



# Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

Presented by: **Innovate Learning Centre CIC**

Author: ASAD SARWAT  
Approved by: SMT  
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Registered Office: 73 Mellish Road, Walsall, England, WS4 2DG  
Contact Address: 78a Walsall Road, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, B74 4QY  
Phone: 0121 716 7286 | Email: [info@innovatelearning.co.uk](mailto:info@innovatelearning.co.uk)

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for reporting concerns about wrongdoing, malpractice, or unethical behaviour within Innovate Learning Centre CIC. It aims to foster a culture of openness, accountability, and integrity.

### **1.2 Scope**

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and learners who wish to report concerns confidentially and without fear of retaliation.

## **2.0 Principles of Whistleblowing**

### **2.1 Protection of Whistleblowers**

Individuals who report concerns in good faith will be protected from victimisation, harassment, or disciplinary action.

### **2.2 Confidentiality**

All concerns raised will be treated in the strictest confidence, and the identity of the whistleblower will not be disclosed without consent unless legally required.

### **2.3 No Detriment**

No action will be taken against a whistleblower who raises a concern honestly, even if the concern turns out to be unfounded.

## **3.0 What to Report**

### **3.1 Examples of Concerns**

Whistleblowing may include reporting: financial fraud, safeguarding breaches, discrimination, abuse, health and safety risks, unlawful conduct, or attempts to conceal such issues.

### **3.2 Exclusions**

Personal grievances, such as disputes about pay or conditions, should be raised through the grievance procedure, not via whistleblowing.

## **4.0 Reporting Procedure**

### **4.1 Internal Reporting**

Concerns should initially be reported to the line manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead, or another trusted senior member of staff.

### **4.2 Anonymous Reports**

While whistleblowers are encouraged to identify themselves, anonymous reports will be considered if sufficient information is provided.

#### **4.3 Formal Investigation**

Upon receiving a concern, a designated officer will assess the risk and initiate a formal investigation if required.

#### **4.4 Outcomes**

Where wrongdoing is found, disciplinary procedures may be enacted, and relevant external bodies may be notified.

## **5.0 Support for Whistleblowers**

#### **5.1 Advisory Access**

Support is available through internal HR advisors or safeguarding teams. External advice bodies may also be consulted if necessary.

#### **5.2 Wellbeing Consideration**

Recognising the stress that may arise from reporting wrongdoing, support mechanisms such as counselling and time-off may be offered.

#### **5.3 Ongoing Communication**

The whistleblower will be updated on the progress and outcome of the investigation wherever possible.

## **6.0 False or Malicious Allegations**

#### **6.1 Policy Misuse**

Deliberate false or malicious allegations are considered serious misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action.

#### **6.2 Good Faith Protection**

Individuals raising concerns genuinely and with honest intent will not face action, even if their concern is mistaken.

## **7.0 Responsibilities**

#### **7.1 Senior Management**

Responsible for ensuring that this policy is communicated, implemented, and reviewed annually.

#### **7.2 Investigating Officer**

Leads the review of concerns, maintains records, and ensures that any corrective actions are carried out.

### **7.3 All Personnel**

Encouraged to speak up if they observe wrongdoing and support a culture of transparency.

## **8.0 Monitoring and Review**

### **8.1 Review Process**

The policy will be reviewed annually and after any major incident or concern to ensure effectiveness.

### **8.2 Records**

All whistleblowing concerns and their outcomes will be recorded and stored securely for quality assurance purposes.