of college policies and procedures
- Any other matters of substantial public interest or concern

Reporting Procedure

- a. Whistleblowers are encouraged to report their concerns promptly. They may do so in writing or verbally to the designated Whistleblowing Officer (rebecca.ofarrell@directskillsgroup.co.uk)
- b. The college will provide clear and accessible information on how to make a report, including details of the reporting channels and the Whistleblowing Officer's contact information.

Confidentiality and Protection

- a. The college will treat all reports and the identity of the whistleblower with the utmost confidentiality, to the extent reasonably possible and permitted by law.
- b. Whistleblowers are encouraged to provide their contact information when making a report to facilitate the investigation and follow-up. However, anonymous reports will also be accepted.
- c. The college will take appropriate measures to protect whistleblowers from any form of retaliation or victimization. Any individual found to have engaged in retaliation against a whistleblower will be subject to disciplinary action.

Investigation and Follow-up

- a. All reports will be promptly and impartially investigated by the designated Whistleblowing Officer or an assigned investigation team.
- b. The investigation process will adhere to principles of fairness, confidentiality, and due process. Whistleblowers will be kept informed of the progress, outcomes, and any actions taken as a result of their report, to the extent possible and within legal constraints.

Non-Retaliation

- a. The college strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who report concerns in good faith. This includes protection against disciplinary action, adverse employment decisions, or any other reprisals.
- b. Whistleblowers who believe they have faced retaliation should report it immediately, and the college will take appropriate action to address and remedy the situation.

Review and Evaluation

- a. This Whistleblowing Policy will be annually reviewed to ensure its effectiveness, compliance with legal requirements, and alignment with best practices.
- b. Feedback from whistleblowers and relevant stakeholders will be actively sought and considered in the continuous improvement of the policy and associated procedures.

By implementing this Whistleblowing Policy, we aim to create an environment where individuals feel empowered to report concerns about serious wrongdoing or malpractice. This policy ensures that whistleblowers are protected, their reports are taken seriously, and appropriate actions are taken to address any identified issues, promoting a culture of integrity and accountability within the College.