



WHISTLEBLOWING / REPORTING POOR CARE PRACTICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Background

In recent years increasing attention has been paid by regulators, funders and the public to standards of practice in the education sector. One such standard of practice is the recommendation by the Nolan Committee for whistleblowing or confidential reporting policies to be adopted. WiEducate supports the Nolan Committee's recommendation.

This policy also complies fully with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which was introduced to protect employees who 'blew the whistle' about any wrong doing.

WiEducate will promote awareness of this policy so that members of staff and others can report serious concerns at an early (and more manageable stage) in the knowledge that they will be listened to and if necessary protected.

Guiding principles

WiEducate is committed to the highest standards of quality, probity, openness and accountability. As part of that commitment we believe that the long-term interest of the company and the public are best served if staff feel confident in voicing issues of serious concern. Whilst in many cases concerns or complaints can be dealt with through our existing procedures, we recognise that in some cases members of staff will need to come forward on a confidential basis. This policy makes it clear that they can do so without fear of reprisal or victimisation.

Awareness of the Policy

It is the responsibility of all Managers to ensure that all staff are aware of this policy. Staff should study this guidance on whistleblowing carefully and discuss anything that seems unclear with their Line Manager.

When is whistle blowing appropriate?

Although not exclusive the following list gives some examples of when whistleblowing might be appropriate.

- * corruption and malpractice (including attempts to cover up earlier problems)
- * abuse or neglect of vulnerable people
- * persistent failure to deliver proper standards of service
- * serious personal conflicts, damaging to the business

If whistleblowing is appropriate, staff are expected to use the internal procedures as set out in this policy. Whistleblowing procedures should not be used where the implementation of another policy is more appropriate. For example, Health and safety concerns should be dealt with under the Health & Safety procedures. Disciplinary matters and staff grievances will be dealt with using the Company's Grievance Procedure or Disciplinary Policy & Procedure.

Whom to contact



In most cases, staff should be able to raise concerns with their Line Manager. If for some reason this is not appropriate, or the member of staff has tried and not had a satisfactory response, he/she should contact the Operations Manager and request a confidential meeting.

The Directors of the Company must be notified of any significant allegations against, and all substantiated complaints about Managers of WiEducate.

Members of staff can approach Public Concern at work for confidential and independent advice – their contact details are

Public Concern at Work
3rd Floor, Bank Chambers
6 - 10 Borough High Street
London SE1 9QQ

Telephone (general enquiries & helpline) 020 7404 6609

Fax 020 7404 6576

Email UK enquiries: whistle@pcaw.co.uk

UK helpline: helpline@pcaw.co.uk

UK services: services@pcaw.co.uk

Confidentiality

Members of staff are urged to come forward with any concerns at an early stage. If preferred, they may come forward with another colleague to report a concern.

Concerned members of staff will be supported and protected from reprisals or victimisation. If a member of staff comes forward with a concern, they can be confident that this will not affect their career. This applies equally if the member of staff comes forward in good faith with a concern which turns out later not to have been justified. WiEducate will take all reasonable steps to respect confidentiality if the member of staff has requested this.

If anyone tries to prevent a member of staff from coming forward to express a concern this could result in disciplinary action being taken. In the same way, WiEducate will deal severely with anyone who criticises or victimises a member of staff after a concern has been expressed.

Dealing with concerns

If a member of staff comes forward with a concern, it will be looked into carefully and thoroughly. We have to be fair to all parties concerned and find out all sides of the story, in our investigation, we will respect any concerns the member of staff has expressed about his/her own safety or career.

If the member of staff requests, we will try to let them know the results of our investigation and about any action that is proposed. However, in doing this we have to respect the confidentiality of other members of staff as well.



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If a member of staff has abused the confidential reporting process, for instance by maliciously raising unfounded allegations, this will be treated as a disciplinary matter. But no-one who comes forward in good faith has anything to fear.

Issue	Date	Reason for change	Approved by
1.0	February 2023	Creation of policy	Steph Horne
2.0	February 2024	Review of Policy	Steph Horne
3.0	February 2025	Review of Policy	Steph Horne



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